

Section 4 Overview

This section pertains to the policy and procedures necessary when an out-of-home placement of a child is imminent or has occurred.

Chapter 21 Overview

This chapter discusses activities necessary when a youth is between the ages of 14-21.

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21.1 Mandates and Rationale

Section 477 of Public Law 99-272 requires each youth in out-of-home care, ages 16-21 to have an Independent Living Plan based on a Life Skills Inventory. Missouri has broadened this to include independent living services to all youth ages 14-21.

The Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 (the Act), signed into law December 14, 1999, established the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, hereinafter referred to as Chafee. This Act directs states to include a broad range of stakeholders in the planning, coordination, and delivery of independent living services. With the passage of H.R. 6893: Fostering Connections and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-351) Chafee was amended to add the purpose of providing services to youth who after the age of 16 leave foster care for adoption or guardianship.

National statistics indicate about 20,000 youth emancipate from the foster care system each year when they reach age eighteen. These young people leave without emotional or financial support that families provide. Many of these youth are not adequately prepared for life on their own. Turning eighteen may mean the beginning of a long and solitary journey toward adulthood if they have no one to turn to for help or support.

To strengthen the system of support that contributes to the safety of these young people we must: 1) increase early and consistent access to independent living preparation skills, especially opportunities for realistic practice of life skills; 2) ensure the active involvement of young people in the individual planning and decision-making process that will lead to successful emancipation; 3) ensure no youth is released from foster care to homelessness; and 4) provide access to transitional housing and longer term affordable housing options.

Young people who have left foster care say the immediate struggle for day-to-day survival after leaving care makes planning for a good future very difficult. To safeguard the well-being of youth making this transition, a continuum of support and preparation must begin when the youth enters out-of-home care. The Act enables the division to provide time-limited services and financial assistance to help these young adults as they develop the skills and education needed to move successfully into self-sufficiency and independence.

Chafee services should not be used as a substitute for sound permanency planning. In this context, independent living services do not constitute a permanency goal, but form a set of services provided to older youth to assist them in their efforts in reaching self-sufficiency. Independent Living is not an alternative to adoption for youth. Enrollment in Chafee shall occur concurrently with continued efforts to locate and achieve placement in adoptive families. The youth's case goal should be driven by his/her individualized case plan.

For youth who plan to enter into a post-secondary or other educational program, remaining in the state's care and custody to continue to have access to necessary services may be in their best interest. It may appear that Chafee conflicts with the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) of 1997. However, ASFA focuses on safety, permanency and well-being for all children, while Chafee focuses on services. The

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Division can comply with ASFA and Chafee by ensuring foster care youth in Legal Status 1 have access to independent living services regardless of their current placement or permanency.

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21.2 Definition and Purpose

Adolescence is a time of adjustment culminating, hopefully, with a successful transition to adulthood and independence. This is a very difficult time of transition for the youth, which can only be made easier with proactive, supportive case planning, involving the youth. There is no definite age for this maturational process to occur. The only certainty is that the process will take place.

For youth in out-of-home care, who can neither return home nor be adopted, independence becomes a factual circumstance. The earlier the youth's needs are addressed, the greater the youth's chances for successful transition. The case manager's role is to ensure that the youth is involved in all phases of planning for their future and to facilitate the youth taking advantage of opportunities provided for them.

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21.3 Older Youth Program

The Older Youth Program incorporates the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999, a federal legislation, which introduced the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program in each state. At that time, Missouri Children's Division renamed the Independent Living Program to the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, per the new law. The Missouri Children's Division has again changed the program to a name that more broadly encompasses all of the needs of older youth in foster care. The new name, the Older Youth Program, (OYP) better reflects the specific philosophy and services that are offered to youth, ages 14 and older, in the custody or previously in the custody of the Missouri Children's Division.

The Older Youth Program encompasses philosophy through positive youth development and the distinct permanency needs of adolescents. Three services are provided through the Older Youth Program: The John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program services are being provided by a contractor or Community Partnership. Transitional Living Services are housing options and are also being provided through contracted agencies. Independent Living arrangements are also encompassed in the Older Youth Program.

21.3.1 Program Goals:

- To identify youth who are likely to remain in foster care until age 18 and to help these youth make the transition to self-sufficiency by providing services. These services may include, but are not limited to: assistance in obtaining a high school diploma, career exploration, vocational training, job placement and retention, training in daily living skills, training in budgeting and financial management skills, substance abuse prevention, and preventive health activities (including smoking avoidance, nutrition education, and pregnancy prevention).
- To assist youth who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age receive the education, training, and services necessary to obtain employment;
- To assist youth who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age prepare for and enter post-secondary training and education institutions;
- To provide independent living services to youth who after age 16 or older, leave foster care for adoption or guardianship.
- To provide personal and emotional support to youth aging out of foster care, through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults;

- To provide financial, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other appropriate support and services to former foster youth, who left care on or after age 17.5 and have not yet reached age 21 to complement their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and to assure that program participants recognize and accept their personal responsibility in preparing for and making the successful transition from adolescence to adulthood; and
- To make available vouchers for education and training, including post-secondary learning and education, to youth who have aged out of foster care.

21.3.2 Eligibility:

- Youth, ages 14-21, currently in the legal custody of the Division and in out-of-home placement;
- Youth, who exited legal custody of the Division on or after the age of 17.5 but have not yet reached age 21.
- Youth, who after age 16 or older, leave foster care for adoption or guardianship.

21.3.3 Referral Process

The case manager is responsible for ensuring that all youth 14-21 receive the skills necessary to become self-sufficient upon release from custody. Youth, ages 14-21, in the legal custody of the Division and in out-of-home placement are to be referred for Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Services, regardless of their case plan.

Youth that have been adopted or obtained guardianship after the age of 16 will follow the same referral process for youth in care if a referral was not previously made, but Adoptive or Guardianship Case Managers will assist youth, adoptive parents, and guardians with completion of the necessary tools and assessments needed for referral. Youth in an adoptive or guardianship placement that were previously referred continue to be eligible for services upon the case plan being achieved. However, the Adoptive or Guardianship Case Manager will be responsible for ensuring that services are being provided to assist the youth in independence skills and will review the Individual Life Skills Progress Form, CD-95 and notify the Older Youth Transition Specialist and Chafee Provider if the desire for services changes. Participation is not mandatory for youth who are in an adoptive or guardianship placement.

Youth enrolled in the Transitional Living Program will receive Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Services through their respective provider. The referral should be made to the Older Youth Transition Specialist assigned to the area in which the youth resides. The case manager will complete the referral process by giving the Older Youth Transition Specialist the following:

- **Older Youth Program Referral, CD-93**

This is used in conjunction with other forms to refer older youth for OYP Services including Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Services and Transitional Living Services (group homes and scattered sites). Forms included with the referral form must have been completed within the last six months.

