



DYFS Adolescent Services Guide

New Jersey Department of Children and Families
Division of Youth and Family Services
Office of Adolescent Practice and Permanency
CC #900
September 2010

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INTRODUCTION

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF) remains committed to providing services and supports to adolescents and young adults, up until their 21st birthday. As we work with them, we must always remember our responsibility to actively engage them in all phases of case planning and decision making. Our ultimate goal is to empower our adolescents to become self-sufficient and encourage them to take a leadership role as they transition from the child welfare system to adulthood.

Most of the services described within this guide are available to youth between the ages of 14 and 21; however some of the programs and services have narrower age limits, and some extend to youth older than 21. Many services are available not only to adolescents in a DYFS paid placement, but also to youth who are homeless or at risk of being homeless.

The services and supports listed in this guide are provided not only by DCF, via contracts with community based private non-profit agencies, but also by other government entities.

Please familiarize yourself with the type of services offered through a particular program before making a referral. For example, many of the housing programs integrate Life Skills Training into their housing services. Therefore it would not be necessary for a youth in a housing program that includes Life Skills Training to also be referred to a stand alone Life Skills Training program.

The Institute for Families of the Rutgers School of Social Work is contracted to design and maintain our website www.TransitionsforYouth.org. This website is a source of information about services and programs for young people. The site also offers assistance to child welfare personnel, parents, service providers, and others interested in supporting the success of our young people.

Additional resource guides are available on the DCF portal page and the DCF Website. Such guides entitled Substitute Care Directory and the Division of Prevention and Community Partnership' Community Program Directory may be most useful.

ADOLESCENT PERMANENCY

As part of our mission and case practice, we are committed to achieving safety, well-being, and permanency for all youth under our care. Achieving permanency is just as important for an adolescent as it is for a young child, as permanency or connections to safe, caring adults contribute to one's overall stability and well being as a self-sufficient adult.

While adoption is the most legally secure permanency alternative for any youth who cannot be reunified with his parents, we recognize that there are other options which may be considered for adolescents such as Kinship Legal Guardianship (KLG) or the completion of a signed agreement (*Permanency Pact*) between the adolescent and a supportive, caring adult of his or her choosing.

Permanency planning is an integral part of ongoing case planning that Division staff must do with all youth in care. This includes discussions with the adolescent regarding the people who are important to him in his life both now and in the past. It means thoroughly reviewing or *mining* the case record to uncover relatives and others from the adolescent's past who were interested in him or who might have been ruled out in the past. One's circumstances can change over the years and an adolescent's needs are different from those of a young child, so a relative who might not have been the best choice when the adolescent was young could be an excellent source for an older child.

Facilitating legal permanency and/or connections to a circle of caring adults is an important role of all DCF staff working with adolescents and young adults. However, we have contracted with the following agencies to provide intensive permanency services to a limited number of older adolescents, who are at risk of aging out of the system with no caring connections in place.

Life-Long Connections – a **Robin's Nest** permanency program that serves DYFS adolescents in Camden, Gloucester, Cumberland, Salem, Cape May and Atlantic Counties.

Youth Permanency – a **Family Service** permanency program that serves Camden, Burlington and Mercer Counties.

Youth Permanency – **Children's Aid and Family Service** (CAFS) permanency program works with DYFS youth who are currently in CAFS programs in addition to DYFS adolescents in Bergen, Hudson, Essex, Passaic, and Union Counties.

The **National Adoption Center of Philadelphia** is contracted to work with legally free adolescents in Camden, Burlington, Cumberland, Salem, and Gloucester counties, who **are not active with either the 100 Longest Waiting Teens or with a Child Specific Recruiter**.

Please Note:

All referrals for these programs must be sent to Niambi London, Office of Adolescent Practice and Permanency via fax, (609) 984-0507 or email niambi.london@dcf.state.nj.us.

LIFE SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMS

Life Skills Training offers instruction in daily living domains such as budgeting and financial management, communication, decision making, self care, and housing. Assistance in obtaining a high school diploma, career exploration, vocational training, job placement, and job retention are also included.

Case workers can refer adolescents, who are at least 14 years of age and in a DYFS paid placement, for Life Skills training. If adolescents are in a DYFS sponsored living arrangement or a congregate care setting, they may be receiving this training as part of their ongoing programming; if they are, then they need not be referred to the stand alone Life Skills training programs. There are only a limited number of Life Skills training slots contracted for in each county. All Adolescent case managers are in the process of being trained on how to administer and interpret the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment Tool, and the expectation is that each worker will be responsible for teaching life skills to their adolescents as an integral part of case planning and decision making.

Following is the list of contracted Life Skills training providers:

Atlantic County	Atlantic County Youth Advocacy Program (YAP)	(609) 345-7333
Bergen County	Care Plus NJ "Homeward Bound"	(201) 265-8200
Burlington County	Burlington County Youth Advocacy Program (YAP)	(609) 261-9300
	Crossroads Programs, Inc. "Just For You"	(609) 880-0210
Camden County	Camden County Youth Advocacy Program (YAP)	(856) 541-4300
	Crossroads Programs, Inc. "Just For You"	(609) 880-0210
Cumberland/Cape May Counties		
	Cumberland & Cape May Counties Youth Advocacy Program (YAP)	(856) 691-1540
Essex County	Multicultural Community Services	(732) 650-0330
	Independence: A Family of Services	(973) 372 5601 x213
	The Bridge	(973) 589-8827
Gloucester/Salem Counties	Gloucester/Salem Youth Advocacy Program (YAP)	(856) 848-0165
Hudson County	Urban League of Hudson County "Life Skills Program"	(201) 451-8888
Hunterdon County	Catholic Charities	(908) 782-7905
Mercer County	LifeTies, Inc. "T.I.L.T."	(609) 671-0040
Middlesex/Monmouth Counties	Multicultural Community Services	(732) 650-0330
Morris/Sussex/ Warren Counties	Plaid House, Inc. "Aging Out Program"	(973) 285-1982

Ocean County Preferred Children’s Services “Project Independence” (732) 367-1352

Passaic County Paterson YMCA “Aging Out Youth” Program (973) 684-2320 x55

Somerset County

Somerset Home for Temporarily Displaced Children “Pathways Program” (908) 526-4567

Union County Community Access Unlimited “Transitional Service Program” (908) 354-3040

AFTERCARE PROGRAMS

The Aftercare agencies provide intensive case management and support services to young adults between the ages of 18 and 22. The Aftercare agency will begin working with the young adult prior to DYFS closing the youth’s case, and can continue to work with him or her after the case is closed with DYFS. Aftercare provides the young adult with assistance in obtaining employment, housing and post-secondary education. These programs can also access flexible funds (wrap around funds) to enable the young adult to obtain the supports, which will assist them in transitioning from the child welfare system to self-sufficiency and stability.

It is recommended that adolescents complete life skills training before being referred for this service.

A young adult who has left Aftercare and is not yet 21 can return to the Aftercare agency for an additional short-term case management services, information, referral and wrap around funds.

