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*NC's Extended Foster Care Program:  
Foster Care 18 to 21*



# *What is Foster Care 18 to 21?*



An opportunity for young adults, who age out of foster care at age 18, to voluntarily agree to continue receiving foster care services, while transitioning into adulthood

## ***The purpose of Foster Care 18 to 21 is to:***

- Assist young adults in transitioning into adulthood while moving towards greater independence
- Meet the developmental needs of young adults who have aged out of foster care
- Advocate for what young adults state they need
- Provide a young adult driven program that allows former foster youth the independence other young adults their age have such as:
  1. Developing meaningful adult relationships and supports
  2. Making their own decisions and learning from their mistakes
  3. Transitioning into adulthood with a cushion of support



# *Foster Care 18 to 21: The Benefits*

- Increases opportunities for success and overall well-being
- Creates positive adult connections and a network of support in early adulthood
- Increase in high school graduates, and enrollment in post-secondary education among former foster youth
- Decrease in criminal activity and homelessness among former foster youth
- Experience independence while having a “safety net” to fall back on
- Ongoing support during the critical transition into self-sufficiency



## Video:

<http://www.wral.com/advocates-extending-foster-care-to-age-21-could-foster-successful-adults/16397223/>



# Background and Legal Basis

- **2008 Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act (H.R. 6893/P.L. 110-351)** allows states to receive federal Title IV-E reimbursement for costs associated with supports for young adults to remain in foster care up to age 21.
  - <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-110publ351/pdf/PLAW-110publ351.pdf>
- **N.C.G.S. § 108A-48** extends the provision of foster care benefits to young adults between 18 years of age and up to 21 years of age.
  - [http://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/PDF/BySection/Chapter\\_108A/GS\\_108A-48.pdf](http://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/PDF/BySection/Chapter_108A/GS_108A-48.pdf)
- **N.C.G.S. § 131D-10.2B** provides authority under which a young adult who turns 18 years of age while in foster care can continue to receive foster care services until the age of 21 through the *Foster Care 18 to 21* program.
  - [http://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/PDF/BySection/Chapter\\_131D/GS\\_131D-10.2B/pdf](http://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/PDF/BySection/Chapter_131D/GS_131D-10.2B/pdf)





# *Background and Legal Basis, cont.*

- **N.C.G.S. § 7B-910.1** authorizes the court to review voluntary foster care placements for young adults in the *Foster Care 18 to 21* program.
  - [http://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/PDF/BySection/Chapter\\_7B/GS\\_7B-910.1.pdf](http://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/PDF/BySection/Chapter_7B/GS_7B-910.1.pdf)
- **N.C.G.S. § 7B-401.1** provides that the young adult and the director of the department of social services are parties to the court's review under N.C.G.S. § 7B-910.1.
  - [http://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/PDF/BySection/Chapter\\_7B/GS\\_7B-401.1.pdf](http://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/PDF/BySection/Chapter_7B/GS_7B-401.1.pdf)



	CARS	Foster Care 18 to 21
<b>Funding Source:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County and State</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Title IV-E and State</li> </ul>
<b>Program Eligibility:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary Education</li> <li>• Post-Secondary or Vocational Education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary Education</li> <li>• Post-Secondary or Vocational Education</li> <li>• Program or Activity designed to remove barriers to employment</li> <li>• Employment</li> <li>• Medical Condition / Disability</li> </ul>
<b>Placement Options:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licensed Placements Only</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licensed or Unlicensed Placements</li> </ul>
<b>Court Requirements:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No Court Requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required 90-day Review Hearing</li> </ul>
<b>County Participation:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory</li> </ul>



# *Existing CARS Agreements:*

- Existing CARS Agreements will continue to be honored until terminated.
- There will be no new CARS Agreements as of January 1, 2017.
- Young adults who terminate their CARS Agreements can later enter into Foster Care 18 to 21, as long as the program eligibility criteria is met.



# Program Eligibility Criteria

## Foster Care 18 to 21



- In order to receive *Foster Care 18 to 21* benefits and services the young adult must meet at least one of the following criteria (N.C.G.S. 108A-48(c)):
  1. Enrolled in high school or a program leading to an equivalent credential; or
  2. Enrolled in an institution that provides postsecondary or vocational education; or
  3. Participating in a program or activity designed to promote or remove barriers to employment; or
  4. Employed for at least 80 hours per month; or
  5. Incapable of completing the educational or employment requirements due to a medical condition or a disability.
- The young adult must also:
  - Have been in foster care upon his/her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday; and
  - Be 18 years of age, but not yet 21 years of age;
  - Enter into a Voluntary Placement Agreement with a county child welfare agency and agree to abide by the provisions of the agreement; and
  - Agree to reside in an approved placement.





# *Funding*

## Foster Care 18 to 21

- All young adults receiving Foster Care 18 to 21 services are eligible to receive monthly foster care maintenance payments.
- These payments will be the standard board rate, and will include standardized rates for child placing agencies and residential foster facilities.
- Available funding: Federal Title IV-E funds and State Foster Home Funds (SFHF).
- County Child Welfare Agencies are held harmless from contributing 50% of the nonfederal share.
- Each entry into the program is considered a new foster care episode.
- Eligibility determinations must be completed upon every entry/re-entry.
- Determinations are based solely on the young adult without regard to the family in which they were removed from as a minor, or relatives the young adult may be currently residing with.



