

Maine Coalition for Housing and Quality Services

Youth in Transition: Updates and Future Planning

Office of Child and Family Services

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2

Office of Child and Family Services

Vision:

All children in Maine will grow up to be
productive community members.

Mission:

Ensuring the safety, permanency and well-
being of Maine children is our top priority.

3

OCFS Strategic Plan for 2016-2018:

Strategic Goal #1:

Improve stability, health and well-being, and quality permanent connections of individuals and families.

Objective #2

Increase access to evidence based children's behavioral health services.

4

OCFS Strategic Plan for 2016-2018:

Strategic Goal #2:

Improve safety of youth, families, and communities.

Objective #2

Increase provider ability to safely serve high need youth effectively.

5

OCFS Strategic Plan for 2016-2018:

Strategic Goal #3:

Improve all children's ability to transition successfully to adulthood.

Objective #1

Improve all children's ability to transition successfully to adulthood through identification, planning, and employment services.

6

OCFS Strategic Plan for 2016-2018:

Strategic Goal #4:

Ensure efficient use of resources through adequate oversight to achieve quality outcomes.

Objective #2

Implement the use of standardized assessment in behavioral health services.

7

OCFS is currently working on...

- Person Centered Planning for children's services.
- Individual Educational Plans and Person Centered Plans that reflect the young person's desires for employment.
- Added expectations in MaineCare Policy for Children's Behavioral Health Services that providers will make transition and employment a focus of their treatment.
- Recognition of the impact of trauma on ASD and DD through the assessment process.
- Continued and increased outreach to rural counties.

8

Youth Transition Services For Youth in Foster Care

OCFS will:

- Engage youth in transition planning earlier, beginning at age 14.
- Continue to serve youth through Voluntary Extended Care until age 21.
- Increased focus on Positive Youth Engagement:
- Increased focus on Youth Development and Well-being:
- Honor youth's rights to services, supports, and opportunities which are normalizing, age and developmentally appropriate, which provide youth with dignity and respect, and which offer a normalized growing up experience similar to youth not in foster care.

Youth Transition Services For Youth in Foster Care

Youth will be provided with services and supports to strengthen their life skills in the following areas:

- Academics;
- Post-secondary educational preparation, such as tutoring;
- Career and vocational planning;
- Budgeting and financial management;
- Housing education and home management;
- Health/sex education, healthy relationships, & communication;
- How to access community-based supports.

MaineCare:

Any youth who was in Maine's foster care (only) on their 18th birthday is eligible for MaineCare coverage to age 26 through the Affordable Care Act. Youth can apply on-line or go to their local Office of Family Independence to apply or contact a MaineCare Eligibility Specialist at: 1-800-482-0790.

Youth must complete an application each year to remain eligible.

❖ **Youth should also be told their income and assets and those of anyone in the youth's home is NOT considered in determining Eligibility:** If questioned about income or assets, youth can cite: 10-144 Chapter 332 of the MaineCare Eligibility Manual, Part 3.5: Eligibility Groups Requirements (page 8) which states:

- III. Former Foster Care Children:
 - i. An individual is eligible to enroll in Medicaid if he/she:
 - ii. Is under age 26;
 - iii. Is not eligible for and enrolled in another mandatory Medicaid coverage under 42 CFR subsection 435.110 through 435.118 or 42 CFR subsection 435.20 through 435.145;
 - iv. Was in foster care in the State of Maine and was enrolled in Medicaid through the State of Maine at age 18. The income and assets of the individual (or anyone else in his/her household) is not considered to determine eligibility for the individual.

11

V9 Agreements for Youth in Foster Care:

- ❑ Are designed to provide a safety net for youth who age out of foster care, and who do not have parental supports.
- ❑ Are to be developed in partnership with youth, honoring youth voice and choice, recognizing youth are now legal adults, beginning at age 18 and until the youth's 21st birthday.
- ❑ Provides additional time for OCFS work with youth to help them establish a network of positive life-long connections.
- ❑ Offers a variety of supports and reasonable expectations that reflects our commitment to provide our youth with opportunities and the understanding that all young adults learn by "trial and error".

12

OCFS recognizes we cannot accomplish these goals alone...

Youth in Transition Steering Committee

- Public and private collaboration convened by OCFS to ensure improved outcomes for youth with ID and DD transitioning to adulthood.
- Goal: Create and sustain a formal multidisciplinary group in Maine around Youth Transition to increase the number of Youth in Transition who are successfully prepared for or connected to employment and post-secondary education following high school.

13

OCFS/OADS Early Referral Process

- Overview (why established)
- Statewide Meetings
- Letter to Schools
- How Parents can request support
- OCFS Calls to Parents

14

OCFS Supports Youth Transition:

- In 2016, The Department of Health and Human Services in partnership with a variety of State of Maine agencies, private service providers, and valued community members, published: ***High School and Beyond: A Guide to Transition Services in Maine***. This Guide was developed with the assistance of youth and families to provide resource and planning information to youth and young adults, their families, and their supports to address the many different areas of transition planning.
- The Guide can be found at:
https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/MEHHS/2016/06/30/file_attachments/578674/MSK.HDBK-update%25286.23.16%2529.pdf

Thanks for all you do...
It really matters!