DYFS contracts with the following non-profit agencies throughout the state to provide aftercare services:

Atlantic County Robin’s Nest, Inc “On My Own” (856) 881-8689

Bergen County Care Plus NJ (201) 265-8200

Burlington County Family Service “On My Own” (609) 953-6800

Camden County Family Service of Burlington County “On My Own” (609) 953-6800

Cape May/Cumberland/Gloucester/Salem Counties

Robin’s Nest, Inc. “On My Own” (856) 881-8689

Essex County Independence: A Family of Services (973) 372-5601 x213

Hudson County Urban League of Hudson County (201) 451-8888

Hunterdon/ Somerset/Warren Counties

Catholic Charities “RAPS” (908) 782-7905

Mercer County	LifeTies, Inc. "T.I.L.T."	(609) 671-0040
Middlesex/Monmouth Counties	Multicultural Community Services	(732) 650-0330
Morris/Sussex Counties Catholic Charities	"Crossroads"	(908) 454-2074
Ocean County	Preferred Children's Services "Project Independence	(732) 367-1352
Passaic County	Paterson YMCA "Aging Out Youth Program"	(973) 278-8019
Union County	Community Access Unlimited Transitional Service Program	(908) 354-3040

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

School-Based Youth Services Program

New Jersey's School Based Youth Services Programs (SBYSP), located in high schools, middle schools and elementary schools, were developed to remove non-academic barriers to learning as a means to enhance student academic success. Each program offers a unique blend of services, determined by the needs of the population served, to help students stay in school, graduate and obtain skills leading to employment. Core services include behavioral health and substance abuse counseling, access to primary and preventive health services, mentoring, skill-enrichment activities and learning support services. Services are provided before, during and after school, and throughout the summer. Referrals can come from peers, family members, guidance counselors or resource families. Students also may enroll themselves.

The DYFS case worker can also make a referral to SBYSP. Prior to making the referral, the worker should have a conversation with the young adult and reinforce that this is a voluntary program. In most cases, the SBYSP will not seek out a student who is referred. The student must initiate contact with SBYSP to seek services. It is recommended that the DYFS worker always ask for the local SBYSP Director when referring a student.

You may obtain further information or find out if there is a program in your area by accessing the Division of Prevention and Community Partnerships (DPCP) online directory at www.state.nj.us/dcf/prevention or calling (609) 984-0678.

Youth ChalleNGe Academy

The New Jersey National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program Academy is a voluntary interventional program, which is designed to provide opportunities for at risk youth (male or female), who demonstrate a desire to improve their potential for successful and productive lives.

They provide a highly disciplined environment, which fosters academics, leadership development, physical training and personal growth to educate and train unemployed youth who are no longer enrolled in school and are between the ages of 16 years-of-age and 19.3 years-of-age. This is accomplished through rigorous training in eight core components, which are required for graduation: academic excellence, life-coping skills, job skills, health and hygiene, responsible citizenship, service to the community, leadership & fellowship, and physical fitness. The program includes a five (5) month residential component.

Although quasi-military in nature and based on a military model, there is absolutely no obligation for students to join the military at any time. Students who pass the GED test earn a State of New Jersey High School Diploma. What makes the Youth ChalleNGe Academy even more successful is the mentoring program in the post-residential phase of the academy. Every Youth ChalleNGe graduate has a community-based mentor who assists them with educational and career goals. For more information or to refer a young person, call (800) 997-5587.

New Jersey Youth Corps (NJYC)

The New Jersey Youth Corps is one of the largest youth service and conservation corps in the United States. It was established by federal legislation in 1984, with the mission to “restore and preserve the dignity of young adults who have been underserved.” NJYC is a year-round voluntary, non-residential program, which engages young adults (ages 16-25) who have left high school before earning a high school diploma in full time community service, training, and educational activities. Guided by staff who serve as mentors and role models, teams of youth called “crews” carry out a wide range of service projects. In return for their efforts to restore and strengthen communities, Corps members receive:

- Educational development in basic skills;
- Preparation to obtain a General Education Diploma (GED) or a locally issued adult high school diploma;
- Life skills and employability skills instruction;
- Personal and career counseling to clarify values, build self-confidence, and develop leadership skills while they are developing their career portfolio;
- Continued support and services as they transition to post secondary training opportunities, employment or other local or national service opportunities; and
- Receive a stipend while enrolled in the NJYC.

NJYC is actively recruiting foster youth for the program and is able to accept referrals directly from the case worker.

Contact one of the individuals below or the state headquarters at (609) 292-2060.

Atlantic/Cape May Counties Odinga Maddox, Coordinator (609) 484-0052 Ext 115	Middlesex County Scott Bollwage, Director (732) 745-5300 Ext 5406	Phillipsburg Michael Muckle, Acting Director (908) 859-2969
Camden Lori Godorov, Director (856) 496-7390	Monmouth County Meg Flores, Coordinator (732)775-1035 Ext 231	Plainfield Jeanne Shanker, Coordinator (908) 561-6012
Elizabeth Syreeta Raines, Coordinator (908) 352-4488	Newark Carolyn Wallace, Director (973) 621-1134 Ext 247	Trenton Edith Siplin, Director (609) 530-2675
Jersey City Bruce Beaman, Co-Director (201) 200-3455 Gary Patnosh, Co-Director (201) 200-3361	Paterson Ralph Colognori, Coordinator (973) 321-0763	Vineland Joe Camardo, Director (856) 794-6943. x6400

NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

The mission of the New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) is to enable individuals with disabilities to achieve employment outcomes consistent with their strengths, priorities, needs, abilities and capabilities. There is a DVRS office in each county. **Educationally classified** students (except those who are being referred to DDD for services) should be referred to DVRS at least 6 months prior to their high school graduation date. This should be part of their senior year educational Transitional Plan. The referral should be made by the parent or the student; however it would be helpful if the case worker or caregiver assist them with the referral process. The school district is responsible for forwarding copies of the students' IEP, and any other documentation, which DVRS requires. You can obtain additional information by calling (609) 292-5987.

Some counties may have a DVRS counselor designated as a liaison to the local school districts to assist in identifying high school seniors who are eligible for DVRS's services. DVRS services include aptitude, vocational, and learning assessments, job training, job placement, and assistance with tuition, fees, and related expenses for post-secondary school. Students receiving DVRS services may also be eligible for participation in the **NJ Foster Care Scholars** grant program, which is described below.

Federal Financial Aid

Federal financial aid is financial assistance for eligible students to pay for educational expenses at eligible postsecondary schools (college, vocational school, graduate school). Federal Financial aid may pay for tuition, room & board, and textbooks, but not child care or transportation.

A youth may claim independent status, thereby not needing to report his or her parent's income due to a special circumstance, such as but not limited to:

- At any time since the youth turned age 13, both parents were deceased, the youth was in foster care, or was a dependant or ward of the court.
- A youth is or was in legal guardianship as determined by a court in the youth's state of legal residence.
- At anytime after July 1, 2009, the youth's high school or school district homeless liaison determined that the youth was an unaccompanied youth who was homeless
- At anytime after July 1, 2009, the director of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), determined that the youth was an unaccompanied youth who was homeless.
- At anytime after July 1, 2009, the director of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program determined that a youth was an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or self-supporting and at risk of being homeless.

Once the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is completed without parental data the youth must follow up with the Federal financial aid administrator at the school he or she plans to attend.