- **Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) Scored Report;**

- **Adolescent FST Guide and Individualized Action Plan, CD-94;** Life Skills Strengths/Needs Assessment Reporting Form, CD-97, is required to be completed in order to complete the Individualized Action Plan, CD-94, but does not have to be submitted to the Older Youth Transition Specialist for referral to the program. The CD-97 should be kept in the youth's file in the Older Youth Program section.

21.3.4 Youth Assessment

Assessment is both a process as well as a product. The product of an assessment is an agreement. It gives youth the chance to tell their story. The youth's independent living competencies will be identified using the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessments, Life Skills Strengths/Needs Assessment, CD-97, and the Adolescent FST Guide and Individualized Action Plan, CD-94. The purpose of a life skills assessment is to provide the youth, youth's caregiver, and Case Manager comprehensive information that will assist the youth with preparing for self-sufficiency. The assessment is to be used in conjunction with other information available to focus specifically on those areas of the youth's life that are, or will, impact on their preparation for self-sufficiency. The assessment will assist in gaining understanding of the youth's strengths and challenges so that practical, concrete efforts can be made to achieve the youth's goals.

The Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment is a free web-based (<http://www.caseylifeskills.org>) evaluation of youth independent living skills. It was developed to provide a tool to assess what youth are learning and what impact life skill instruction is having. The youth format contains items to measure self-reported knowledge, behaviors and a brief performance section to test actual knowledge of life skills. The caregiver form asks a parent or other adult to rate the youth in his/her care on the same set of knowledge and behavior items used

in the youth self-report. The assessment is available in English, Spanish, and French. For each format, there are four developmentally related levels: Level I (8 -9 years), Level II (10-12 years) Level III (13-15 years) and Level IV (16+ years).

Case Managers must ensure all youth ages 14 and older are administered the ACLSA. It is crucial at least one adult complete the caretaker form to gain a realistic picture of the youth's life skills accomplishments. Up to three adults can complete the caregiver format, but it is important the adult completing the assessment is someone who knows the youth well.

Once the youth and the caregiver have completed the assessment, the Case Manager should receive a scored report instantly. The scored report provides both a summary of the actual responses to each question as well as the domain scores, overall scores, and a performance score. The domain scores indicate areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. The ACLSA scored report is useful for practice as it can help youth, caregivers, and staff acknowledge youth strengths, develop a realistic picture of youth readiness for emancipation, and identify areas in which youth may need to learn more or develop additional skills. This can create opportunities and facilitates increased understanding among all team members. A matching scored report (caregiver and youth scores on the same report) is achieved when the caregiver(s) and youth complete the assessment within 42 days of each other, thus making it easier to have the conversation regarding life skills. The initial assessment is completed by the case manager and on a yearly basis thereafter by the contracted provider of services.

Youth may be assessed as often as appropriate for the situation. It is also completed upon the youth exiting services. Aggregate data comparison between the initial assessment and the yearly assessment provides a picture of how well youth are doing.

The ACLSA is completed within the first sixty days of a youth coming into care after age fourteen or turning 14 while in care. The ACLSA takes about 15-25 minutes to complete, depending on which ACLSA level is used and the youth's reading level. Preferably, the ACLSA is completed electronically via the Internet, but copies can be printed from the ACLSA web site at [Casey Life Skills](#) and taken by hand and the responses entered into the website at a later time.

Adolescent FST Guide and Individualized Action Plan, CD-94, is a comprehensive document to guide team members through the Family Support Team (FST) process. The plan will identify the youth-specific team members, the identified individuals for a youth support system, goals for the youth and life skills assessment and continued evaluation.

The Learning/Action Plan takes the place of the Written Service Agreement if reunification is not the goal. If reunification is the goal, the Learning Plan will be used in conjunction with the family's Written Service Agreement. The form will be completed according to the age of the youth. This is an assessment tool to aid in determining life skills needed and obtained and will aid in documentation. It is also a tool to capture a thorough assessment of the youth as well as teach life skills. The entire form does not need to be completed at once. It is a living document that will be updated constantly through out the youth's time in care.

The learning goals and expectations provide the framework for life skills instruction. It is designed to help youth acquire knowledge and understanding about a life skill and then apply the life skill to real life situations. The learning goal represents the overall goal for instruction, and the expectations describe what the youth should be able to do after instruction takes place.

The learning plan can be developed electronically through the Casey life skills website and copied and pasted into the Adolescent FST Guide and Individualized Action Plan. The Guide and Plan are to be completed within 120 days of a youth coming into care after the age of 14 or turning 14. The Adolescent FST Guide and Individualized Action Plan should be started in the first thirty days of a youth coming into care after the age of 14 or turning 14 in conjunction with the youth by the case manager. It is an on-going document and is presented at Permanency Planning Reviews in conjunction with the Child Assessment and Service Plan, CS-1. For youth eligible for Chafee in an adoptive or guardianship placement, the family will update the form with assistance of the Adoptive or Guardianship Case Manager and the revised Guide and Plan will be submitted to the Older Youth Transition Specialist by the Adoptive or Guardianship Case Manager at least every six months.

Life Skills Strengths/Needs Assessment Guideline Questions, CD-96, and Life Skills Strength/Needs Reporting Form, CD-97, are interview style tools to assist in the planning process. The strengths/needs assessment uses a holistic approach to develop rapport and engage the youth. The assessment covers nine domains and provides a snapshot in time. This tool is used to assist in determining what a youth wants to work on (need statement) right now for goals in the Adolescent FST Guide and Individualized Action Plan/Learning Plan and is filed in the youth's record. The youth receives a copy of the completed form. This form is completed within the first 60 days of a youth turning 14 or coming into care after the age of 14. The form can also be completed again as the youths achieve their goals and need to set additional goals.

Individual Life Skills Progress Form, CD-95, is a form used to record performance of youth in achieving life skills by using a Likert scale of Got It, Working On It, or Needs Assistance. It is completed through direct observation of the youth's work during and just after instruction has taken place and helps the youth appreciate what has just been demonstrated. Together, the youth and the

instructor decide where the youth is on the three-point scale. It also provides the agency with historical data on the youth's life skill overall development. This form is completed quarterly by the person teaching life skills. This may or may not be a contracted agency.

The Portfolio is a collection of samples that communicate a youth's interest and give evidence of the youth's talents. It is used to show others what the youth has accomplished, learned, or produced. The portfolio is created during life skills instruction and is guided by the learning goals. Performance is observed and recorded on the CD-95 so staff may see the concrete results of instruction. The portfolio process involves the appreciation and evaluation of one's work. Portfolio items are completed for each life skill instruction.

21.3.5 Credit Reports

The Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act of 2011 requires each youth age 16 and older in foster care receive a copy of any consumer credit report each year until discharged from foster care, and youth must be assisted in interpreting the credit report and resolving any inconsistencies.

Free credit reports from three nationwide consumer credit reporting companies can be requested online at AnnualCreditReport.com, by phone at 1-877-322-8228, or by completing the [Annual Credit Report Request Form](#) and mailing the completed form to Annual Credit Report Request Service, P.O. Box 105281, Atlanta, GA 303048-5281. All three reports may be requested at once or ordered one at a time. Ordering separately allows monitoring of credit more frequently throughout the year.

