

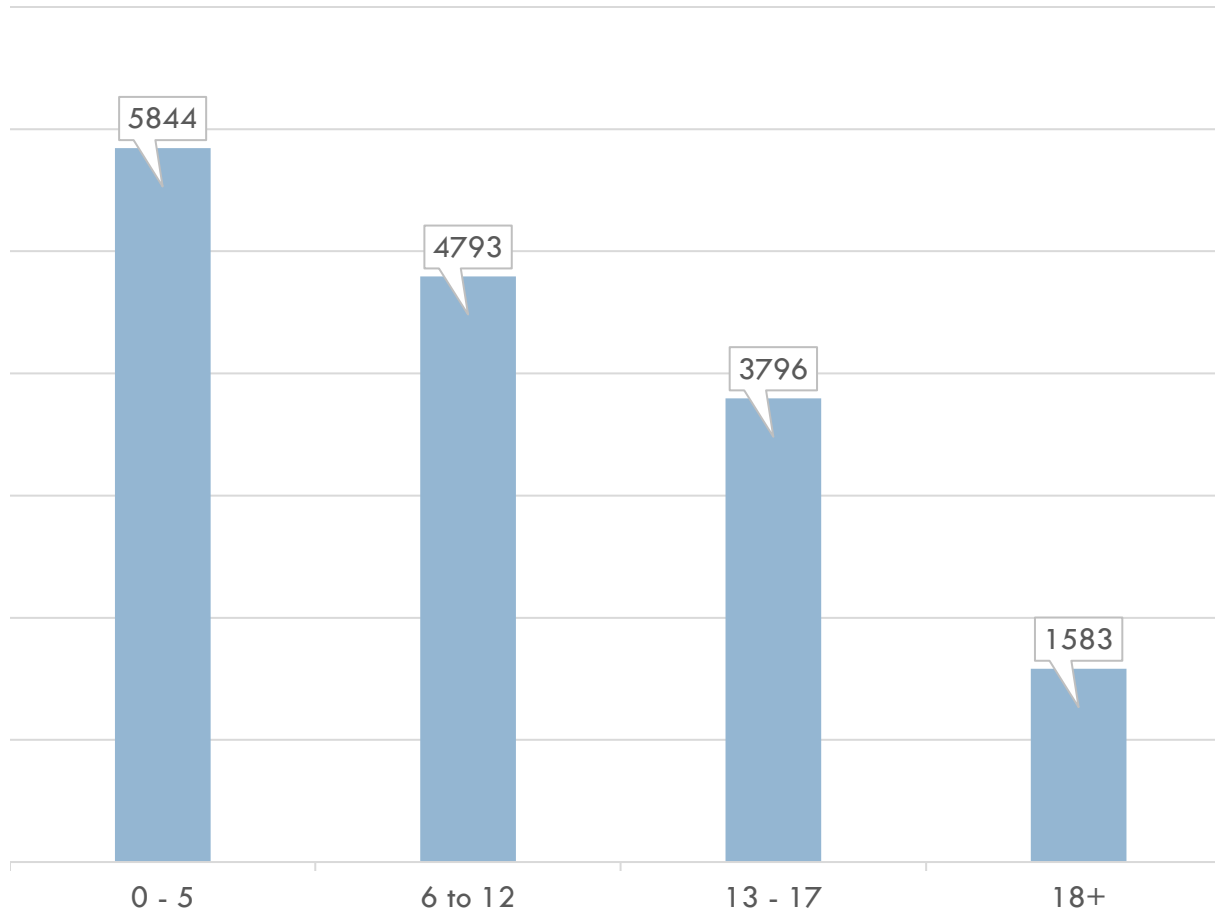
Older Adolescents in the Child Welfare System



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Older Youth: 33%

July 2022 – June 2023



Average # of youth aging out

507/year

over last 15 years (2008-2023)

