



Educational Champion Training

MODULE 11:

Transition to College or Career

Why Focus on Transition to College or Career?



Educational champions can:

- Play an **important role** in a youth's transition to college or a career.
- Help a youth **develop an interest** in pursuing post-secondary education.
- **Support youth** in choosing a program, applying, and enrolling.
- Continue to support the youth after enrollment—the youth will benefit from **affirmation and encouragement** during this significant life transition!

Talk to the youth about why high school graduation is important.



For example, high school graduates have:

- More job options,
- Better working conditions,
- Higher incomes, and
- Opportunities to pursue higher education.

Talk often and openly with the youth about college preparation and attendance.



- If you attended college, **share stories** of your experiences with the youth.
- Remember that it is **never too early to speak** with the youth about college— start this conversation while the child is in elementary school!

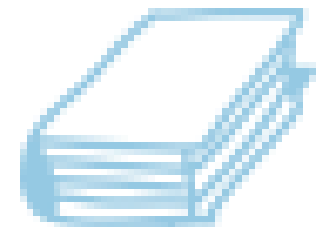


Help the youth establish college and career goals early on during high school.



Here are some helpful talking points about college and career goals:

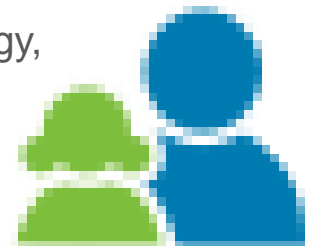
- “College is fun—and important.”
- “Consider your college goals.”
- “Think about your career goals.”
- Tell the youth that you are proud that he/she is applying to college.



Types of higher education available.



- **Four-year colleges and universities**
 - Award bachelor's degrees; some also award graduate or professional degrees.
- **Two-year colleges, called community colleges or junior colleges**
 - Award associate degrees or certificates of study.
 - Some students go to a two-year college first, then transfer to a four-year college.
- **Vocational or technical schools**
 - Award certificates of study in specific job areas, i.e. computer technology, auto repair, cosmetology.



Visit a college campus with the youth.



- A **college visit** can help motivate the youth to work hard in high school and get excited about college.
- Ask the youth's **school counselor** if the school is organizing any opportunities to see a college. If not, **take the youth** to visit a local campus.

Help the youth prepare for the transition to college and career.



- If the youth is enrolled in the County's Transition Age Youth Services program:
 - Take part in the development of the youth's TARP plan.
 - Take part in the youth's TARP conferences.
 - If the youth is not enrolled in the County's Transition Age Youth Services program, ask the youth's social worker about eligibility and enrollment.

Encourage the youth to meet with his or her school counselor.



- His or her school counselor should make sure the youth is taking college prep classes (called “A-G” requirements).
- The youth should talk to the counselor about college goals and the college application process.

Basics of the college application process.



- Most **two-year colleges** only require a high school diploma or its equivalent to apply.
- Most **four-year colleges and universities** will look at factors such as:
 - High school coursework and grades earned.
 - Entrance exam scores (SAT, ACT).
 - Involvement in extracurricular activities or employment (e.g. athletics, school clubs).
 - Some colleges will interview the student; ask for letters of recommendation, and/or a personal statement.

Applying to college.



- If the youth is getting ready to apply to college or in the process of applying:
 - **Start a folder** to keep track of information about college and application materials.
 - **Gather documents for college applications**, i.e. official school transcript copies.
 - **Help the youth decide** what schools to apply to.
 - **Talk to the youth** about where to find college applications.

Getting through the application process.



Help the youth:

- Keep track of application requirements and deadlines.
- Sign up for college admissions tests, like the SAT and the ACT.
- Brainstorm a list of people who could write letters recommending him or her.
- Apply for financial aid and scholarships.

Independent Living Program.



- There are resources available through the Independent Living Program (“ILP”) to support the transition to post-secondary education.
- Ask the child’s social worker for the name and contact information for his/her ILP coordinator.

Many colleges and universities provide support services to foster youth.



One of the best-known is the **Guardian Scholars Program**.

Guardian Scholars students typically receive:

- **Financial aid packages** for tuition/housing expenses.
- **Priority** for campus housing.
- **Academic advisement** (class selection and registration).
- **Employment services, mentoring, and career counseling.**
- Regular contact with a **counselor**.
- **Supplemental support services** (i.e. child care, textbook vouchers, etc.)

Priority registration.



- Once enrolled, foster youth and former foster youth are generally entitled to priority registration. This means that they get to sign up for classes earlier than most other students, and they should definitely take advantage of this benefit!
- Indiana state and community colleges are required to provide this service. Many others offer priority registration, but the law does not require them to do so.

Keep talking to the youth about school, even when s/he begins college.



- **Show** that you're **invested and interested** in the youth's future, and that the youth's academics continue to be very important to you.
- **Celebrate the youth's academic successes!** Ask to read the youth's papers and about what the youth is studying.

My Goals:



What I will do:

How often I will do this:

Resources.



This PowerPoint, Tip Sheets, Mentoring Modules, and supporting materials can be found at: www.foster-ed.org.

If you have questions about the materials, please contact: info@fostered.org

Other Resources:

- *Major financial aid programs*, available at www.calgrants.org
- *FAFSA Tips for Applicants in Unique Situations*, written by NASFAA
- *California Chafee Grant*, written by California Student Aid Commission, available at www.chafee.csac.ca.gov
- *Myth-Busting Financial Aid for Foster Youth!*, available at www.cacollegepathways.org

More resources.



- *Education Services for Transition Age Youth Factsheet*, written by the California Foster Youth Education Task Force, available at www.cfyetf.org
- *California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE)*, available at www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/
- *Foster Youth Educational Planning Guide*, written by California College Pathways
- *UC Information*, available at www.universityofcalifornia.edu
- *CSU information*, available at www.csumentor.edu