AnnualCreditReport.com is the only authorized source for the free annual credit report that can be obtained per the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

Because the information in credit reports is used to evaluate applications for credit, insurance, employment, and renting a home, the information needs to be accurate and up-to-date. The Children's Service Worker should assist youth in interpreting the credit report and resolving any inconsistencies. Information to assist with interpretation and education can be found on the [Federal Trade Commission's](#) website.

Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, both the credit reporting company and the information provider (the person, company, or organization that provides information to a credit reporting company) are responsible for correcting inaccurate or incomplete information in reports. When reviewing the report with youth, if there are accounts that are not recognized or information that is inaccurate, there is concern for identity fraud. Identity fraud is when a consumer whose means of identification or financial information is used or transferred without authorization from the consumer.

Examples of concern would be credit cards that the youth has not opened, utility bills in the youth's name that were prior to the youth residing on his/her own, or car purchases if the youth does not have a vehicle.

If the Children's Service Worker suspects identity fraud, the Division of Legal Services (investigations and/or litigation section) should be consulted to determine if an investigation or referral to law enforcement is necessary. If the youth's identity has been compromised the worker should send a referral to the Division of Legal Services so the necessary legal steps to correct the problem can be taken. Notice should be provided to the youth's Juvenile Officer and Guardian Ad Litem about the report findings.

If there is a need to further educate youth regarding credit, Children's Service Workers should address this on the CD-94, Adolescent Family Support Team Guide and Individualized Action Plan by submitting new goals to the Chafee provider. The Chafee provider will assist with identified tasks of the new goals.

The CD-94 should be updated to reflect that the credit report has been received on a yearly basis, beginning when the youth turns 16 or comes into care after age 16 and each subsequent year thereafter while in foster care.

All documentation pertaining to the credit checks should be filed in the Older Youth Section of the youth's record i.e. request form, credit report.

As this is life skill teaching, documentation of this service should also be included on the NYTD Older Youth Services and Financial Expenditures Screen in FACES

21.3.6 Education and Training Voucher

The Promoting Safe and Stable Families Amendments of 2001 added a 6th purpose, Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) to the Chafee program. ETV allows states to provide funds for youth to attend post-secondary education or training programs. Early and on-going support for education is extremely important in preparing youth for self-sufficiency. Setting, monitoring and incorporating educational goals as part of their permanency plan will assist youth in understanding the importance of having a vision of educational success. At a minimum our foster youth should have a GED as their educational goal, but it is our desire that youth shall have the opportunity to receive post-secondary education and training. The ETV Program gives the Children's Division the opportunity to provide educational and training funds to assist eligible youth interested in pursuing a higher education to reach their goals. The Missouri ETV program is administered by the Orphan Foundation of America.

Those eligible for ETVs include:

- Youth currently eligible for Chafee services; and

- Youth who were adopted or obtained legal guardianship from foster care after their 16th birthday;

Additionally:

- Youth participating in a higher education program on their 21st birthday shall remain eligible until age 23, provided they are making satisfactory progress;
- Youth must have a high school diploma or equivalent;
- Youth must demonstrate academic success or motivation in school (generally a “C” average or its equivalency or as otherwise agreed upon with the plan) or in a training program;
- Youth must be accepted to an accredited or pre-accredited public or non-profit college/university and vocational school or certified training program;
- Appropriate scholarships, grants and other financial assistance must be explored and utilized; and
- There must be reasonable assurance the youth will graduate from the educational or training program.
- Personal assets (bank account, car, home, etc.) are not worth more than \$10,000.
- Youth must be aged 18, 19, or 20 when first applying to the ETV Program.

Youth may receive up to \$5,000 per year or the total “cost of attendance”. The cost of attendance includes:

- Tuition and fees.
- Room and Board for former foster youth who left care at age 18 or after but have not reached age 21. Room and Board assistance may also be available to eligible youth 21-23 if they are enrolled full-time in a post-secondary educational or training program.
- Rental or purchase of required equipment, materials or supplies (including a computer).
- Allowance for books, supplies, transportation, etc.; and

- Special study projects.

Eligible youth may apply for post secondary education/training assistance by completing the application online at <https://www.statevoucher.org> and submitting the required forms:

- ETV Student Cashier Statement;
- ETV Financial Aid Release Form;
- Federal Financial Student Aid Application (FASFA)

All applicants must have an active E-mail account which can be created for free through the ETV website. ETV assistance will be reviewed and made on a semester basis. Students must reapply online for every new school year. Every term, they must complete and submit a new Financial Aid Release Forms and Cashier Statements.

Older Youth Transition Specialists assist with eligibility determination once a student has applied on-line.

21.3.7 Educational Opportunity for Children of Families Serving in the Military

Occasionally, families serving in the military receive Family-Centered Services (FCS) or their children come into custody of the Children's Division. If the youth is a survivor of a war veteran, they may be eligible for a tuition grant for higher education. Section 173.234. 6-11 RSMo. states "Survivors of war veterans shall be certified as eligible by the Missouri veteran's commission to receive a tuition grant for higher education. If the survivor is granted financial assistance under any other student aid program, public or private, the full amount of such aid shall be reported to the coordinating board for higher education by the institution and the eligible survivor. Surviving children who are eligible shall be permitted to apply for full tuition benefits conferred by this section until they reach 25 years of age."

Related Subject: Section 4 Chapter 25.7.4 Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

21.3.8 State Youth Advisory Board

The Missouri State Youth Advisory Board (SYAB) was established December 1992. The SYAB meets on a quarterly basis. Each member of the board is an outstanding youth in foster care or youth that obtained adoption or guardianship after the age of sixteen that represents other youth in his/her area of the state. Each of the seven administrative areas is represented with up to four (4) youth

who are nominated at their local level to serve on the SYAB to assure that SYAB members are equally representing their specific area as related to geographical size. The board also may consist of three non-voting, ex-officio members. Ex-officio members must be a current or former foster care youth who has served at least a one-year term as a board member or alternate, within the last three years.

Recognizing that each SYAB member represents all children and youth who are/were in out-of-home placements, each SYAB member is responsible for providing Children's Services' policy and procedural input to CD administrative staff/Juvenile Court. The SYAB decides what goals and activities they want to pursue for upcoming meetings and carry those out accordingly. The SYAB also works as a network by bringing back important information to the Area Youth Advisory Board (AYAB) or other area youth leadership community, who in turn, takes information back to youth in their area. When recommended to serve on the SYAB, the membership term is one year, however, once a member; there are guidelines to follow in order to continue membership.

Leadership opportunities are an important life skill and should be given to all youth in care.

[E-Forms and Instructions](#)

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21.4 Aftercare Program

The intent of the Foster Care Independence Act was to increase funding to states for the expansion of the independent living program. This expansion allows the Division to serve youth with an array of services to meet their needs. Eligible youth are between the ages of 17.5 to 21, who left foster care at age 17.5 or after, but have not reached age twenty-one.