Additional information regarding the FAFSA and other financial aid information is available in the 2010-2011 Guide to Federal Student Aid at <http://www.edpubs.gov/document/EN0913P.pdf>

New Jersey Foster Care Scholars Program

New Jersey receives funding from the federal government- John Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, and from the State of New Jersey to provide grants to foster youth, who are pursuing post secondary education or training opportunities. DYFS has contracted with Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS) to administer these funds. This grant program is referred to as the New Jersey Foster Care Scholars program. All applicants must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form, and if appropriate, the Equal Opportunity Fund (EOF) application (if they are attending a school in New Jersey) prior to completing the Foster and Adoptive Family Services grant application form, which can be downloaded from the FAFS' web site: www.fafsonline.org

Based upon eligibility a youth may be able to receive assistance with textbooks, child care, transportation and food may be eligible expenses. There are also support services such as mentors that a youth can access.

The applicant must meet the following criteria:

- Have been in the care and custody of DYFS for a period of at least 9 months between the ages of 16 and 22 **OR**
- Have been adopted through DYFS after the age of 12 **OR**
- Have been in foster care and currently in a DYFS Kinship Legal Guardianship home **OR**
- Reside in or have resided in a state or federally funded Independent Living arrangement for youth in an out of home placement for 3 months or more

AND

- Be between the ages of 16 and 22
- Be in possession of a high school diploma or GED (General Educational Development) credential
- Be granted admission to a degree or certificate granting post secondary institution that has been accredited to receive Title IV funding

A maximum of \$5,000 per year **may be** awarded to qualified full or part time students who are attending an in state or out of state school. The school can be private or public.

Some of the expenses which may be covered by these grants include tuition, fees, room and board, books, supplies, transportation, special equipment, computers, or child care costs. Students, who receive these awards must maintain at least a 2.0 (C) average. They must also maintain a working e-mail address. Certain applicants, who are attending a New Jersey public college or university full time, may be eligible to receive up to the full cost of their tuition. While youth are encouraged to apply for both the Federal Financial Aid and the NJFCS, the NJFCS is the scholarship of last resort.

Project MYSELF

Recipients of NJFC Scholarships are automatically enrolled in *Project MYSELF*, a direct service program within the Institute for Families' Transitions for Youth program at the Rutgers University School of Social Work. *Project MYSELF* students are provided with a supportive mentoring and coaching relationship, opportunities to build life, academic, and leadership skills, enhance self awareness and move towards self-sufficiency and autonomy. *Project MYSELF* outcomes are to improve retention in educational settings, to improve academic performance (GPAs) and ultimately to increase graduation rates. For more information, please contact Lesley Dixon, Senior Project Coordinator at (732) 932-8758, x13 or email at ldixon@ssw.rutgers.edu.

Other Scholarship Information

High school graduates may also be eligible for a variety of private scholarships administered by Foster and Adoptive Family Services. Information about these scholarships and the NJ Foster Care Scholars Program is available by calling 1(800) 222-0047 or visit www.fafsonline.org

Addition scholarship information is available at www.transitionsforyouth.org

Employment and Training

The county based **One-Stop Career Centers** are located throughout the state to provide comprehensive services to residents under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Some of their core services include skills assessment, job search and placement assistance, information on training providers and supportive services, as well as follow-up services for 12 months after placement. Youth between the ages of 14 and 21 who are in foster care, have low or no income, have dropped out of school, are pregnant or parenting, and/or have offender status are all eligible for WIA services.

The Department of Labor and Work Force Development administers a website targeting youth at www.njnextstop.org. This website assists youth in the exploration of career options.

There is also a listing of local One Stop Career Centers at www.wnjpin.net/oscc/.

Case workers should encourage all adolescents, age 17 and older to register at their local One Stop Career Center. The centers are a source of both year round and summer employment, and under certain circumstances, they can pay for training.

There is no limit on the number of times, a young adult can return to a One-Stop Career Center for additional job search and employment placement services.

TEEN PARENTS

Following are several programs that provide services and supports for pregnant teens, teen fathers and teen mothers:

Crossroads Programs - "Capable Adolescent Mothers"

(609) 386-3342

Residential facility for pregnant teens, between 14 and 19 years old, who may enter at any time, and stay until the child's first birthday.

Crossroads Programs - "Second Chance Homes"

(609) 880-0210

Provides services and supports for teen mothers, who reside with their children in private homes within the community.

Center for Great Expectations

(908) 218-0570 ext. 203

Residential facility for pregnant teens, at least 13 years of age, who are either addicted or have familial history of addiction.

Family Service of Burlington County - "Teen-Age Parents Program"

(800) 963-3377

Counseling, case management, consultation, and home visits for pregnant and parenting teens.

HOUSING

There is housing available to foster youth aging out of care through a variety of programs. Some have been created solely for foster youth, some serve youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness (which includes foster youth aging out of care). Some of these housing options have time limits (typically 18 months or 2 years), others are considered “permanent” (young adult does not have to leave until he or she is ready). Contact individual programs for eligibility criteria as they vary from program to program.

These housing programs have limited treatment services, and are not appropriate for youth in need of intensive supervision or treatment. Housing programs accept residents from anywhere in New Jersey, but they usually give preference to adolescents living in their county. Inquiries and referrals should be made directly to the agency. Housing programs may access wrap around funds for their DYFS involved residents from the Regional Wraparound Administrator.

ATLANTIC COUNTY

Covenant House Transitional Living Program

(609) 348-4070

Contact: Brian Nelson

Gender: Male and Female

Age: 18-21

BERGEN COUNTY

Bergen County CAP Phases Transitional Living Program

(201) 968-0200

Contact: Allison Dubois

Gender: Male and Female

Age: 16-21

Volunteers of America- Synergy I Supportive Housing also in Union and Hudson Counties

(732) 827-2444

Contact: Jennifer Intindola

Gender: Male and Female

Ages 16-21

BURLINGTON COUNTY

Crossroads Programs “Rites of Passage & TLP”

(609) 880-0210

Contact: Bernadette Mahoney

Gender: Male and Female

Age: 17-21

Children’s Home of Burlington County Apartment Program

(609) 267-1550

Contact: Greg Wilson

Gender: Male and Female

Age: 17-21

CAMDEN COUNTY

Center for Family Services “Camden Dreams”

Apartment Program

(856) 964-1990

Contact: Dwayne Ingram

Gender: Male and Female

Age: 18 -21

Center for Family Services “Grand Slam”

(856) 964-1990

Contact: Stacy Smiriglio

Gender: Female

Age: 16-19

Center for Family Services “Homebase”

(856) 964-0061

Contact: Yahya Rahman

Gender: Male

Age: 16-19

Vision Quest

(609) 894-4856

Contact: Andi La Fleur

Gender: Male

Age 18 – 21

CAPE MAY COUNTY

Cape Counseling Apartment Program

(609) 463-0014

Contact: Kelly Magliocco

Gender: Male and Female

Age: 18 – 21

ESSEX COUNTY

Covenant House

“Nancy’s Place”

