

HAPPY NEW YEAR

FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE YOUTH TOGETHER (FAAYT)

UPCOMING FAAYT MEETINGS:

- January 16th (3 Square, 4190 N. Pecos Road LV NV 89115)
- February 20th
- March 20th
- April 17th
- May 15th

****FAAYT is moving; please contact Rebecca Lucente for meeting location details.**

As the new year begins, FAAYT is also seeking new membership and leaders.

FAAYT is Clark County's Youth Advisory Board. The group formally meets once per month and is comprised of current and former foster and adopted youth, 13 to 21 years of age. Their mission is to inspire, empower, and to give a voice to those in foster care, those aging out, and former foster youth.

FAAYT also provides youth the opportunity to interact and socialize with their peers through participation in secondary activities, outside of the normal meeting times. Members are eager to plan such

activities that contribute to normalcy. In December, the group enjoyed an evening of lights, visiting the Ethel M's cactus garden and viewing the dancing lights of the "Home on Robindale". FAAYT will give back during the months of January and February. Members will volunteer their time at 3 Square, preparing meals for those in need. During Spring break, FAAYT youth will "fly high" during an event at Gravady Extreme Sports and explore the deep blue sea during an outing at SeaQuest Interactive Aquarium.

If you have any questions regarding FAAYT participation, please contact Rebecca Lucente at (702) 455-0573.



FAAYT HOLIDAY PARTY

On November 20th, FAAYT sponsored a cosmic skating party. Approximately 50 youth showed up to skate and hang out. Caregivers were also invited to stay and enjoy the event. All feasted on pizza and wings while plenty of beverages were provided to quench that thirst created from skating. It was great to sit back and watch these youth interact and catch up with each other.

FAAYT acknowledges the significance of these social gatherings. They provide youth in care the opportunity to come together, put the stressors of child welfare on the back burner, and "just be". Many youth were observed laughing loudly together, helping each other learn to skate, and chasing each other around the rink. FAAYT looks forward to planning the next big event for their peers in care.

INDEPENDENT LIVING HOT TOPICS

The Independent Living unit has been diligently at work ensuring that there is consistency within our practice. As youth create their Independent Living Transition Plans, you will hear your IL worker discuss topics such as: credit reports, a health care power of attorney, and legal documentation.

The Independent Living unit is responsible for monitoring credit reports to ensure no discrepancies exist or credit is not being abused in any way. The state of Nevada provides annual credit reports to the Independent Living unit for those youth assigned. IL will provide copies of the report for your review. If there are any concerns, IL will submit a request for investigation to the Attorney General's office. Upon the completion of an investigation, the discrepancy is typically removed from the youth's credit report. As

youth transition from care, they will be instructed on how to obtain a free annual credit report.

Another topic you will discuss with your IL worker is that of a Health Care Power of Attorney (HCPOA). As youth transition from care, the responsibilities of a HCPOA will be reviewed and youth will be advised of their right to appoint one if desired. Legal HCPOA documents are provided to the youth by the IL worker for their review. The youth can choose to review and execute the document with their appointed CAP attorney or receive assistance from IL.

Finally, the Independent Living unit wants to ensure every youth in care has access to their legal documents. DFS orders an original birth certificate and social security card for every youth in care. These remain on file with the De-

partment; however, youth can access them to obtain a state issued ID or employment purposes. IL is dedicated to ensuring that youth obtain their NV state ID by the age of 16. The Department is able to lend youth's original documentation to caregivers for this purpose. Your IL worker can facilitate this process. As youth approach 18 years of age, they will receive the Department's original documentation upon their transition from care.

If you have any questions regarding the information above, please contact IL supervisor Ariel Racine at (702) 455-1184.

POST SECONDARY EDUCATION FINANCIAL RESOURCES

As youth begin the second half of the school year, many are considering "life after high school". For some, that may mean a 4 year university, community college, or a trade/technological education. Regardless of their plans, there are financial resources to assist. The Educational Training Voucher (ETV) is one of these.

Youth who have aged out of foster care can receive the ETV financial assistance, up to \$5,000 per year. This financial assistance is also available to youth who were adopted, or established guardianship, from foster care on or after their 16th birthday. In order to receive the educational voucher, you must attend an accredited school, at least on a part time basis, and maintain a grade point average of 2.0 and/or make satisfactory progress in your education goals. The IL worker can assist youth in accessing the ETV application or they can be found at: <http://dcfs.nv.gov/Programs/CWS/IL/ETV>.

Another financial resource available to youth is the Foster Care to Success Scholarship. This scholarship application will be opening January 1, 2018 and close March 31st. To be eligible, youth would have had to be in foster care for 12 consecutive months leading up to their 18th birthday, or have been adopted or placed into legal guardianship after their 16th birthday, under the age of 25, and have been accepted or expect to be accepted into an accredited, Pell-eligible institute. The scholarship awards \$2,500-\$5,000 based on need and merit. More information can be found at: www.fc2success.org/our-programs/information-for-students.

Please note that this is not a comprehensive list of financial resources available to youth who are pursuing post secondary education. For more information. Please contact your assigned IL worker.