Aftercare services are meant to be flexible, short term and are intended to be used as a **safety net** in order to meet the needs of the young adult when:

- Remaining in state care and custody after age 17.5 is not a realistic or practical option;
- The youth has requested to leave custody upon or after age 17.5 and his/her case manager has assisted him/her in developing a reasonable and acceptable exit plan; or
- The Juvenile/Family Court has automatically terminated jurisdiction on or after age 17.5.

21.4.1 Referral and Assessment

Case managers and service workers shall notify youth in the process of transitioning out of care about assistance available under the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, the Educational Training Voucher Program, and MO HealthNet Insurance.

Youth may also contact the Division for services after they have left care. There may be several avenues former foster care youth take to return to the Division for services. Youth may directly contact their former case manager or Older Youth Transition Specialist. Youth may come to the Division for assistance through Family Support Division (FSD) or referrals from other agencies (e.g., homeless shelters, Workforce Development, etc.). Once a youth contacts the Division for services, a referral, CD-93, should be made to the Older Youth Transition Specialist. The Older Youth Transition Specialist will refer the youth to the contracted Chafee provider in the region of the youth's residence.

Older Youth Transition Specialists are located and serve in the Regions/Circuits throughout the state as listed below:

Northwest Region: Circuits - 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 17, 18, 43
Northeast Region: Circuits - 1, 2, 10, 11, 12, 13, 19, 20, 23, 41, 45
Southeast Region: Circuits - 24, 25, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 42
Southwest Region: Circuits - 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 38, 39, 40, 44
Jackson County Region: Circuit - 16

St. Louis City Region: Circuit - 22
St. Louis County Region: Circuit - 21

County offices shall establish the following protocol to ensure eligible young adults who were former foster care youth coming into the agency shall have access to services:

1. Ninety days prior to a youth being released from foster care on or after age 17.5, the Children's Service Worker should have a discussion with the youth informing them of services available when they do exit custody. Each county office should have Exit Packets readily available to give to youth. The Exit Packet should contain MO HealthNet information, the Chafee Aftercare Pamphlet, an Education and Training Voucher (ETV) brochure, the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) Pamphlet, Consent to Access Administrative Data release form and any additional resources pertinent to their own local communities.
2. Upon leaving care, a letter signed by the case manager shall be provided to the youth on state letterhead verifying the youths time in care and exit date. This will aid youth in receiving assistance after leaving care within the state and out of state for services that require eligibility verification.
3. When the young adult's first contact with the agency after leaving care is through FSD, the FSD worker shall follow procedures instructed through the Income Maintenance memorandum, IM00-191, dated December 27, 2000, on the process of collaborating with or referring the young adult to Children's Division (CD). FSD staff will refer the young adult to the Children's Division (CD) liaison/contact person for former foster care youth during the application process.
4. If the liaison/contact person is not available in a county, then the CD supervisor will be responsible for the assignment of the referral. In the absence of, or if there is not a CD supervisor based in the county, the assignment of the referral shall be the responsibility of the Circuit Manager.
5. The assigned CD staff shall meet with and provide the young adult with the CFCIP Support Application, CS-ILP-4, form to complete. When completed the form will provide the following information:
 - Identifying information for the young adult;
 - Current housing situation and household composition;
 - Educational level and completion;
 - Employment and salary information;
 - Current and outstanding bills;

- Medical/mental health needs and access;
- Available family/community resources;
- Current/future needs;
- Ability/inability to reach self-sufficiency and continued independence;
- Present and future goals; and
- Willingness to accept personal responsibility.

CD staff or the Older Youth Transition Specialist shall complete a database search to confirm the current age of the young adult and the age at discharge to ensure program eligibility and document the findings on the Older Youth Program Referral form. Upon making contact with the young adult and receiving information of the young adults need for Chafee Aftercare services, the CD county liaison/contact person for former foster care youth shall immediately notify the Older Youth Transition Specialist assigned to their county by faxing or mailing the Older Youth Program Referral form and, if completed, the CFCIP Support Application, CS-ILP-4, to the Older Youth Transition Specialist. The youth's current address should be updated in the Contact List of the youth's most recent closed AC function. The Older Youth Transition Specialist shall forward the referral to the contracted Chafee Foster Care Independence Program agency. The CFCIP contracted agency will assist the young adult in designing a plan that is realistic and supports their efforts to become self-sufficient or to continue to live independently. The agreement shall be updated or renegotiated as often as needed. In the event of a crisis, if the Older Youth Transition Specialist is not accessible, the county liaison/contact person for former foster care youth may contact the Older Youth Transition Specialist's supervisor. Even in a crisis situation, the county liaison/contact person for former foster care youth will follow the procedure of referring the young adult to the designated Older Youth Transition Specialist by faxing the Older Youth Program Referral form to the appropriate, available Older Youth Program staff. The Older Youth Transition Specialist or Older Youth Program staff shall immediately follow up with the county liaison/contact person for former foster care youth involved with the young adult.

21.4.2 Healthcare for Former Foster Care Youth

Youth who have exited the State's custody on or after their 18th birthday and are not yet 21 years old are automatically eligible for MO HealthNet coverage, (formerly known as Medicaid). Youth are eligible without regard to their income or assets, per RSMo 208.151.1 (SB 577, 2007). The youth's most current address must be updated in FACES under SB577 or through the MO HealthNet Division so that the youth may receive a MO HealthNet card. Once the youth

receives his/her healthcare card they should enroll into a MO HealthNet Managed Care plan for their physical healthcare; if they reside in a geographic area covered by Managed Care, their behavioral healthcare will be provided on a fee-for-service basis.

For those youth who are Missouri residents but are attending an out-of-state school or on a visit outside of Missouri, the out-of-state provider must be willing to enroll in the MO HealthNet program. Per federal requirements, Medicaid cannot be opened in two states at the same time.

When a youth exits CD custody, the Children's Service Worker will close the Alternative Care Client case in FACES, in order to capture the exit data in our information system. Upon closing, the system will automatically populate the youth as LSM, which denotes the youth is eligible for MO HealthNet coverage only.

Each county has designated liaison/contact person(s) for those LSM youth to contact and to ensure address changes are made in the FACES system. The contact/liaison is responsible for referring the youth to an Older Youth Transition Specialist, if necessary.

Eligible youth receiving MO HealthNet services through Family Support Division (FSD) will continue with their current healthcare coverage. If the eligible youth currently receiving FSD services becomes ineligible for healthcare through FSD, FSD will refer the youth to the CD.

If the former foster care youth already has health insurance or obtains health insurance from another source such as employment, they must use their third party insurance before using MO HealthNet. The youth will need to inform their medical/behavioral services provider that they are eligible for MO HealthNet.