(973) 286-3550

Contact: Sharon Teague

Gender: Male and Female

Age 18-21

Must Have Axis I Diagnosis

Care Plus New Jersey

“Strive for Independence” Apts

(973) 744-6522 x228

Contact: Paul Kates

Gender: Male and Female

Age: 18-21

Covenant House

“Rites of Passage” Apt. & Shelter

(973) 286-3417

Contact: David Hall

Gender: Male and Female

Age: 18-21

Tri-City Peoples Corporation Apartments

“Launch into Life” Apartments

(973) 675-4484

Contact: Felicia Bacon Garnes

Gender: Male and Female

Age: 18-21

Corinthian Housing

Youth Build Program

(973) 624-4720

Contact: Sandonna Jones

Gender: Male

Age: 16-21

GLOUCESTER COUNTY

Robin’s Nest “Lifelink Home”

Apartments

(856) 881-6701

Contact: Kim Wallace

Gender: Male and Female Age: 18-21

HUDSON COUNTY

Volunteers of America “Synergy” III & ILP

(732) 827-2444

Contact: Jennifer Intindola

Gender: Male and Female

Ages 16-21

Volunteers of America “Synergy” V

(732) 827-2444

Contact: Jennifer Intindola

Male and Female

Age: 16-21

Volunteers of America “Step Up” Program

(732) 827-2444

Contact: Jennifer Intindola

Gender: Male and Female

Age: 18-21

Catholic Charities Diocese of Newark “Strong Futures”

(201) 798-9957

Contact: Kathy Elias

Gender: Male

Age: 16-21

MERCER COUNTY

The Anchorage

Transitional Living and Apartments

(609) 989-1625

Agency Contact: Aleaha Hosszu

Gender: Male and Female

Age: 18-21

Lifeties, Inc “Mary’s Place”

(609) 771-1600

Contact: Robin Wilkins

Gender: Male and Female

Age: 18-21

MIDDLESEX COUNTY

Garden State Home Transitional Living Program

(908) 331-0467

Contact: Louis DeLucia

Gender: Male

Age: 17-21

MIPH Apartment Program

“Irayna Court”

(732) 246-2256 x122

Agency Contact: Tricia Floyd

Gender: Female

Age: 18-21

MONMOUTH COUNTY

**Catholic Charities Diocese of Trenton
“Beacon House”**

Transitional Living and Apartments

(732) 502-9245

Contact: Nancy Moore

Gender: Male

Age: 16-21

Collier Services

Transitional Living Program

(732) 264-3222

Contact: Kerry Buckman

Gender: Female

Age: 18-21

IEP Youth Services

“Project Stepping Stone”

(732) 577-9906

Contact: Dawn Lenz, Program Coordinator

Gender: Male and Female

Age: 18-21

MORRIS COUNTY

Plaid House, Inc “Thenen House”

Transitional Living Program

(973) 898-1962 x2*

Contact: Kim Ward, Program Manager

Gender: Female

Age: 16-21

OCEAN COUNTY

Ocean Harbor House

“Shore House”

(732) 281-0822

Contact: Marissa Stefani

Gender: Male and Female

Age: 16-21

PASSAIC COUNTY

NJ Community Development

Corporation

“Independence House”

Transitional Living and Apartment

Program

(973) 225-0555

Contact: Stacy White

Gender: TLP males; Apartments male and female

Age: 18-21

**Paterson Coalition for Housing, Inc
“Supervised Transitional Youth
Program”**

(973) 546-8825

Contact: Therese Tolomeo

Gender: Male and Female

Age: 16- 21

SOMERSET COUNTY

Somerset Home for Temporarily

Displaced Children

“My Place”

(908) 526-6686

Contact: Alex Ciccone

Gender: Male

Age: 16-21

Somerset Home for Temporarily

Displaced Children

“Whitney House”

(908) 526-6686

Contact: Alex Ciccone

Gender: Female

Age: 16-21

Somerset Home for Temporarily

Displaced Children

“Passages”

(908) 526-6686

Contact: Alex Ciccone

Gender: Male and Female

Age: 16-21

UNION COUNTY

Volunteers of America “Synergy II”

(732) 827-2444

Contact: Jennifer Intindola

Gender: Male and Female

Age: 16 -21

Volunteers of America “Synergy IV”

(732) 827-2444

Contact: Jennifer Intindola

Gender: Male and Female

Age: 16- 21

Community Access Unlimited

(908) 354-3040

Contact: Tanya Johnson

Gender: Male and Female

Age: 16-21

HEALTH INSURANCE

Medicaid

Any youth or young adult currently in a DYFS paid placement is automatically entitled to Medicaid.

A young adult aged 18 through 21, who was in a DYFS placement on his 18th birthday; is a resident of New Jersey; and is a US citizen or qualified alien is eligible for Medicaid under the Medicaid Extension for Young Adults (**MEYA**), regardless of income level.

For information, you may call the Medicaid Extension Warm Line, 1(888) 235-4766, during normal business hours.

Careful consideration should be given before one decides to opt out of either DYFS Medicaid or MEYA Medicaid. If a young adult goes on General Assistance (welfare), even for a brief period of time, that individual loses all rights to MEYA and cannot be reinstated in MEYA.

An adolescent or young adult, who is not eligible for MEYA, may be eligible for Medicaid under other programs, such as:

- Medically needy programs for permanently disabled, blind or aged (SSI)
- Medically needy programs for pregnant woman
- Medically needy program for children
- Medicaid special program for children
- Home and Community-Based Services Waiver programs

These programs may require that the individual have specific medical needs and/or meet specific income and resource restrictions. You may contact your county welfare office for additional information.

Special Automobile Health Insurance Policy (SAIP) or Medicaid 365

This is an initiative to help make limited auto insurance coverage available to drivers who are eligible for **Federal Medicaid with hospitalization**. Such drivers can obtain a **medical coverage-only policy at a cost of \$365 a year**.

- It covers emergency treatment immediately following an accident and treatment of serious brain and spinal cord injuries up to \$250,000. It also provides a \$10,000 death benefit.
- It does not cover outpatient treatments such as doctor's visits covered by Medicaid, damage you may cause to other persons or property (liability coverage) or damages to your own car (collision and comprehensive coverage).
- You cannot get this policy if your driver's license or registration is revoked or suspended.
- You may call customer service at 1(800) 652-2471 for additional information.

ADDICTION SERVICES

The Division of Addiction Services (DAS) has developed services targeted to youth in New Jersey's child welfare system. These programs enable youth to receive treatment for addictions in a recovery-oriented environment that treats each young person with dignity and respect. Most of these programs are for adolescents age 13 to 17. There are pre-paid child welfare slots available for our adolescents. When making a referral, make sure you indicate that you would like to access one of the child welfare slots. Although the Local Office Certified Addiction Counselor (CAC) cannot complete assessments on our youth, they can serve as a resource for information.