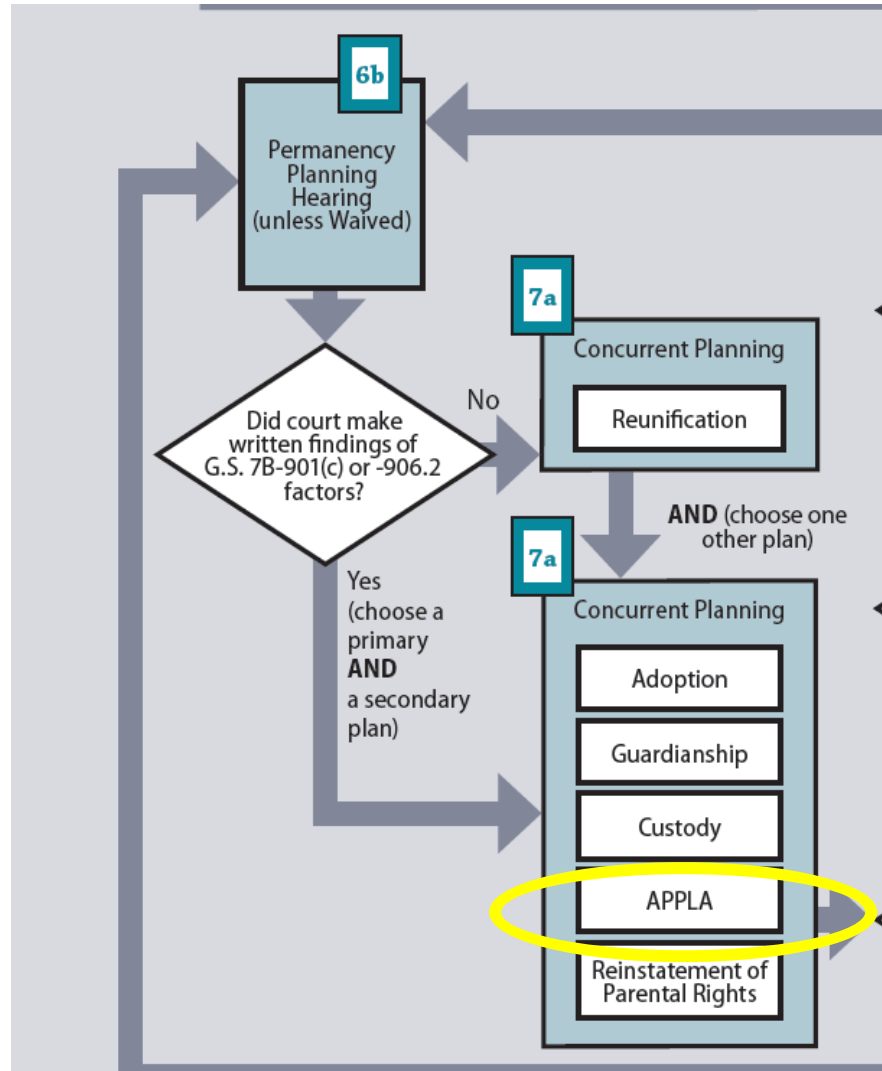
Median days in foster care: Aging Out

1,476 or 4 years (last 10 years)

Last year: 1,541 or 4.2 years



At Permanency Planning



Or no achieved permanent plan

Outcomes Generally



Increased risk of

Homelessness

High unemployment

Low educational attainment

Early/unintended pregnancy

Higher risk of incarceration

THE PROJECTED **COSTS OF DOING NOTHING**

ON AVERAGE, FOR EVERY YOUNG PERSON WHO AGES OUT, TAXPAYERS AND COMMUNITIES PAY \$300,000 IN SOCIAL COSTS OVER THAT PERSON'S LIFETIME.

Social costs equal taxpayer-funded costs such as **public assistance** and **incarceration**, as well as costs **absorbed by the community**, such as wages lost as a result of dropping out of high school.



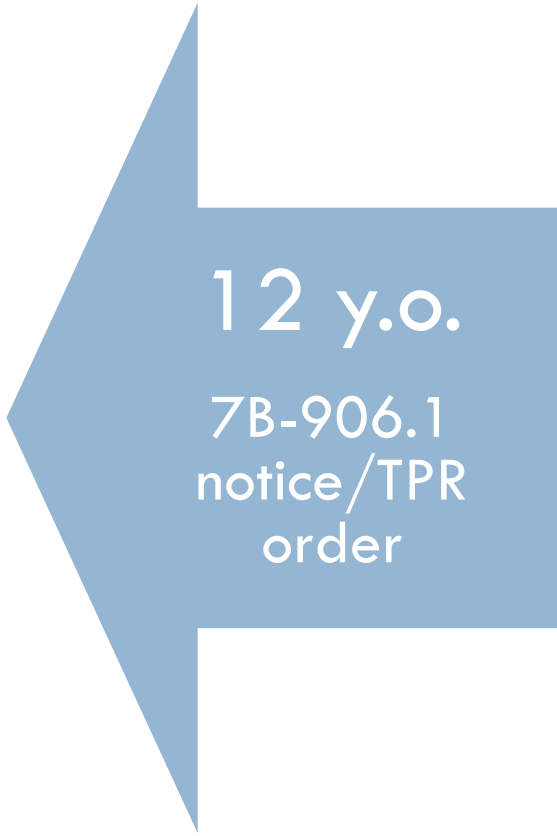
$$\begin{array}{ccccc} 26,000 & \times & \$300,000 & = & \$7.8 \text{ billion}^2 \\ \text{YOUNG PEOPLE AGING OUT} & & \text{PER PERSON} & & \text{IN TOTAL COSTS} \end{array}$$

Source: Aging Out of Foster Care In America, Annie E. Casey Foundation (2013)