21.4.3 Procedural Guidelines for Service Delivery

A critical piece for young people exiting care is the ability to develop a support network, and the influence of informal role models to serve as mentors in a support network. While each of the young adult's needs is important in its own right, we are increasingly learning the importance of significant adult relationships in supporting young adults during the transition to adulthood. Support services for former foster youth must focus on a larger target than the establishment of mentoring relationships. As we identify the important resources which will be needed by these young adults to support their efforts to achieve independence, we must develop partnerships with public and private agencies that already offer the needed services. Emphasis is placed on connecting or referring youth rather than providing financial assistance. Chafee funds may be expended for a variety of reasons and should be used as a support for the young adult, not as an on-going supplemental funding source.

Expenditures may include, but should not be limited to, emergency/crisis intervention, housing/room and board, educational assistance, job training/employment assistance, and support services. Support services should include, but are not limited to life skills, transportation, health care, mentoring, child care, and job training/employment assistance.

21.4.4 Education and Training Vouchers

The Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) Program is also available to former foster care youth eligible for Aftercare services.

Related Subject: Section 21 Chapter 3.5 [Education and Training Vouchers for current foster care youth.](#)

21.4.5 Timeframes and Exceptions

For youth who do not have the option of remaining in state care and custody after 17.5 years old, or if the youth has developed a reasonable and acceptable aftercare plan and requested to leave custody, Chafee services should be used as a **safety net**, not a supplemental funding source, to assist them in reaching self-sufficiency and independence.

Former foster youth who left care at 17.5 years old or after, but have not reached age 21 may choose to request assistance only once or return intermittently to seek assistance as needed. **The Act is very clear; funding cannot be expended for room and board for any child who has not reached 18 years of age or for young adults upon reaching their 21st birthday. There are no exceptions to this law.** Former foster youth who left care prior to age 17.5 are not eligible for Chafee Aftercare services, with the exception of youth who obtained kinship guardianship or adoption after the age of sixteen, who are eligible for full Chafee services. Most Chafee services, except Education and Training Vouchers, must end for the young adult upon reaching his/her 21st birthday, regardless of the legal status, with the exception of youth who obtained adoption or guardianship after the age of sixteen, who are eligible for full Chafee services.

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21.5 Independent Living Arrangement

An Independent Living Arrangement is a state-approved and subsidized placement option for youth age 17 and older who cannot return home. The case manager in conjunction with the Family Support Team (FST) determines the youth's suitability for placement in an independent living arrangement, by assessing the youth's motivation, abilities, skills and capabilities for living independently and ultimate emancipation from the service delivery system.

21.5.1 Criteria for Independent Living Arrangement

Independent Living Arrangements (ILA) should be the **planned** placement for youth in out-of-home care and should never be used when a more appropriate placement resource is available for the youth. The payment of \$372.00 for monthly maintenance is made directly to the youth when they are in an ILA placement. Prior to placement of a youth, appropriate County Children's Services staff or contracted case agency staff must approve the suitability of the residence. Staff shall use the TLP Advocate and Independent Living Arrangement (ILA) Checklist, CS-TLP-1, which provides a procedure for documenting health and safety requirements specific to an older adolescent placed in an ILA. The CS-TLP-1 should be completed every time a youth moves to a new ILA.

Criteria for an ILA are as follows:

1. Youth is at least 17 years of age;
2. Youth is under court jurisdiction and in the care and custody of the Children's Division;
3. There is no likelihood of reunification with parent/legal guardian;
4. The youth does not want to be adopted;
5. The case manager has consulted with the FST and a plan has been completed that specifies how the youth will live;
6. Youth is enrolled and participating actively in the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program;
7. Youth is able to demonstrate competency in life skills;
8. Youth is able to manage his/her own finances and live independently;
9. Youth has demonstrated responsible conduct for at least 12 months:
 - a. No criminal law violations;

- b. If applicable, school performance is equal to youth's capabilities; and
 - c. Responsible money management.
10. Youth is attending an educational or vocational school regularly to the satisfaction of school officials and is gainfully employed; and
11. Youth has assisted or developed their plan for independent living.

21.5.2 Independent Living Arrangement Housing Options

There are a variety of housing options available to youth who have demonstrated the skills/competencies to live in an independent living arrangement. Whatever option is selected by the youth, it must be stable and safe and in a community setting that allows the youth full access to services and resources in order to fully develop independent living skills. Housing options include the following:

1. Single dwelling (house, apartment, mobile home);
2. Shared housing;
3. Boarding home;
4. Dormitory (college program); or
5. Subsidized housing (HUD-Section 8).

21.5.3 Independent Living Arrangement Support Services/Systems

The majority of youth in ILA placements have limited or no family support systems to rely on in the event they experience a crisis, i.e., financial, health, emotional, etc. Therefore, it is critical that the case manager assist the youth in identifying and accessing resources to enhance the prospects for success in the ILA. Specifically, the case manager youth, and other family support team members should identify, to the extent possible and appropriate, the following support systems:

1. Medical/dental services;
2. Educational/vocational training programs/options;
3. Employment opportunities;
4. Emergency contacts within the agency;
5. Family supports;

6. Religious supports;
7. Community sponsor/mentor; and
8. Others as needed.

21.5.4 Termination of Independent Living Arrangement

An Independent Living Arrangement subsidized and supported by the Division is temporary and should be terminated under the following circumstances:

1. Youth has demonstrated success in living independently and the FST agree that the youth will likely continue to live successfully as an adult in the community and should be released from court jurisdiction;
2. Youth is unsuccessful in living independently and requires placement in a more structured and supervised setting, i.e., transitional living program, out-of-home care or residential treatment;
3. Youth is in runaway status in excess of seven (7) consecutive days and likelihood of his/her returning to care is remote;
4. Youth engages in criminal activity which results in action by the legal system; or
5. Youth is released from court jurisdiction, Division custody, or reaches his/her 21st birthday.

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21.6 Transitional Living Program

The Transitional Living Program (TLP) is intended for a youth, typically age 16 or 17 and over; whose permanency goal is not reunification, adoption or legal guardianship. Youth younger than these age specifications may be determined eligible for TLP if mutually agreed upon by the TLP provider, the Family Support Team, and the case manager. Transitional living experiences for youth are vital. The purpose of the transitional living program is to provide a living environment that provides a path for the youth to transition from alternative care to self sufficiency and achieves the outcome of preparing the youth to live independently.

Adolescence is a time of testing, not only one's abilities but others' abilities as well. It is a time of trial and error. Our out-of-home care youth need to be allowed to make mistakes and to learn by natural consequences. Staff and care providers are to assist the youth with coping and learning from their successes and deficits.

When youth in out-of-home care make mistakes, staff and care providers need to exhibit patience, support and guidance. Youth need to feel the security that we will not give up on them, rather, we will work with them as they learn how to live and function in the adult world.

Ideally, TLP offers the youth the opportunity to transition smoothly from a more restrictive environment to a less restrictive setting based on the readiness of the youth. TLP allows the youth to apply what has been learned in their life skills teaching to actual daily living. Based on the particular needs of the youth, they may progress from one setting to another but may enter or exit any living situation at any time when it is felt by staff and the youth that they are ready for a change.