# *Foster Care Maintenance Payments*

Foster Care 18 to 21

- Payments can be made to a licensed or unlicensed placement.
- Payments can be made directly to the young adult, a rental agency/landlord, or a relative/family friend.
- Maintenance payments can be used for: Room and Board/Rent, Food, Transportation Costs, Utilities, and other Living Expenses.
- Young adults receiving SSI/SSA, ETVs and NC Reach are still eligible for monthly foster care maintenance payments.



# *County Oversight of Placements*

## Foster Care 18 to 21

### **Transitional Living Plans:**

- An individualized plan developed in partnership with the youth/young adult
- Plan documents goals, services, and independent living skills that will assist the young adult in transitioning into self-sufficiency

### **Transition Support Team (TST) Meetings:**

- A team of supportive adults who assist the young adult in developing goals and identifying services
- Young adult driven

### **Monthly Contacts:**

- Within a three month cycle, 2 out of 3 visits must be face-to-face
- Quarterly in-home assessments

### **Independent Living Skills:**

- Housing, Education/Employment, Money Management, Meal Planning, Housekeeping, Transportation, Healthcare, etc.

# *Placement Options*

## Foster Care 18 to 21

### A. FOSTER CARE HOME / FACILITY

- Family Foster Home
- Therapeutic Foster Home
- Group Home

### B. COLLEGE / UNIVERSITY DORMITORY

- On-Campus Dormitories
- On-Campus Apartments
- College Co-Ops

### C. SEMI-SUPERVISED INDEPENDENT LIVING ARRANGEMENT

- Shared Housing (Apartment, Townhome, House)
- Non-College Dormitory
- Host Home
- Extended Relative or Family Friend



# *Semi-supervised Independent Living Settings*

## Foster Care 18 to 21

- A non-licensed, least restrictive living arrangement with approval and ongoing oversight by a county child welfare agency.
- Young adults can live on their own, while still receiving support services to help them become independent and self-sufficient.
- Placements should be selected based on the young adult's best interest, and an individual assessment of his or her needs, goals, and personal preference.
- This type of placement is appropriate for young adults who are:
  - *High-functioning*
  - *Responsible*
  - *Developmentally Sound*





# *Semi-Supervised Independent Living*

## Foster Care 18 to 21

- **Assessing the Young Adult's Readiness:**
  - Budgeting and Financial Management
  - Tenant Responsibilities
  - Daily Tasks
  - Safety and Behavior
- **Assessing the Placement:**
  - Living Conditions
  - Utilities
  - Safety Hazards



# *Intercounty and Interstate*

## *Foster Care 18 to 21*

*Young adults can be placed out-of-county or out-of-state for the purposes of Foster Care 18 to 21 services.*

### **Intercounty Placements and Transfers:**

- Young adults can contact the county child welfare agency in the county in which they were previously in foster care, **OR** the county in which they are currently residing, to initiate services.
- An Intercounty Agreement (addendum to VPA) must be completed at the time the young adult signs the Voluntary Placement Agreement.

### **Interstate Placements:**

- ICPC regulations must be followed when placing young adults receiving Foster Care 18 to 21 services across state lines.
- Receiving states may or may not agree to provide supervision and services for this population.
- If the receiving state is unwilling to provide supervision and services through ICPC, the county child welfare agency is responsible for ensuring supervision and services are provided to the young adult.



# *Terminations and Re-Entries*

## Foster Care 18 to 21

Foster Care 18 to 21 benefits and services must be terminated when:

- The young adult reaches 21 years of age;
- The young adult no longer meets eligibility criteria\*;
- The young adult requests that services be terminated;
- The court has determined the young adult is not meeting the goals of the Transitional Living Plan and/or the young adult has violated the Voluntary Placement Agreement for Foster Care 18 to 21; or
- The young adult has been absent from his/her approved placement for more than 14 days without prior approval from the county department of social services.

Re-Entry into Foster Care 18 to 21 can occur if the young adult:

- is at least 18 years of age, but not yet 21 years of age;
- was in foster care upon turning 18 years of age;
- is meeting at least one of the eligibility requirements for the program;
- is willing to enter into a VPA for Foster Care 18 to 21 and abide by the provisions of the agreement; and
- is willing to reside in an approved placement.