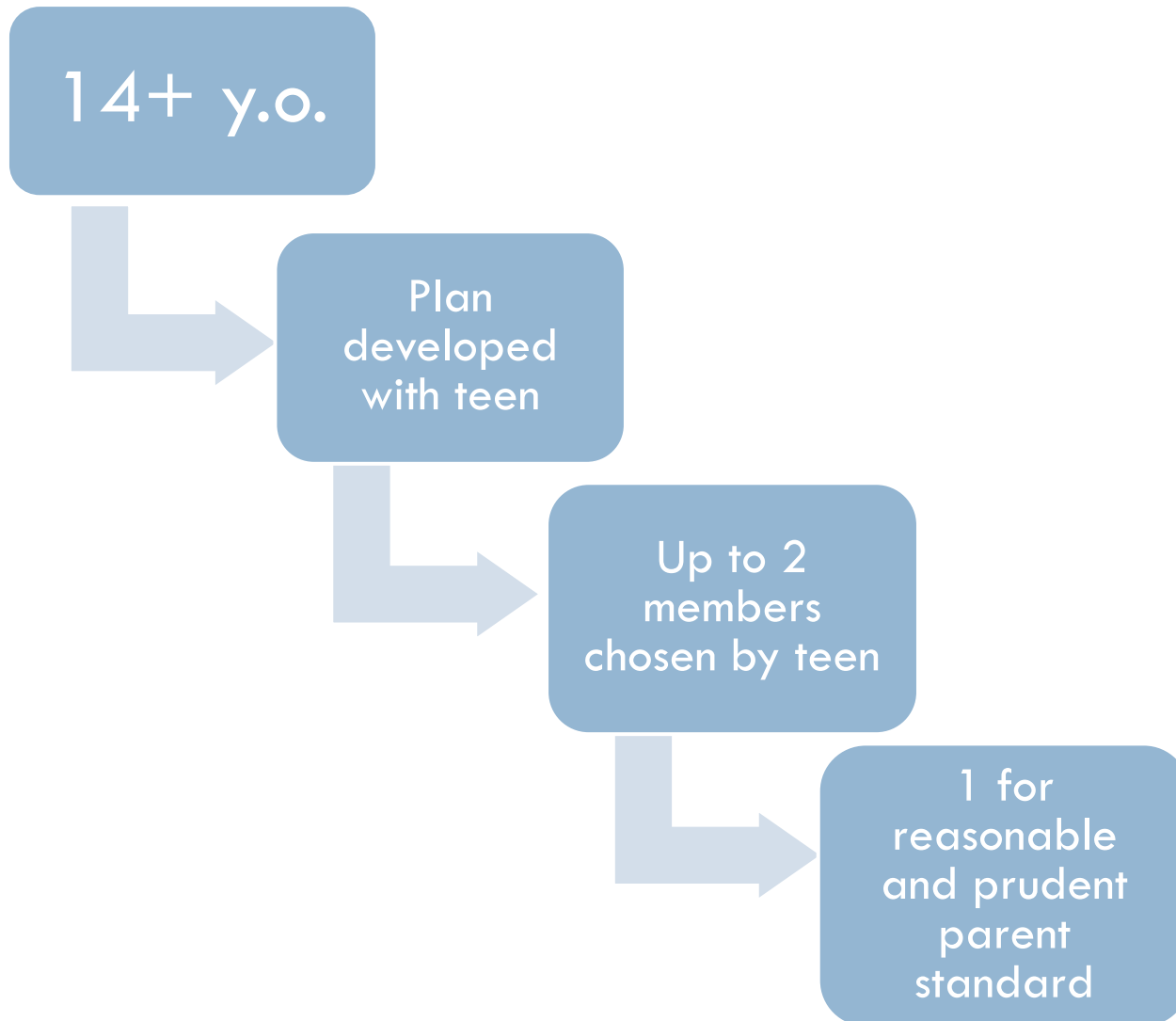
Party

Youth
Involvement
in Case



12 y.o.
7B-906.1
notice/TPR
order

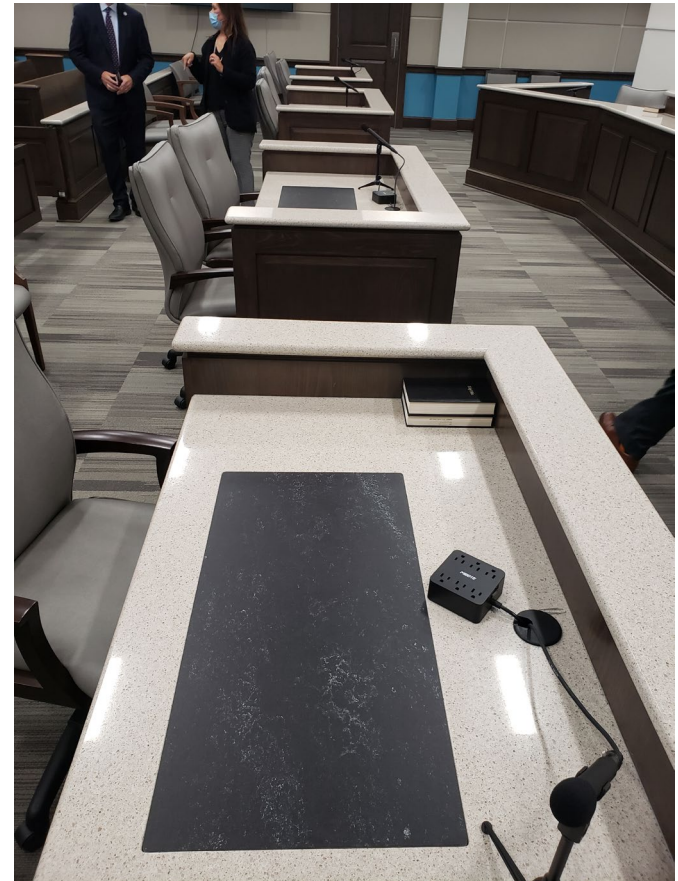