When a youth is not successful, staff and care providers should assess the current needs of the youth and modify the case plan accordingly. It is hoped the majority of issues will be resolved in the current placement. As a last resort, a youth may be returned to a more restrictive setting and receive remedial services as needed. When the youth is ready to progress again, TLP placement may occur.

21.6.1 Transitional Living Advocate

The Transitional Living Advocate (TLA) is an adult, 21 years of age or older, who provides the youth a safe place to stay, continued life skills training, encouragement and guidance in regard to employment, education and/or training, and preparation for successful transition from CD custody. The TLA may be married or single and is willing to provide the time, a home, supervision and support needed by the youth transitioning out of care. They must be successful in their own independence, i.e., employed, maintain a household and generally provide a positive role model for the youth. The advocate should be similar to or understanding of the youth's race or ethnic background.

They must have flexible attitudes and expectations of the youth during this difficult time of transition. The advocate should have prior experience with adolescents, be energetic, and have the ability to listen and to handle failure as a learning process. They must have an understanding of adolescent behavior and be able to let the youth make mistakes and deal with natural consequences. Communication is essential when working with youth as well as allowing the youth to form their values.

The advocate should be aware of community resources that will support the youth's endeavors and be willing to assist the youth in accessing those services. Cultural sensitivity is a necessary asset of the advocate as is the ability to work with a variety of people. It will be required for the advocate to work with the Children's Service Worker, support providers, and others in developing and maintaining the youth's case plan.

This type of placement is crucial to the youth's successful transition to adulthood. It is hoped the advocate will become a life-long friend and mentor for the youth, allowing the youth to return for visits, holidays and occasional support.

Advocates must ensure a safe haven for the youth to stay in; help the youth with employment and education/vocational training; guide the youth and assist the youth with learning to live with rules. The advocate should encourage the youth and provide opportunities for the youth to practice life skills learned in life skills training.

21.6.1.1 TLP Advocate Training

Prior to approval, the advocate must complete the following:

- Successful completion of 18 hours of pre-service, specialized training on adolescent issues through CD including three (3) hours each in cultural/race sensitivity, OYP overview, adolescent development with an emphasis on what to expect from adolescent behavior, emotional obstacles out-of-home care youth must overcome, adolescent sexuality and behavior management via natural consequences;
- A criminal and child abuse/neglect background screening;
- An approved home study completed by the CD case manager/service worker, in the county that the advocates reside;
- A signed copy of the Agreement for the Purchase of TLP Advocate Services, CM-12; and
- Register with the Family Care Safety Registry;

It is recommended each area ensure that a cross section of youth assist in all phases of the advocate training. This includes recruitment and placement. Placement planning is very important and requires adequate time for a good

match. The youth needs to be matched with an advocate who has similar values and has an understanding of the needs of the youth.

21.6.1.2 TLP Advocate Approval

Prior to placement of a youth, appropriate County Children's Services staff, must approve the advocate. Staff shall use The TLP Advocate and Independent Living Arrangement (ILA) Checklist, CS-TLP-1, when determining the suitability of the living arrangement. The CS-TLP-1 provides a procedure for documenting health and safety requirements specific to an older adolescent placed with an advocate.

A TLP advocate has the same right to a fair hearing as a foster parent when approval is denied or revoked. The advocate may also grieve a youth case management decision in the same manner as a foster parent.

21.6.1.3 Advocate Maintenance Payment

The youth shall receive \$586 per month for rent, food, clothing, incidentals and payment to the advocate. \$450 per month shall be paid by the youth to the advocate for food and rent expenses. The youth is to use \$136 per month for other expenses such as clothing, school/work necessities, personal hygiene, grooming, transportation, etc., as well as the establishment of a savings account.

21.6.1.4 Characteristics of the Youth

The youth should be at least 16 years of age with a placement history, which indicates this type of placement as a logical progression to independence. He/she should have developed good decision making skills and has a clear understanding of the program and what is expected.

Youth must be enrolled in the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and actively participating prior to placement. The youth should not require close supervision and should have shown the ability to manage money with little to no assistance. Average or above average school performance is desirable as is some work experience. Work experience is not required for entry into this type of placement, however. It is recommended youth enrolled in school full time should not work more than 20 hours per week.

Related Subject: Section 4 Chapter 21.3.3 Referral Process
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21.6.2 Transitional Living Program Group Home (TLG)

A **licensed**, residential, child care site where older youth, ages 16-18, who have a plan of independent living concentrate on preparation for independent living and completion of their educational/vocational programs in a supervised group setting.

Youth are currently enrolled and actively participating in Chafee Foster Care Independence Program services. Youth should not work more than 20 hours per week, if they attend school full time. Typically, youth entering a TLG have been residing in a residential treatment facility. Youth are expected to maintain employment and develop goals and plans for their future. All facilities that are contracted as TLP group homes are licensed as residential child care agencies by the Residential Program Unit within Central Office.

If the Family Support Team (FST) decides placement in a group home setting would be in the best interest of the youth, staff should refer the youth to the Older Youth Transition Specialist in their region. The case manager will submit the Residential Treatment Referral, CS-9, Adolescent FST Guide and Individualized Action Plan, CD-94, and the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) scored report. All forms, with the exception of the CS-9, must have been completed within the last six months and attached to the Older Youth Program Referral form, CD-93. The CS-9 must have been completed within the last thirty days. Once placed, the group home is responsible for completing a day-to-day service plan that addresses all items listed in the Adolescent FST Guide and Individualized Action Plan, CD-94, within 30 days of the youth's initial placement and quarterly thereafter. The group home provider's service plan should address:

- Academic Achievement;
- Job Readiness;
- Community Services and Support;
- Youth Leadership;
- Independent Living Skills Training.

In order to meet the individual day-to-day service plan, the provider is responsible for contacting, interviewing, and screening youth, lesson planning, liaison activities, skills assessment, record keeping, pre and post testing evaluation, material and resource organization, organization of field trips, incentives for youth, and purchasing supplies for independent living skills training.

The provider of TL services is to reassess the youth annually and upon discharge utilizing the ACLSA.

It is the responsibility of the case manager to update the youth's case in FACES to show the youth placed in a TLG placement type. The maintenance code must be coded "no maintenance".

If a Foster Care Case Management (FCCM) Agency is utilizing a provider that does not hold a contract for Transitional Living services and the facility meets the requirements, in order to show the correct placement, an SS-60 will need to be

submitted to Central Office for the opening of the vendor. The SS-60 will be reviewed to ensure licensing. If the agency does not have a residential child care license for the potential TLG operating site, the Residential Program Unit must first be contacted and a license must be obtained before proceeding with this placement.

Once a youth is residing in a Transitional Living Group Home, Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Services will be provided by the TLG provider.

If at any time the case manager thinks that the contractor for TLG is not meeting the requirements outlined in the Transitional Living contract and the issue cannot be resolved with the contractor, the case manager should contact the Older Youth Transition Specialist with the concerns to be addressed.