Outpatient Programs

(Male and Female)

Catholic Charities- Trenton
Sister Maureen Malone
(609) 396-4557

COPE Center -Montclair
Rose Maire
(973) 783-6655

Counseling and Referral of Ocean
Roberto Flecha
(732) 920-2700

Family Connections-Orange
Hayden Smith
(973) 675-3817

Genesis Counseling Center
Kevin Gregan
(856) 858-9314

My Father's House
Miriam Broderick
(856) 742-0900

Newark Renaissance House
Rogelio Hernandez, Jr.
(973) 623-3386 x335

SODAT
Sister Anne Winkelmann
(856) 845-6363

Inpatient Programs

Bonnie Brae (Males)
Jamie Rau
(908) 647-0800

Daytop South (Males)
Ian Gershman
(856) 358-4111

Daytop Village, Inc.-Parsippany (Males)
Jim Tambini
(908) 806-5195

Genesis Counseling Center (Males)
Kevin Gregan
(856) 858-9314

Daytop Village (Females)
Suzanne Fischer
(973) 543-5656

CURA, Inc. (Males)
Maria Rodriguez
Secaucus: (973) 353-6284
Vineland:(856) 696-7335

Integrity House, Inc. (Males)
Nicole Drake
(973) 623-7255

Newark Renaissance House (Males)
Paula Smith
(973) 642-7337

New Hope Foundation, Inc. (Males)
Judy Kurtzer
Secaucus (coed): (201) 866-0888
Marlboro: (732) 946-3030

Straight and Narrow (Males)
Karen Roccisano
(973) 345-6000

Vantage Health System, Inc. (Males)
Dave Roden
(201) 784-6490

YOUTH ADVOCACY

Youth Advisory Boards

DYFS has 12 county-based Youth Advisory Boards (YABs) throughout the state. Contracts were awarded to non-profit community agencies to host and facilitate the meetings of each YAB.

Any adolescent in placement is welcome to become part of their local Youth Advisory Board, and should be encouraged to become a member.

Through the YABs, teens and young adults have an opportunity to provide input and feedback on adolescent programming and policy to DYFS management and staff. They are a youth directed forum that strives to empower foster and homeless youth to successfully transition from being dependent on the child welfare system to being self-sufficient and responsible adults. Youth develop and enhance their advocacy and leadership skills through public speaking, community service, training, and interaction with positive role models.

We encourage an enhanced relationship between each county's Youth Advisory Board and the local Adolescent Units. An interchange of ideas between them could assist in enrichment and visitation programming, which would benefit all youth. For more information, contact your local Youth Advisory Board:

Atlantic/Cape May Counties Atlantic/Cape May YAP Mary Ann Hamidy (609) 345-7333	Cumberland/Gloucester/Salem Robins Nest, Inc. Grant Hildebrand (610) 416-4076(cell)	Monmouth County Catholic Charities Ted Hoffman (732) 232-6679
Bergen County Children's Aid and Family Services Jennie Drossman (201) 445-7015	Essex County Tri-City Peoples Corporation Alan Ogletree (973) 675-4484	Middlesex County Rutgers University Transitions for Youth Elizabeth Salerno (732) 932-8758
Burlington County Family Service of Burlington County Anne Greenwood (609) 518-5470	Hunterdon/Somerset /Warren Counties Somerset Home for Temporarily Displaced Children Tichina Smith (908) 526-6686	Passaic County Community Development Corporation Michael Scott (973) 413-1604
Camden County Camden County YAP Janeen Seddens (856) 541-4300	Mercer County Capitol Corridor Community Development Corporation Elijah James (609) 392-0034	Union County Community Access Unlimited Howard Wingrad/Julia Leftwich (908) 482-7255

Youth Partnerships

The Division of Child Behavioral Health Services supports similar advocacy and peer leadership groups for young people who identify as having mental health challenges and/or receive services through DCBHS. They are sponsored by their local Family Support Organizations in each county/region. The FSO contact information can be found at: <http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/behavioral/help/family.html>

Advocacy Opportunities for Young Adults

Any youth age 18 or older who has experienced any type of out of home care can consider becoming a member of Foster Care Alumni of America, a national alumni organization that provides opportunities to connect with other alumni and provide leadership in child welfare reform. www.fostercarealumni.org

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Local Office Flexible Funding Account

The DYFS case manager, with appropriate approval, can access Local Office Flexible Account funds, in order to provide goods or services to meet the individualized needs of a youth or family under supervision.

Wraparound Funds

DYFS has contracted with community-based agencies to administer these funds. They are to be used in emergency situations, such as for security deposits, up to four months of rent, to purchase linens, furniture, or other items or services that will assist the adolescent in achieving or maintaining self-sufficiency. The lifetime maximum that a young adult could receive is \$4,000. Wraparound funds are short-term, and are limited in scope and amount.

Youth must meet one of the following criteria:

- Be between ages 16 and 21; have completed life skills training which includes pregnancy prevention, currently engaged living in life skills training or living in a DYFS sanctioned housing program.
- Be between 18 and 21, and receiving Aftercare services.
- Adolescents between the ages of between 18 and 21 who were in a DYFS placement on their 18th birthday, whose case is currently closed, may still be eligible for wraparound funds.

These funds are not an entitlement, and should be accessed after all other funding sources have been explored and exhausted.

Independent Living Stipend

Certain young people, over the age of 16 whose special circumstances do not lend themselves to a “traditional” DYFS placement, may create an individualized living arrangement. The local offices can provide an “independent living stipend” to assist in paying for rent and food. The stipend consisting of \$40 per week for food and \$45 per week for rent is dispensed in two payments each month. The Local Office Manager can override these amounts. (See Appendix A for policy citations)

The youth must be sufficiently mature to be able to function responsibly without immediate or continuous supervision, and must be engaged in a vocational or educational training program; treatment program; or working a minimum of 30 hours a week and earning less than 150% of the federal poverty income levels for a family of one (in 2008, that was \$15,600 for one person and \$21,000 for two person household.)

Youth in any independent living arrangement, whether receiving the Independent Living stipend or not, are eligible for other supports such as clothing allowances.

Other Financial Resources

Some other sources of financial assistance/money saving that adult foster youth may be eligible for or find helpful include:

- Communications Lifeline—free basic service or a credit on monthly phone bill as well as 50% discount on installation. Does not apply to cell phones. Applications for the program are available through the local welfare office and must be verified, then mailed or faxed to Verizon before establishing service. The name and address on the Verizon account MUST match the name and

address for Medicaid/welfare services exactly. For more information call NJ Shares at 1(888) 337-3339 or <http://www.verizonnj.com/about/community/nj/tele/njlifelinerev.asp>

- LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program)—helps with costs of home heating and medically necessary cooling, even if the young person is renting and even if heat is included in rent. Application period is usually October through March and forms can be found at libraries and local welfare offices.
- Freecycle—a website where people give away unwanted items free for the taking. Local groups in most areas of NJ: www.freecycle.org

GAY, LESBIAN, BI-SEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, QUESTIONING, INTERSEX YOUTH

It is the practice of the Division of Youth and Family Services to create welcoming and inclusive environments for all youth. DYFS prohibits discrimination based on an individual's sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. The DYFS practice of inclusion extends to service delivery. Therefore both heterosexual youth and gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, questioning and intersexed youth (GLBTQI) youth are provided with equal access to all available services, including placement, care, and treatment.

DYFS Area and Local Offices have designated Safe Space Liaisons to assist in identifying local community resources for GLBTQI youth, such as school-based peer support, welcoming congregations, etc. They can also provide print resources to help guide decision-making for LGBTQI youth in care.

