Module 1: Independent Living

OBJECTIVES

• Define “Independent Living.”
• Determine State and Federal Funding.

Definition: A comprehensive array of services available to adolescents in the custody of the department.

Goal: assist older children in foster care and young adults who were formerly in foster care obtain life skills and education for IL and employment have a quality of life appropriate for age assume personal responsibility for becoming self sufficient adults
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State & Federal Funds

Federal Funding Sources
P.L. 106-169
- Chaffee Funds
- Education and Training Voucher (ETV) funds

State funds for foster care or Federal fund are used to establish the continuum of services for eligible children.

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Federal Funds
- Education and Training Voucher Funds (ETV)
  - Used for eligible students as the first option
  - Used for eligible students attending a postsecondary (college, university or vocational) school either part-time or full time.
- Chafee Funds
  - Used for young adults under 21 years of age

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State Funds
- Must be used for young adults age 21 and 22 if they are not eligible for ETV funds.
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National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)

Provides states with flexible funds for youth to transition out of foster care

Requires (ACF) Administration of Children and Families to develop
• a data collection system to track provision of IL services
• outcomes that measure client success in preparing youth

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Transition to Independent Services

- Pre-Transition (age 13 to 18)
  - Pre-Independent Living
  - Life Skills
  - Subsidized Independent Living

- Transition (age 18 to 23)
  - Aftercare Support Services
  - Road to Independence
  - Transitional Support Services

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Module 2: Independent Living Services for Children in Foster Care

Objectives

- Identify transitional services for children in foster care

- Examine the transitional services eligibility requirements for children in foster care
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**Pre-Independent Living Services**

**Eligibility**
- Youth 13 – 15 licensed out of home care

**Services**
- Life skills training
- Educational Field Trips
- Conferences
- Pre-Independent Living Assessment

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**Pre-Independent Living Services**

**Annual Staffing**

**Case Plan – IL Tasks and Services**

**Written report signed by child**

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**Life Skills Services**

**Eligibility**
- Youth 15 - 18
- Licensed Care

**Services**
- Independent living skills training
- Educational support
- Employment training
- Counseling
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**Life Skills Services**
- Assessment to identify services
- Staffing every 6 months
- Independent living assessment post 17th birthday
- Written report signed by child

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**Driver’s License for Youth**
- Application for learner’s permit can be signed for youth 15-18 in licensed out-of-home care
- Not held liable for damages caused by the minor
- Prior to signing must notify the foster parent/other responsible party

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**Disability of Nonage of Minor**
- To ensure foster care youth can secure checking and saving accounts, the disability of nonage of minors is removed provided the youth:
  - Is 16 years of age
  - Is adjudicated dependent
  - Resides in an out-of-home placement
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Disability of Nonage of Minor

- Complete a financial literacy class
- Court order removing the disability on nonage

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Subsidized Independent Living Services

- Living arrangements that allow the child to live independently of the daily care/supervision of an adult in a setting not required to be licensed.
- Services are part of an overall plan leading to total independence of the child from the agency's care.
- Subsidy payments may be made directly to the child or other responsible adult approved by DCF

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Subsidized Independent Living

All 16 year olds in out-of-home licensed care must be formally evaluated.

SIL Eligibility

- Youth between 16 - 18
- Adjudicated Dependent

CM 126 In-Service Independent Living
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Eligibility

- Placed in licensed out-of-home care at least 6 months prior
- Permanency goal of adoption or another planned permanent living arrangement
- IL is permanency goal
- Youth can demonstrate IL skills

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SIL Finances

- Board rate: maximum $1,126 monthly (RTI amount)
- Determined by youth’s expenses and cost of living
- Negotiated with youth
- Annual clothing allowance
- May receive additional incentives, not greater than $50 each

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SIL Living Arrangements

- Live alone
- Roommate in dorm (no cohabitation)
- Rent a room from a family

- Background checks per 65C-28.009(7)(e), F.A.C.
- Important for youth 16-18 who have found placement with unlicensed relatives/other adults to qualify for all possible post 18 IL programs.
**Case Manager Contact**

**First 3 Months**
- Twice weekly contact
- One contact in youth’s residence
- One weekly contact with IL coordinator

**After**
- Every 30 days, in the youth’s residence
- Monthly contact with IL coordinator

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**Judicial Reviews**

- Every 6 months
- 90 days after child’s 17th birthday
- 6 months prior to youth’s 18th birthday

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**Fostering Connections Act**

- Must assist and support youth in developing a transition plan as they age out of care
- At age 17½ (during 90 day period before youth’s 18th birthday)
- Must list personalized goals and activities to be achieved
- Must detail specific options for housing, health insurance, support services
- Reviewed, approved, signed by youth: 90 days prior to 18th birthday or 90 days prior to date leaving care
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Minor Parents in Foster Care

- Parent/baby placed together unless baby’s safety is at risk or there is no available home
- Dependency petition filed ONLY if there is an issue independent of the parent’s stats as a dependent child
- Foster home received enhanced board payment to include baby’s needs

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Module 3: Independent Living Services for Young Adults Formerly in Foster Care

Objectives:
- Identify IL services provided to young adults formerly in foster care.
- Examine the IL services eligibility requirements for young adults formerly in care.