21.6.3 Transitional Living Program Single/Scattered Site Apartments (TLS)

This program offers youth, ages 18-20, with a plan of independent living, ideally from a TLP group home, the opportunity to practice life skills and prepare for the future in an apartment setting. Youth in this type of placement receive support and guidance, but supervision is minimal. To be considered for TLS, youth need to demonstrate the ability to make responsible decisions, maintain employment, and have a clear understanding of the financial and emotional demands of living independently. Youth entering TLS ideally would be currently enrolled and actively participating in Chafee Foster Care Independence Program services.

A scattered site apartment is defined as a self-contained furnished (refrigerator, stove, bed, oven, table, chairs, etc.) unit with utilities (trash, sewer/water, electricity/gas, phone accessibility, etc) cooking, sleeping, and bath facilities for no more than one (1) youth per bedroom. Scattered site apartments may include apartments adjacent to other treatment programs, or sites scattered throughout the community and/or apartments clustered together. The apartment must provide a pleasant, clean, safe and healthful environment. Placement settings are located in community environments to allow the youth full access to services and resources in order to fully develop independent living skills.

The apartment must provide a pleasant, clean, safe (including fire extinguisher and fire alarm), and healthful environment. The apartment should be in good repair, including proper screening for ventilation, sufficient window coverings to assure the privacy of each client, and pest controlled. All painted surfaces should be in good condition. All areas and surfaces must be free of undesirable odors. Placement settings are located in community environments to allow the youth full access to services and resources in order to fully develop independent living skills.

Furniture and furnishings should be comfortable and maintained in clean condition and good repair. All upholstered furniture should not be torn. If furniture is torn, it must be covered with fitted slipcovers. The slipcovers must be clean and in good repair with no tears. Throws are not acceptable to cover torn furniture. Chairs should not be broken, have cracked frames, or in any other way be unsafe or unsightly.

All sleeping areas must be physically separated by gender unless otherwise pre-approved by the state agency in writing. There should not be more than one (1) resident per bedroom occupying a given living arrangement unless otherwise approved by the family support team, the youth, the state agency case manager, the provider, and the state agency.

There are two types of Transitional Living Single/Scattered Site Apartment services:

A structured Transitional Living Single/Scattered Site Apartment service is defined as a support being available for the youth to contact twenty-four (24) hours per day and the youth is visited, at a minimum, every seventy-two (72) hours in the youth's living arrangement.

An unstructured Transitional Living Single/Scattered Site Apartment service is defined as a support being available to the youth upon request of the youth and the youth is visited a minimum of one (1) time per week. At least one (1) such visit each month is in the youth's living arrangement.

If a TLS placement is selected by the FST, the case manager should refer the youth to the Older Youth Transition Specialist in their region. The case manager will submit the Residential Treatment Referral, CS-9, Adolescent FST Guide and Individualized Action Plan, CD-94, and the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment scored report. All forms must have been completed within the last six months and attached to the Older Youth Program Referral form, CD-93.

It is also the responsibility of the case manager to update the youth's case in FACES showing a placement type of TLS, with the vendor number of the TLS facility and a maintenance code of no maintenance.

NOTE: This is not an ILA placement; therefore, maintenance payments are never paid directly to the youth. Payment is always made directly to the provider for the youth. The case manager should be sure that the youth's SS-61 reflects no maintenance payment. If a youth has a child, the case manager would then pay monthly CYAC payments to the youth through a CS-65.

If a FCCM agency is utilizing a provider that does not hold a contract for Transitional Living Program services and the facility meets the requirements, in order to show the correct placement an SS-60 should be submitted to Central Office along with the apartment standards checklist.

The TLP Advocate and Independent Living Arrangement Checklist, CS-TLP-1, must be completed and each standard met. A copy of the completed checklist will be filed in the youth's record in the Older Youth Program Section and when using a Children's Division contracted provider, a copy is also provided to the Older Youth Transition Specialist. This form will need to be completed each time the youth moves to a new transitional living apartment, regardless of the reason for the move.

Once placed, the TL Provider is responsible for completing a day-to-day service plan that addresses all items listed in the Adolescent FST Guide and Individualized Action Plan, CD-94 within 30 days of the youth's initial placement and quarterly thereafter. The TL provider's service plan should address:

- Academic Achievement;
- Job Readiness;
- Community Services and Support;
- Youth Leadership;
- Independent Living Skills Training

The provider will demonstrate, document and report competencies obtained by youth for inclusion on the Adolescent FST Guide and Individualized Action Plan, CD-94. In order to meet the individual day-to-day service plan, the provider is responsible for contacting, interviewing and screening youth, lesson planning, liaison activities, skills assessment, record keeping, pre and post testing evaluation, material and resource organization, organization of field trips, incentives for youth, and purchasing supplies for independent living skills training.

The provider is to reassess the youth annually and upon discharge utilizing the ACLSA.

Once a youth is residing in a Transitional Living Scattered Site Placement, Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Services will be provided by the TLS provider. If at any time the case manager thinks that the contractor for TLS is not meeting the requirements outlined in the Transitional Living contract and the issue cannot be resolved with the contractor, the case manager should contact the Older Youth Transition Specialist with the concerns to be addressed.

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21.7 Exit Plan

The goal of an exit plan is to identify anticipated service needs for older youth who are in the process of transitioning out of foster care. Youth who have a comprehensive transition plan are better equipped to transition successfully from foster care to self-sufficiency. An unintended consequence of not preparing youth to exit from foster care is the youth becoming homeless.

Exit planning should be viewed as a collaborative effort between the youth, staff and Family Support Team (FST) members to ensure needed services are in place or the youth is aware of how to access services in their community prior to release.

Related Subject: Section 7 Glossary/Reference : Homeless Child or Youth; Section 4 Chapter 21.4 Aftercare Program

In order to prepare youth for their exit from the foster care system, the Case Manager or Children's Service Worker should plan to meet with their youth to complete exit planning ninety days prior to release from custody. The Adolescent FST Guide and Individualized Action Plan, CD-94, should be updated to reflect the youth's plan for successful transition from foster care.

Upon leaving care, a letter signed by the case manager shall be provided to the youth on state letterhead verifying the youths time in care and exit date. This will aid youth in receiving assistance after leaving care within the state and out of state for services that require eligibility verification.

A summary of the youth's plans should be filed in the Older Youth Program Section of the case record as well as a copy of the eligibility verification letter.

As staff work with youth who are nearing, or past, their 18th birthday and opting to exit from custody, it is imperative that these youth are made aware of resources available to them upon release. Children's Service Workers shall inform these youth of their eligibility for MO HealthNet, and, if possible, determine the address where the youth will reside upon leaving care.

Each county must designate a liaison/contact person(s) for those youth who have exited care to contact. An Exit Packet is to be provided to those youth currently in care as they exit the foster care system, or to former foster care youth requesting Aftercare services. The Exit Packet includes information regarding MO HealthNet coverage, services available through the Chafee Aftercare program, an Education and Training Voucher (ETV) brochure, the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) pamphlet, and the Consent to Access Administrative release form. Each county should also include additional resources pertinent to their own geographic areas into the packet.