One resource, "It's Your Life," is a tool for helping GLBTQI youth navigate the child welfare system. The youth website is <http://new.abanet.org/child/Pages/lgbtq.youth.aspx> and a print version of the material can be accessed here: http://www.abanet.org/child/docs/itsyourlife_book.pdf

Family members and caregivers of GLBTQI youth can find support and information by visiting www.pflag.org/, the web site for Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. PFLAG also has local support groups at several locations within NJ.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

DCF's Division of Child Behavioral Health Services (DCBHS) serves children and adolescents with emotional and behavioral challenges and their families. DCBHS is committed to providing behavioral health care services based on the needs of the child and family in a family-centered, community-based environment.

Contact with PerformCare by DYFS workers should be initiated under the following conditions:

- when there is concern about a youth's emotional and/or behavior well-being;
- when there is imminent need for placement as a result of emotional and/or behavior challenges;
- when there is imminent risk of placement disruption;
- when there is NO active involvement from another care management entity (CMO, UCM or YCM) in planning for the youth;
- when directed by DYFS leadership based upon anticipated needs of youth.

.For questions about or to access services for children and youth, call the 24-hour, toll-free Access Line at: 1-877-652-7624 or visit their website at: www.state.nj.us/dcf/behavioral.

Emergency Diagnostic Services

DCF's Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) maintains a contract with Youth Consultation Service (YCS) for the operation of a residential emergency diagnostic/assessment center. The Emergency Diagnostic Reception Unit (EDRU) will accept, on an emergency basis, DYFS supervised youth between the ages of 11-17, who are experiencing emotional/behavioral difficulties, in the home, school or community, and who require an out-of-home placement. EDRU will provide services to stabilize, assess, and develop an appropriate treatment plan. (*Note: Admission for ages 11-13 requires DYFS Director Approval*)

This program can accept youth who have a pending discharge from another program/facility and for whom an interim clinical placement will be required. EDRU is operated at a 24- hour accessible, 11-bed facility in Northern New Jersey. Access to this program is limited to thirty calendar days. ***Only DYFS Case Managers through conferences with their assigned Team Leaders have ability to make referrals to this program.***

The following are considered exclusionary criteria for admission into EDRU if the most recent incident occurred within 12 months of referral:

- Aggressive, assaultive behavior
- Sexual offense
- Fire-setting

The program goals of the Emergency Diagnostic Reception Unit are:

- Stabilization of crisis/placement
- Family Engagement
- Comprehensive Behavioral Health Assessment
- Development of a Discharge Plan
- Coordination of Discharge activities with DYFS, family, previous caregivers and CSA or UCM/CMO/YCM (as appropriate)

The following services are offered at the Emergency Diagnostic Reception Unit:

- Case Management
- Family Engagement
- Assessment (Medical, Psychiatric, and/or Substance Abuse)
- Therapeutic Treatment

OTHER COMMUNITY SERVICES

Division of Prevention and Community Partnerships offers a wide range of services beyond the traditional adolescent / young adult programs that may be helpful in caring for our youth. Please explore the DPCP Program Directory at www.state.nj.us/dcf/prevention

Home Visitation program provides a myriad of supports and education to pregnant women across the state.

Family Success Centers provide assistance and supports in 37 communities across the state.

NJ 2NDFLOOR Youth Helpline 888-222-2228 or www.2ndfloor.org.

2NDFLOOR is the only helpline of its kind in New Jersey designed to provide confidential telephone assistance to address the social and health needs of New Jersey's youth and young adult (ages 10-24) population. The overall goal is the promotion of healthy youth development by offering immediate interactive, respectful helpline services with linkage to appropriate information and resources. Youth can either call the helpline 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week or access the interactive website. Since its statewide launch in September 2008, the helpline has had over 196,000 conversations with youth and over 246,000 visits to the website.

Outreach to At-Risk Youth

The program is designed to prevent crime/juvenile delinquency, and deter gang involvement by providing enhanced recreation, vocational, educational, outreach or supportive services to youths, ages 13 to 18, with the option to serve youths until age 21. The programs are located in communities with demonstrated high crime and gang violence. One of DCF's community partners has extensive experience with implementing research-based, outcome-driven youth development programs. These programs have a proven track record of making a difference in the lives of youth, including "at-risk" youth. There are 21 programs represented in ten counties in New Jersey. The programs are in Camden, Essex, Mercer, Atlantic, Monmouth, Cumberland, Hudson, Passaic, Middlesex and Union Counties. You may obtain further information or find out if there is a program in your area by accessing the Division of Prevention and Community Partnerships online directory at www.state.nj.us/dcf/prevention or calling (609) 984-0678.

APPENDIX A

DYFS Adolescent Policy

DYFS Field Operations Policy and Procedures Manual

- **Section II B: Initial Response**
 - 400: Who May Receive Services
 - 403: Services to Adolescents Ages 18 to 21
- **Section II D: Foster Care Services**
 - 700: Independent Living
 - 1000: Services to Children in Resource Home Placement
 - 1010 Adolescent Services toward Self-Sufficiency
 - 1000: DYFS Authority to Issue Consent
 - 1205 Procedures Related to Consent for Enlistment in the Armed Forces

SECTION II B: 403 SERVICES TO ADOLESCENTS AGE 18 TO 21

Purpose 403.1

This policy applies to adolescents under DYFS supervision age 18 to 21 years old living at home or in an out-of-home placement. Our goal is to successfully transition adolescents to independence and self-sufficiency.

Authority 403.2

- N.J.S.A. 9:17B-3 (defines person age 18 or older, as an adult)
- N.J.S.A. 30:4C-2.3 (gives DCF authority to provide services to youth age 18-21)
- Safe and Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act of 2006

Definition of Terms 403.3

- **Adolescent** means a person between the ages of 18 and 21.
- **Age of Majority** means the age at which a child becomes an adult in the eyes of the law. In New Jersey the age of majority is age 18.

Actions When an Adolescent Turns 18 Years of Age 403.4

When an adolescent attains the age of 18, the decision to keep the case open, or to close the case, is determined on an individual, case-by-case basis.

The expectation is that staff will actively engage the adolescent in planning for his or her future, including continued involvement with DYFS. A case may continue to be open and a youth can receive services up to the age of 21.

It is not DYFS policy to automatically close a case based solely on an adolescent turning 18 years of age, the age of majority.

Criteria for Continuing Services 403.5

DCF provides services to adolescents who meet at least one of the following requirements:

- The adolescent received services from DCF at age 16 or older.
- The adolescent is in a DYFS supervised or funded out-of-home placement and agrees to accept continued case management services from DYFS, including continued board payments. This includes adolescents in foster care or independent living settings.
- The Worker and Supervisor, as part of an assessment that actively engages the adolescent, conclude that continuation of services is in the adolescent's best interest. For example, it is determined that continued assistance is needed to allow the adolescent to complete high school, attend GED classes, pursue post secondary education or vocational training.
- There may also be clinical reasons, when it is in the adolescent's best interest, for the case to remain open; for example a severely depressed adolescent may need continued mental health services and support.

- The adolescent is continuing to work towards the goals outlined in his or her Transitional Plan for Adolescents (DYFS Form 5-43).
- An adolescent is fully employed (30 hours per week or more) and earns less than 150% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines for a family of one (2008=\$15,600) or needs non-financial DYFS services. See II D 2505, Federal Register Poverty Income Guidelines.