Youth Involvement in Case Planning



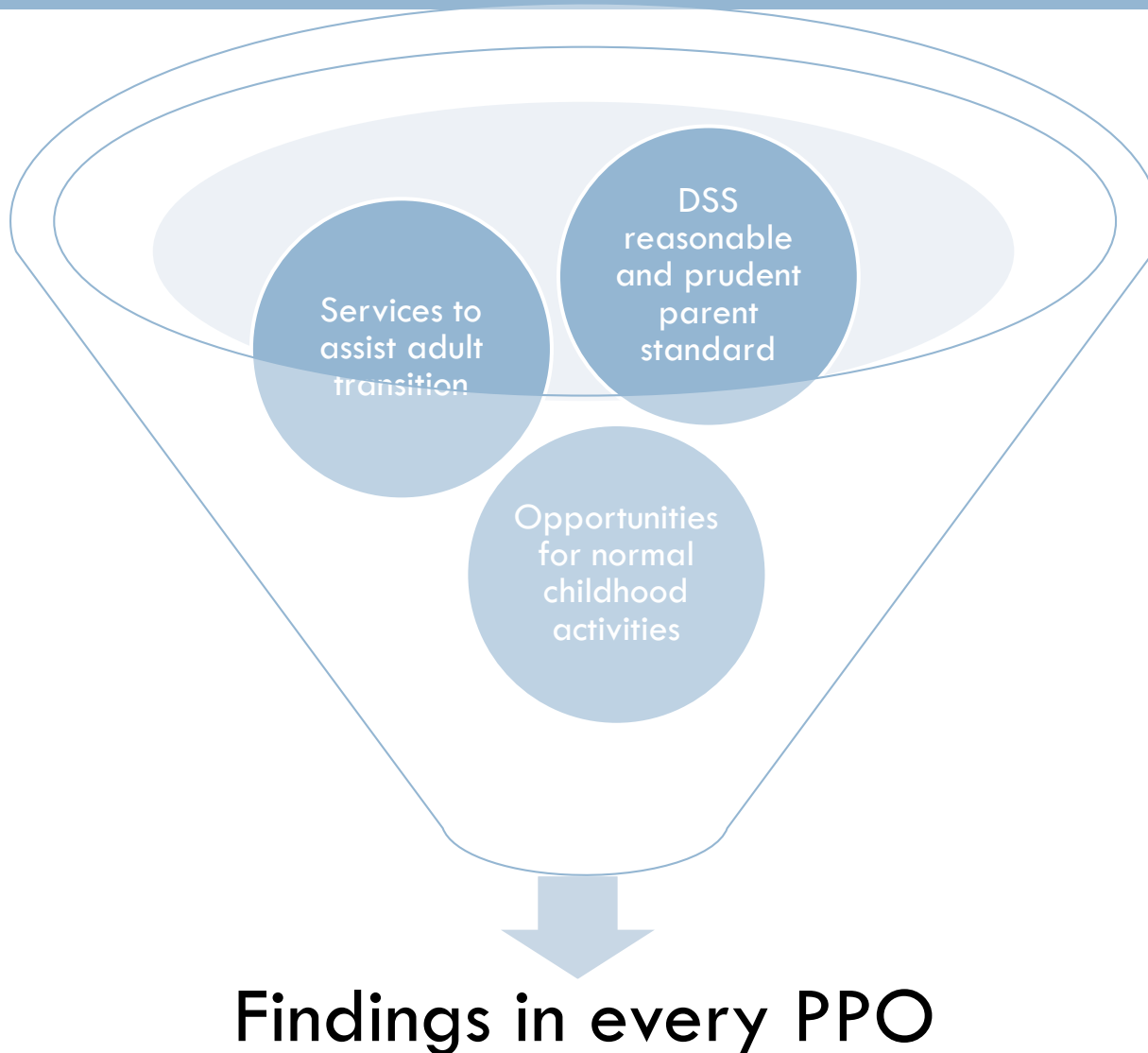
What is bad advice to give to a judge
about these cases?