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Former foster care youth will be required to enroll into a MO HealthNet Managed Care plan for their physical healthcare, if they reside in a geographic area covered by Managed Care. Their behavioral healthcare will be provided on a fee-for-service basis.

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21.8 Resource Development

While Children's Division (CD) is considered the primary caretaker for youth in out-of-home care, the community plays a crucial role in their healthy development. Given the multitude of needs of youth in and exiting out-of-home care, CD must access and partner with community resources. Community supports are essential, and our efforts to develop an array of resources to meet their areas of need should be on-going. Making a smooth transition to self-sufficiency will depend on the youth's physical, psychological, and emotional well-being. A successful transition to independence hinges on building partnerships with other public and private agencies in the community.

Children's Service Workers, Supervisors, and Older Youth Program Service Providers should be cognizant of community resources already available. The intent of Chafee is to focus on services for youth who are in care, are aging out, or have aged out of the foster care system. Chafee funds are meant to be short term, flexible, and used as a safety net to meet the needs of the youth to assist them in their efforts toward independence. Youth should always be encouraged to work toward independence and self-sufficiency. Chafee providers will refer to and utilize all available resources before accessing Chafee funds and should look to the youth as a resource. Family Support Team (FST) members should regularly brainstorm resources accessible to youth at meetings. Resources may include, but should not be limited to the following:

- MO HealthNet (formerly called Medicaid);
- Employment Agencies;
- Service/Volunteer Organizations for Mentoring;
- College/Technical School Financial Assistance;
- Faith-Based Resources;
- Clothing Resources;
- One-Stop Centers;
- Transportation Resources;
- Child Care Resources;
- Emergency Housing Assistance;
- Food Pantries;
- Community Action Agencies;

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- Adult Education Programs;
- Income Maintenance Programs/Resources;
- Medical Clinics; and
- Other State Agencies.

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21.9 Outcomes

The John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) provides States flexible funding to carry out independent living programs that assist youth in care as well as those transitioning to adulthood. The law also requires the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to develop a data collection system to track the independent living services provided to youth and to develop outcomes that measure States' performance in preparing youth for their transition from foster care to independent living. To meet this requirement, ACF published a proposed rule in the Federal Register in July 2006 and issued a final rule in February 2008. The data collection system is called the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD).

The NYTD regulation requires States to engage in two data collection and reporting activities. First, States collect and report basic demographic data on each youth and the independent living (IL) services provided to them by the State in thirteen broad categories:

- independent living needs assessment
- academic support
- post-secondary educational support
- career preparation
- employment programs or vocational training
- housing education and home management training
- budget and financial management
- health education and risk prevention
- family support and healthy marriage education
- mentoring
- supervised independent living
- room and board financial assistance
- education financial assistance

Life Skills services may be provided for collection and reporting in one of the following ways:

- Through the Chafee provider if the youth is enrolled.
- Through the CD Contracted TLP provider if the youth is enrolled through CD.
- Through TLP services provided via Foster Care Case Management Agencies and reported by the Children's Service Worker.
- Through Missouri Alliance Specialized if the youth is enrolled.
- Through the foster parent or other community service provider if arranged by the Chafee, TLP, or Specialized Care Contracted Provider.
- Through the foster parent as part of their services and entered by the Children's Service Worker.

- Through a community service provider if arranged by the Children’s Service Worker and entered by the Children’s Service Worker.
- Through the Children’s Service Worker.

Second, States conduct a baseline survey of youth in foster care at age 17 and conduct a follow-up survey with these youth at ages 19 and 21 to collect and report information about the following youth outcomes:

- financial self-sufficiency
- experience with homelessness
- educational attainment
- positive connections with adults
- high-risk behavior
- access to health insurance

States collect the outcomes information by conducting a survey of youth in foster care on or around their 17th birthday. States track these youth as they age and conduct a new outcome survey on or around the youth’s 19th birthday; and again on or around the youth’s 21st birthday. **States collect outcomes information on these older youth after they leave the State’s foster care system, regardless of whether they are still receiving independent living services from the State when they are 19 or 21 years old.** All States collect and report outcome information on a new cohort of youth every three years. All outcome information with the exception of demographics must be obtained directly from the youth and reflect the youth’s provided response and not information obtained from other agency databases. The state will survey youth who reach their 17th birthday every third year thereafter.

The table below illustrates an example of the timeframes:

Fiscal Year of Implementation	All youth receiving services	Baseline Outcomes (17-year-olds)	Follow-up Outcomes (19-year-olds)	Follow-up Outcomes (21-year-olds)
FFY 2011	X	X (Cohort 1)		
FFY 2012	X			
FFY 2013	X		X (Cohort 1)	
FFY 2014	X	X (Cohort 2)		
FFY 2015	X			X (Cohort 1)

The survey consists of 21 questions in which the answers must come directly from the youth. For those youth still in care, the Case Manager or Children’s Service Worker will be responsible for ensuring that a survey is completed via one of the methods outlined below and entered into FACES. For youth who need assistance completing the survey, the Case Manager or Children’s Service Worker should assist with this to ensure survey completion. For example, if a youth is incarcerated and the youth can be located, the youth could be interviewed by phone.

Options for youth to complete survey:

- Completed electronically by the youth within 45 days of youth's 17th birthday from web-based link sent to the youth's email account.
- Completed electronically by the youth within 45 days of youth's 17th birthday from a letter sent to youth's last known address containing information on an electronic link to complete survey.
- Paper copy sent to youth and completed by the youth within 45 days from 17th birthday and sent to Central Office for entry in postage paid envelope.
- Paper copy completed by youth during home/office visit and entered by Case Manager or Children Service Worker.

Regardless of method of completion of the survey, the Case Manager or Children's Service Worker should talk to youth once the youth turns 17 about method of completion.

A Consent to Access Administrative Data release form will also be discussed and offered to youth during transition planning by the Case Manager or Children's Service Worker. The consent release form gives our agency permission to search other agency databases in order to locate the youth. This will assist in efforts to reach youth that are transient after they are no longer in care. These forms are completed at exit from care and then sent to the Older Youth Transition Specialist in the youth's Case Manager Region. The Older Youth Transition Specialist will maintain a file of releases to be used in searching for the youth if all contact information becomes invalid.

Efforts must be made to ensure contact information is available after the youth leaves care. E-mail is the preferred method to distribute the survey so that data collection can be as automated as possible.

By utilizing resources available through the Division, such as Chafee, MO HealthNet and the community, youth who are currently in out-of-home care or left the legal custody of the Division will be:

- Better prepared to meet the challenges they face on their road to self-sufficiency and independence;
- Will understand the importance of their role and personal responsibility to self and community;
- Will be more aware of community resources and how to access them if needed; and
- Will be able to develop their own support system to enable them to transition successfully to independence.

Title: Child Welfare Manual
Section 4: Out-of-Home Care
Chapter 21: Older Youth Program (OYP)
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Chapter Memoranda History: (prior to 01-31-07)

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Memoranda History:

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