Note: A pregnant adolescent is always entitled to DYFS services.

See II K 900, Services to Pregnant Women.

Advance Notification - Continuation of Services 403.6

Six months prior to the adolescent's 18th birthday the Worker engages the youth in a service needs assessment. Areas assessed include the need for services to achieve the goal of independence and self-sufficiency, education, finances, housing and health care.

The Worker (ideally with the adolescent) contacts significant case collaterals to discuss the adolescent's need for services after age 18. Depending on the case, these collaterals may include:

- A parent or foster parent, or other "caring adults" involved in the case plan;
- An agency overseeing the child's residence/living arrangement;
- An agency providing life skills instruction; or
- Other individuals or agencies that are currently providing services, such as a therapist who may be providing counseling services, or a teacher or guidance counselor, if the adolescent is attending school.

Contacts with these interested parties are documented in the case record. The Worker sends out a letter to the adolescent, under the Local Office Manager's signature (use DYFS Form 5-61, Notification: Services May Continue Beyond Age of Majority), to reiterate that DYFS services may continue until the adolescent turns age 21.

Documentation of Continuation of Services 403.7

For adolescents in out-of-home placement, use DYFS Form 26-81 a/b, Family Summary/Case Plan/Court Report Out-of-Home, to document the services that will continue beyond the adolescent's 18th birthday. The adolescent signs the plan.

For adolescents in their own home, use DYFS Form 26-51 a/b, Family Summary/Case Plan/Court Report In-Home, to document the services that will continue beyond the adolescent's 18th birthday. The adolescent signs the plan.

When the adolescent is unable to sign the Case Plan due to a developmental or emotional disability, the adolescent's parent, legal guardian, legal custodian or other person acting in loco parentis may sign for the adolescent.

Placement Reviews 403.8

The Division continues to conduct internal placement reviews for adolescents age 18 and older. The Child Placement Review Board may continue to review an adolescent's case, if

the court indicates that it will retain jurisdiction after the adolescent turns 18 years of age. See II A 2419.3.

MVR Schedule 403.9

See II A 703.1, Visitation Schedules Between Once Per Week and Monthly.

Board Rate for Adolescents in Resource Homes 403.10

Resource parents continue to receive a standard board rate for adolescents placed in their home who are 18 to 21 years old. This includes adolescents who are working, and/or going to school.

See II D 2507, Appendices - Level of Care Rate Table; Resource Family Board Rate and Clothing Schedule for Resource Care and Relative Care.

Resource parents are paid on a per-diem basis for adolescents who return to the resource home on a temporary basis during college breaks and dorm closures.

Vacation Board Rate for College Students 403.11

Adolescents, as well as youth age 17 who were in an out-of-home placement prior to attending college, who leave the resource home to attend school, may require temporary placement in a resource home during school breaks, dorm closures, or for other reasons, such as illness. The temporary placement is not to exceed 150 calendar days unless approved by the Local Office Manager, in 30-day increments.

The Resource Parent is paid by a K-100 at Level A (base rate) Vacation Home; service Action Code P-398.

See II D 2507, Appendices - Level of Care Rate Table; Resource Family Board Rate and Clothing Schedule for Resource Care and Relative Care.

Note: The adolescent's case remains in open status, while at college. Conduct MVR's while the adolescent is on break at the resource home.

Medicaid - Individual Under Age 21 403.12

An adolescent in placement continues to receive Medicaid.

An adolescent is eligible for Medicaid Extension for Young Adults (MEYA), if he or she was in out-of-home placement on or beyond his or her 18th birthday, and the case is closed. The Worker gives the adolescent the toll free telephone number, 1-888-235-4766, to enroll in MEYA. See II K 317, Medicaid Extension for Young Adults (MEYA).

An individual under age 21 may be eligible for Medicaid Special through the County Welfare Agency, even though the adolescent is not eligible for Medicaid coverage under TANF. Financial eligibility for Medicaid Special is established when the income of the adolescent does not exceed the allowance standard for TANF.

For further information about Medicaid Special, contact the county welfare agency, where the adolescent resides.

See II K 905.3a, Medicaid Special.

Reasons to Close the Case of an Adolescent Age 18 – 21 403.13

There are three situations when it is appropriate to consider closing an adolescent's case:

- Adolescent refuses to cooperate or participate in the case plan or requests that his or her case be closed despite attempts by DYFS to actively engage the adolescent;
- The adolescent and Worker mutually agree that he or she is no longer in need of services or support from DYFS;
- Adolescent attains the age of 21.

Note: An adolescent's case cannot be closed if DYFS has custody or the case is active in DYFS litigation.

When the adolescent refuses to cooperate or participate with the case plan, the Worker must make every effort to reengage him or her in the planning process. Discuss with the adolescent the reasons for lack of cooperation.

The Worker contacts others involved in the case plan, e.g., Legal Guardian, parent, resource family, third party agencies, and other caring adults, to explore possible alternatives or revisions to the plan.

Case Closing Practice for Adolescent 18-21 403.14

Regardless of the reason for closing the case, the Worker follows these procedures:

- Provides two month written notification prior to case closing, using DYFS Form 5-62, Termination of Services to Adolescent Client (see next section);
- Completes DYFS Form 5-66, Adolescent Case Closing Agreement, with the adolescent;
- Completes DYFS Form 5-67, Adolescent Case Closing Checklist;
- Prepares the adolescent for termination of DYFS services;
- Reinforces with the "caring adult" the importance of their role; (see II D 1010)
- When applicable, notifies the caregiver, Life Skills Training and/or Transitional Housing programs, parent, and the Aftercare service provider that DYFS will be terminating services within two months;
 - The Aftercare agency can provide the adolescent short term case management services after his or her DYFS case is closed.
 - The Worker refers the adolescent to the Regional Aftercare provider.
- Facilitates referrals to other agencies that may become involved with the adolescent after the case is closed, such as agencies involved with financial benefits, housing, employment, education, and health care;
- If the adolescent is exiting resource care at or beyond age 18, provides him or her with a copy of the health and education records at no cost, in accordance with the federal Safe and Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act of 2006; and
- Has a face-to-face meeting with the adolescent prior to case closure. See II A 2900.

Advance Notification - Intent to Terminate 403.15

Worker must send notification to the adolescent and other interested parties(parents, legal guardian, legal custodian, resource family, and/or other agencies involved in the

case)of the intent to terminate **two months** prior to the termination date via DYFS Form 5-62.

Policy for Addressing Disagreement with the Decision to Terminate Case 403.16

If the adolescent or his or her advocate disagrees with termination, the agency's actions may be challenged.

See III A, Formal and Informal Dispute Resolution Policy and Procedures.