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Services for Young Adults Formerly in Care

Road to Independence
Aftercare Support Services
Transitional Support Services
Road-to-Independence Program

- Former foster children who are eligible to receive educational/vocational training.
- Award: earnings equal to 40 hr. federal minimum wage job, after grants/scholarships.
- Paid from State funds only.
- Costs unless youth attends postsecondary institution.
- May use up to $6,250 per year from the Education and Training Voucher funds.
- After reaching $6,250, funds must be used to support the student's award for the remainder of the year.

Road-to-Independence Eligibility

- Youth who exited care at age 18.
- In care at least 6 months prior to 18th birthday.
- Full-time student unless disability prevents full-time attendance.
- Florida resident and meets citizenship requirements.
- Between ages of 18 and 23rd birthday.

Transitional Support

Eligibility:
- Young adult in care who has reached 18 but is not yet 23.
- Was a dependent child.
- Lived in licensed care or in subsidized IL at the time of 18th birthday.
- Spent at least 6 months in foster care before that date.
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Transitional Support

Services:

- Short term funding/services include:
  - Financial assistance
  - Housing resources
  - Counseling
  - Employment/education assistance
  - Services may be received with aftercare support services and/or RTI program
  - Life skills training
  - Educational field trips
  - Pre-independent living assessment to identify other services

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Transitional Support Services Plan

- Agency must assist in plan development consistent with needs assessment specifying transitional services
- Specific tasks must be identified
- Young adults must be accountable for completion of tasks
- If young adult and agency cannot agree, you adult may access a grievance process to resolve the disagreement

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Aftercare Support Services

Youth who reached 18 but not yet 23 who leave care at 18 but request services prior to reaching age 23.
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**Aftercare Support Services**

Services include referrals for:

- Mentoring
- Tutoring
- Substance abuse counseling
- Life skills classes
- Parenting classes
- Job and career skills training
- Financial assistance
- Financial literacy skills training
- Temporary services to prevent homelessness, up to $1,000 per fiscal year

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**Payment of Aftercare, Scholarship or Transitional Support Funds**

Payments made to recipient unless other request made

Payments of awards, under the RTI Program are made to recipient by direct deposit unless recipient provides written request:

- Payments by check or warrant
- A portion of the payments be made to institutions
- A two-party check to a business/landlord for legitimate expenses
- Automobile repair/maintenance
- Education
- Job or training expense, cost incurred except legal cost, fines, penalties
- Rental agreement to secure a home or residence

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**Payment of Aftercare, Scholarship or Transitional Support Funds**

The agency may purchase housing, transportation, or employment services to ensure the availability/affordability of these services, allowing utilization of the services in lieu of direct payment.
Module 4: Independent Living and Case Planning

Objectives:
- Determine case planning requirements for youth.
- Decide when to conduct IL staffings.
- Determine required documentation for audits.

Case Planning

65C-28.009 F.A.C.

- Principles
  - Youth centered
  - Staffing to include youth
  - Held in time and place convenient for youth
  - Must include IEP tasks
- All tasks/services including Agency w/Persons w/Disabilities must be coordinated and in case

Independent Living Staffings

Conducted (at minimum) annually

Mandatory people to invite
- Supervisor
- CLS attorney
- Youth
- GAL
- Youth’s attorney
- Adults and family significant to youth
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Independent Living Staffings
Mandatory Topics

- Youths educational and work goals
  - Examine youth’s progress and any obstacles to goal achievement
- Identify needed life skills and progress towards skills previously identified
- SIL program, including program requirements and benefits

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Independent Living Staffings
Mandatory Topics

- Road to Independence Program
  - Requirements and benefits
  - Tuition fee exemption and Bright Futures Program
- Permanency, including the youth’s wishes regarding adoption
- Youth age 18, plans for living arrangement after 18 and needed life skills services

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Case File Audits

- Pre-Independent Living Services
- Life Skills
- Subsidized Independent Living
- Road To Independence
- Transitional Support Services
- Aftercare Support Services