Treat Them All The
Same

Court Participation?



Age 14+ in DSS Custody



Reasonable and Prudent Parent

G.S. 131D-10.2A

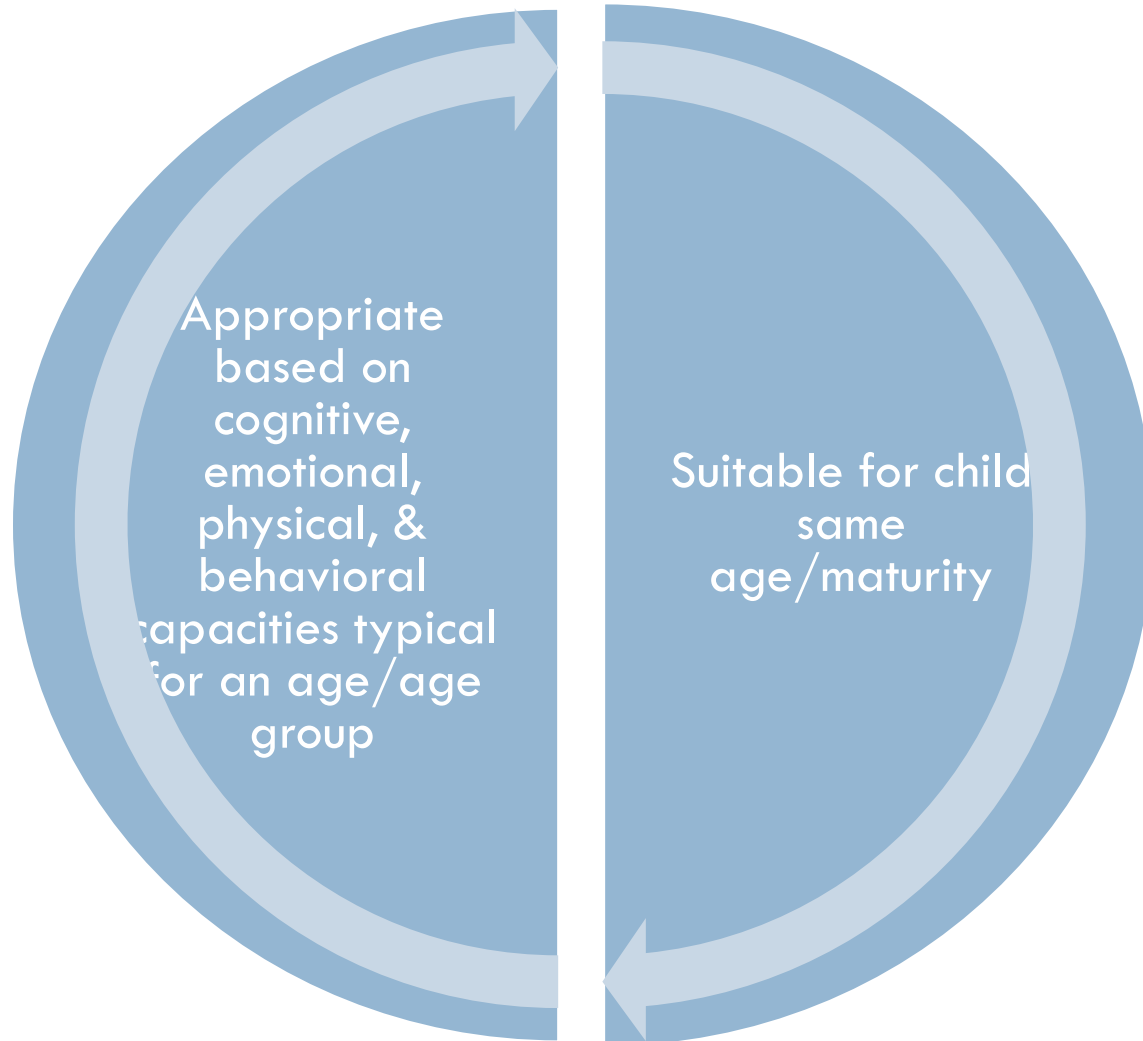
Careful and sensible parental decisions



Health, safety,
best interests

Encourage emotional &
developmental growth

Age/Developmentally Appropriate Activities



DSS Custody

DSS Makes Decisions
generally made by
custodian unless
prohibited by
federal law

But Placement Provider Decides

Normal Childhood Activities

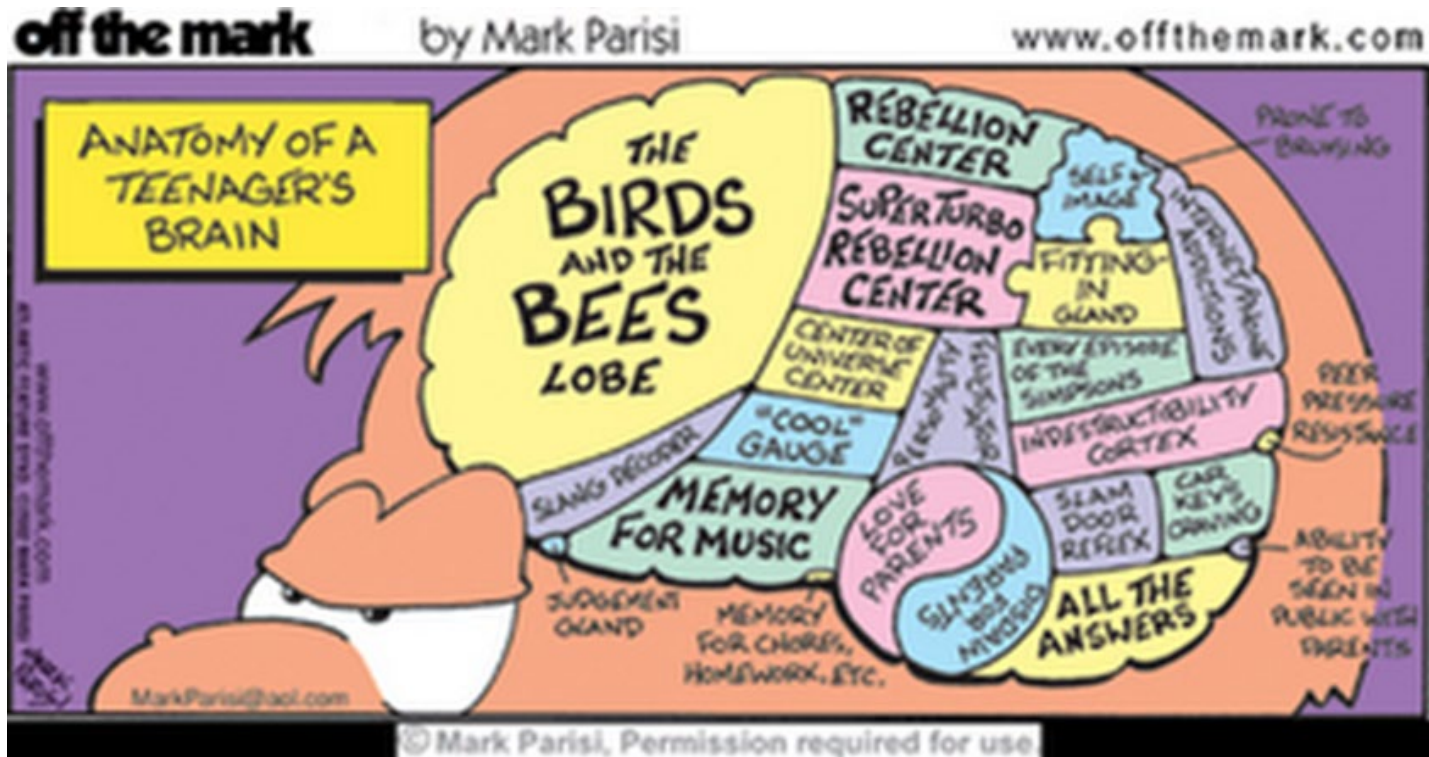
(extracurricular, enrichment,
social)

Unless court orders not BIC, then...

Normal
Childhood
Activities

(extracurricular, enrichment,
social)

“Normal childhood activities”



Extracurriculars, Enrichment

- Sports
- Clubs
- Field Trips
- Prom
- Youth Groups
- Volunteering
- Music/Art
- Cooking Classes
- Financial literacy
- Driver's Ed

Driver's Permit: 15-17 y.o.

1. Driver's Ed
 2. Pass written test
 3. Driver eligibility certificate or a HS diploma (or equivalent)
- G.S. 20-11(i), application:
- Teen and parent or guardian (or approved by parent/guardian)
 - Legal custody of DSS, signed by teen and
 - GAL or attorney advocate
 - DSS
 - Court*



What does a driver's permit lead to?



Employment

- G.S. 95-25.5: Youth Employment
 - Youth employment certificate
 - 16-17 (11 p.m. – 5 a.m. restriction/school night)
 - 14-15
 - 7 – 7 school/ 7 -9 summer
 - 3 hours max school/18 hours a week (school)
 - 8 hours max / 40 hours a week (no school)
 - 12 -13 (no certificate needed)
 - Newspaper delivery (3 hours/day max)
- Babysitting?
 - 13 or younger, DSS or court approval (per policy)

Social



Dating



Doctor: Are you sexually active? **Me:** Well....
death glare from Mom
Me: NO. NOT AT ALL.
WHAT IS SEX?