Youth Ages 18 to 21 Requesting to Re-Open Their DYFS Case 403.17

DYFS is committed to providing services to adolescents, age 18 to 21, to assist with a successful transition to independence. DYFS encourages youth who are 18 or older to remain service-active with DYFS until they turn age 21. However, when there are no CPS concerns or other legal reasons to keep a service case open, an older youth (age 18 or older) may request that his or her case be closed; DYFS is required to heed such a request. This is a reversible decision, however, when all of the following are true:

- A. The adolescent was receiving services from the Department, on or after his or her 16th birthday;
- B. The adolescent has actively requested that services be provided and is now willing to accept services; and
- C. Continuation of services would be in the adolescent's best interest and would help the adolescent to become an independent and productive adult. (N.J.S.A. 30:4C-2.3)

Any youth who meets all of the conditions above can request his or her case be re-opened for appropriate services. The State Central Registry, SCR, shall reopen the adolescent's case, based upon his or her request and professed willingness to accept services. The SCR Screener documents the request as a Child Welfare Service (CWS) referral. SCR assigns the referral to the appropriate Local Office for response, an assessment of the adolescent's needs, and the provision of services, as necessary and applicable. The adolescent's case may remain open until his or her 21st birthday.

Relevant Policy for Students in Post Secondary Educational Programs 707.3

Adolescents in Independent Living Placements - Since these adolescents do not have continuous adult supervision, face-to-face contact between the Permanency Worker and the adolescent is required at least once every month. The Worker is required to visit the adolescent's residence at least once every six (6) months. See II D 707.3

Adolescents who attend college - The Worker is required to have face to face contact with the adolescent, when he or she returns to the resource home while on a school break.

Identifying Lifelong Connections/Caring Adults 1010.7

The Worker, in collaboration with the adolescent identifies at least one significant adult in the adolescent's life. This may be a relative, a teacher or coach, a neighbor, clergy or a member of the child's house of worship, who will function as an adult advisor to the adolescent, to assist in the development of the Transitional Plan and who will continue to provide guidance to the adolescent after involvement with DYFS ends. The caring adult(s) may be the resource parent(s).

Developing a Transitional Plan 1010.8

The Worker, adolescent, caring adults, family members and others who are interested in the adolescent's future gather together to develop a strength-based plan using DYFS Form 5-43.

Transitional Plan for Adolescents, completing or updating it at the Placement Review Conference held every six months, or when a goal has been achieved or a modification is necessary. See II A 2900, Family Engagement.

The plan explains the responsibilities of each person involved in the development of the plan to assist the adolescent in mastering the identified skill(s). Use DYFS Form 22-25 the New Jersey DYFS SDM Child Strengths and Needs Assessment accessible through the NJ Spirit application. Obtain the youth's academic records from his or her current school, to assist those gathered to develop a viable plan.

Objectives of the Transitional Plan 1010.9

This written plan addresses, at a minimum, the adolescent's:

- Life goals – which the adolescent selects for him or herself;
- Career goals – selected by the adolescent and chosen through exploration of information and subsequent referral to appropriate resources, the Worker, independent living, aftercare, transitional living program, or caregiver help the adolescent identify the skills necessary to achieve his or her career goals.
- Educational goals – give the adolescent information about the New Jersey Foster Care Scholars Program which can provide financial support for post secondary educational and vocational programs.
- Upon request, the Worker refers the adolescent to other resources for post-secondary educational opportunities.
- Permanency goals – the adolescent will attain permanency either through adoption, KLG, reunification with a safe family member, or a lifelong connection to a designated adult.
- Health Care – give the adolescent information regarding the Medicaid Extension for Youth Adults (MEYA).
- Acquisition of basic life skills – the adults and the adolescent review the assessment to identify critical areas that should be addressed with formal and/or informal education and training; and
- Resource identification – the adults identify and review services and programs available through DCF, other state agencies, and additional public and private organizations, to aid the adolescent in achieving his or her stated goals.

Case Closing Forms

Notification: Services May Continue Beyond Age of Majority, DYFS Form 5-61, is used to provide official notice to the adolescent, that DYFS will continue to provide services to him or her beyond the age of majority (from age 18 through age 21). The adolescent's case will remain open unless he or she a) wants the case to be terminated, or b) is not compliant with the criteria for continued services from DYFS. The letter is sent under the signature of the Office Manager.

The assigned Permanency Worker meets with the adolescent to assess his or her needs, plan for his or her self-sufficiency, and begin his or her transition to adulthood. The Permanency Worker prepares the letter for signature by the Office Manager.

Termination of Services to Adolescent Client, DYFS Form 5-62

This letter provides official notice to an adolescent in open case status, age 18-21, of the Division's intent to terminate his or her case, when the adolescent (age 18-21) requests his or her case be closed; refuses services; does not comply with policy (Provision of Services, II B 400); or reaches age 21. This letter advises the older adolescent that he or she may contact the Administrative Hearings Unit, if he or she disagrees with the agency's decision to terminate.

The Permanency Worker prepares the Termination Letter two months before the intended date of termination. Copies of the letter are also sent to parents/guardians, resource or para parents, a caring adult who will remain involved with the adolescent after DYFS closes the case, and other involved individuals, as appropriate.

Adolescent Case Closing Agreement, DYFS Form 5-66

This form is used in conjunction with the DYFS Form 5-67, Adolescent Case Closing Checklist. This agreement allows the Worker to review and document a discussion held with the adolescent about limitations on service eligibility, once his or her DYFS case is closed. The form allows the adolescent to give a written explanation and documentation as to why he or she would like his or her DYFS case closed. The form cannot be used/does not apply when DYFS has custody of the child or when the adolescent is receiving services based on child abuse/neglect.

Adolescent Case Closing Checklist, DYFS Form 5-67

Use this form in conjunction with the DYFS Form 5-66, Adolescent Case Closing Agreement, to present information to an adolescent between 16 to 21 years old for whom DYFS does not have custody, when closing his or her case. The Worker obtains and/or makes copies of documents for the adolescent. The form cannot be used/does not apply when DYFS has custody of the child or when the adolescent is receiving services based on child abuse/neglect.

Note: Give the original Long Form Birth Certificate, and Social Security Card to the adolescent. Make/keep copies for the case record.

APPENDIX B

DYFS ADOLESCENT FORMS

Adolescent Case Closing Agreement DYFS Forms 5-66

Use this form in conjunction with the DYFS Form 5-67, Adolescent Case Closing Checklist. This agreement allows the Worker to review and document a discussion held with the adolescent about limitations on service eligibility, once his or her DYFS case is closed. The form allows the adolescent to give a written explanation and documentation as to why he or she would like his or her DYFS case closed.

This form cannot be used, and does not apply if DYFS has custody of the adolescent or if the adolescent is receiving services based on child abuse/neglect.

Adolescent Case Closing Checklist DYFS Form 5-66

Use this form in conjunction with the DYFS Form 5-66, Adolescent Case Closing Agreement, to present information to an adolescent between 16 to 21 years old for whom DYFS does not have custody, when closing his or her case. The worker obtains and makes copies of documents for the adolescent.

The form cannot be used and does not apply if DYFS has custody of the adolescent or if the adolescent is receiving services based on child abuse/neglect.

Transitional Plan for Adolescents DYFS Form 5-43

This form provides a plan for adolescents who are placed out of home, to identify needed life skills, goals, and actions to achieve identified goals:

- When the adolescent is 14 years of age;
- When an adolescent is entering into an Independent Living Program, Transitional Living Program, or Supported Housing Program;
- Every six months, at a minimum, to re-evaluate status and progress; and
- Within 90 days prior to closing the case.

Use the form in conjunction with the Casey Life Skills Assessment located at www.caseylifeskills.org