# *New Forms*

## Foster Care 18 to 21

1. Voluntary Placement Agreement for Foster Care 18 to 21 (DSS-5097)
  - <https://www2.ncdhhs.gov/info/olm/forms/dss/DSS-5097.pdf>
2. Transitional Living Plan (TLP) (DSS-5096 Parts A-D)
  - <https://www2.ncdhhs.gov/info/olm/forms/dss/DSS-5096a.pdf> (Part A)
  - <https://www2.ncdhhs.gov/info/olm/forms/dss/DSS-5096b.pdf> (Part B)
  - <https://www2.ncdhhs.gov/info/olm/forms/dss/DSS-5096c.pdf> (Part C)
  - <https://www2.ncdhhs.gov/info/olm/forms/dss/DSS-5096d.pdf> (Part D)
3. Monthly Contact Record for Foster Care 18 to 21 (DSS-5098)
  - <https://www2.ncdhhs.gov/info/olm/forms/dss/DSS-5098.pdf>
4. Determination of Foster Care 18 to 21 Benefits and/or Medical Assistance Only (DSS-5120E)
  - <https://www2.ncdhhs.gov/info/olm/forms/dss/DSS-5120E.pdf>
5. Placement Agreement (DSS-5099)
  - <https://www2.ncdhhs.gov/info/olm/forms/dss/DSS-5099.pdf>
6. Semi-Supervised Independent Living Assessment Tool (DSS-5100)
  - <https://www2.ncdhhs.gov/info/olm/forms/dss/DSS-5100.pdf>



# Values and Principals of Foster Care 18 to 21

*The success of the program depends on all those involved*

- **The following are the values and principles that should guide our work with young adults in Foster Care 18 to 21:**
  - **Ensure that all young adults establish and maintain permanent lifelong connections to caring and committed adults**
  - **Allow young adults to gain real life experiences with independence, and allow them to learn from their mistakes**
  - **Work in partnership with young adults to develop and reach independent living goals**
  - **Empower young adult to take ownership of planning and developing goals, while learning decision-making skills along the way**
  - **Be a safety net for young adults during their transition to self-sufficiency, so they can successfully live as independent adults in the community**





# From Former Foster Youth:

## REASONS TO LEAVE FOSTER CARE AT AGE 18

- To Reconnect with Family
- Just Done!
- Flexibility
- Restrictions
- Do What I Want
- You're Ready
- Family
- Inconveniences
- Misinformation or NO Information
- First Chance to Make Choice
- Intimidation of Court Process
- Placement

## REASONS TO STAY IN FOSTER CARE 18 TO 21

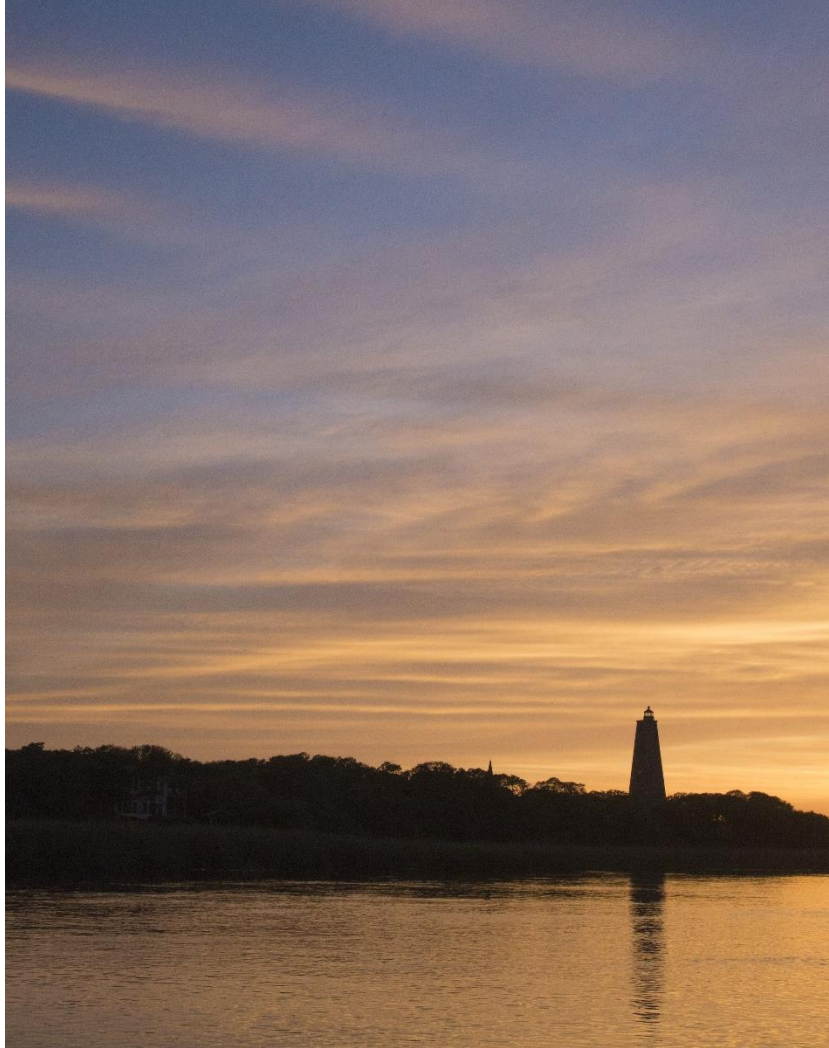
- Structure
- Education
- Resources
- Safety Net
- Not Ready
- Stability
- Gives More Time
- Financial / Parenting Support
- Sibling Contact
- Relationships
- Experiences / Exposure
- Preparation



# *Questions/Comments/Feedback*



# *Contact Information*



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