□ G.S. 90-21.5

- Minor may consent to a licensed NC physician
- Services for prevention, diagnosis, treatment
 - STI/other communicable diseases
 - Pregnancy

■ Teen births (15-19 y.o.)

■ 2011:	11,070
■ 2016:	7,190
■ 2021:	5,474



Technology



Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard



What's Happening While Youth In Care

- **Case Planning**

Court Consideration

- **Permanency Planning Orders**

17 year old, every PPH



- Court shall inquire
- Whether teen has copies of documents
 - ▣ Birth certificate, social security card
 - ▣ Health insurance information
 - ▣ Driver's license/other ID
 - ▣ Education/medical/other records requested by juvenile
 - ▣ Participation in Foster Care 18-21
- Identify person/agency assist teen in obtaining the documents

Federal law starting at 14 y.o.

- Annual copy of any consumer report for child
- Receives assistance interpreting and correcting



DSS report to the court

- Efforts to identify/secure viable placement at 18
- List of adult resources for when 18
- Contact info re: Foster Care 18-21
- If appropriate, info about how to maintain contact with family when turn 17
- A point of contact for Medicaid and maintaining physical/mental health services provided when 18
- Info about educational, vocational or jobs plans for when 18

APPLA, G.S. 7B-912(c), (d)

- ▣ Findings of each before plan ordered
 - 16 or 17 years old
 - DSS made diligent efforts to permanently place w/parent or relative, guardianship, or adoption
 - Compelling reasons exist that not in BIC to place permanently w/ ...
 - APPLA is best permanent plan
 - If approved, after questioning teen, the teen's desired permanency outcome

Foster Care 18-21



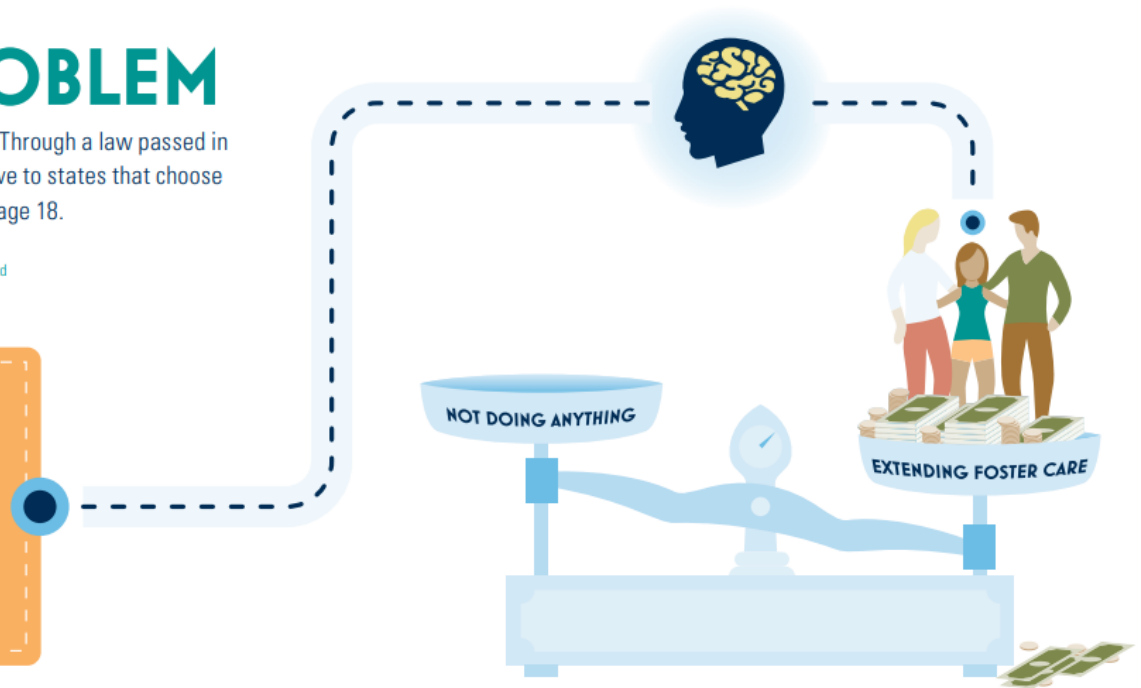
A SOLVABLE PROBLEM

Despite these realities, there are reasons for optimism. Through a law passed in 2008³, the federal government offers a financial incentive to states that choose to extend foster care services for young people beyond age 18.

3. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008* (P.L. 110-351)

🔍 ADOLESCENT BRAINS

WHAT'S MORE, THE LATEST RESEARCH ON THE ADOLESCENT BRAIN PROVES THAT THE TEEN BRAIN IS STILL DEVELOPING, PROVIDING A 'SECOND CHANCE' FOR KIDS TO OVERCOME ADVERSITY.



Who?

In foster care at
18

Adopted
between 16-18

Guardianship
ordered
between 16-18

Eligibility Criteria

- Full-time Student/Accepted
- Participating in a program or activity designed to promote or remove barriers to employment
- Working 80+ hours per month or
- Medical condition/disability

Voluntary Placement Agreement

- Placement
- Foster care or adoption payments: \$810/month
- intended to pay for
 - ▣ food
 - ▣ shelter
 - ▣ clothing
 - ▣ personal incidentals, and
 - ▣ ordinary and necessary school and transportation expenses

Transition Living Plan

DSS-5096a

Youth/Young Adult Name: _____ DOB: _____

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services | Division of Social Services
PART A: TRANSITIONAL LIVING PLAN FOR YOUTH/YOUNG ADULTS IN FOSTER CARE

Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. This form must be completed within 30 days following the youth's 14th birthday, or when the youth enters foster care, if age 14 or older; and updated every 90 days thereafter.2. The Transition Plan (Part B) must be completed 90 days prior to the youth's 18th birthday. The youth must be informed of his/her option to continue in Foster Care 18 to 21 at this time. Note: If the youth opts to continue in Foster Care 18 to 21, the Transition Plan must be completed <u>and</u> the goals of the TLP (Section I.B) must be updated to reflect how the youth plans to meet eligibility requirements of the program.
Foster Care 18 to 21:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. If the young adult opts to continue in Foster Care 18 to 21, the TLP (Section I – III) must be updated within 30 days of the young adult's 18th birthday, and every 90 days thereafter.2. If the young adult is over age 18 and wishes to re-enter into Foster Care 18 to 21, the TLP (Sections I – III) of this form must be completed within 30 days of re-entry, and every 90 days thereafter.3. The Transition Plan (Part C) must be completed 90 days prior to the young adult's 21st birthday, or planned exit from Foster Care 18 to 21.

I. TRANSITIONAL LIVING PLAN

Case Worker Name: _____ Case Worker Phone Number: (____) _____

DSS must conduct



Monthly contacts



Quarterly in-home
assessment of living
arrangement



Quarterly transition
support team
meetings



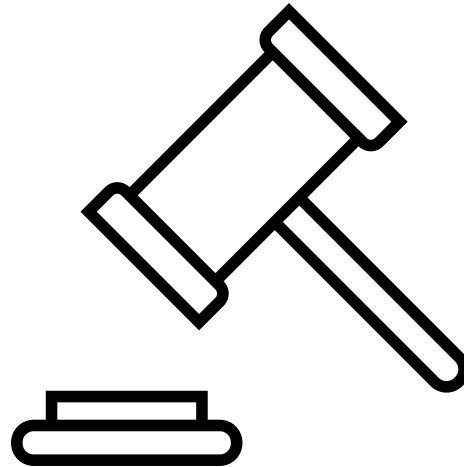
Yearly credit checks

Court Reviews, 7B-910.1

- DSS and young adult only
- W/in 90 days of agreement and as requested
- Findings
 - ▣ Whether placement is BIC
 - ▣ Services provided (or should be)
 - to improve placement
 - If relevant, further educational/vocational ambitions

Termination of agreement

DSS must go to court if young adult objects



Termination

NC Child Welfare Manual Permanency Planning

- Temporary breaks in participation (60 days) or absence from placement (14 days) does not automatically disqualify from program
- Criminal activity
- Not engage in services

NC Child Welfare Manual

PERMANENCY PLANNING SERVICES

Foster Care 18 to 21

Protocol – What you must do	Guidance
<p>Foster Care 18 to 21 is a program that offers young adults opportunities to continue foster care placement and transition to independence with county child welfare agency supervision. There are some young adults who may not be ready to exit foster care upon turning 18 years of age, and may choose to stay in Foster Care 18 to 21 as long as certain requirements are met. Young adults who exit foster care at age 18 are also able to return to the Foster Care 18 to 21 program at a later date as long as they have not reached their 21st birthday.</p>	

Order: Appealable?

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA		▶ <i>NC-JOIN No.</i>	▶ <i>File No.</i>
_____ County		In The General Court Of Justice District Court Division	
IN THE MATTER OF		JUVENILE ORDER	
<i>Name And Address Of Juvenile</i>			
_____ _____ _____			
<i>Juvenile's Date Of Birth</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Date Of Hearing</i>	
_____	_____	_____	
The following persons were present at the hearing:			

G.S. Ch. 7B

Remember

They look like adults
but they are limited by
cognitive development
that continues into their
early 20s