



# So Your Client is Turning 18... What Now?

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# Key Independent Living Dates

- Within 45 days of turning 14, a youth must be assigned a DFS Independent Living worker.
- If a youth is older than 14 when entering foster care, the youth must be assigned to the IL program within 45 days of entering the child welfare system.
- At age 16, Other Permanent Planned Living Arrangement (OPPLA) can be a permanency goal.
- 120 days before a youth “ages out” of foster care at the age of 18, the IL worker must meet with the youth and the CAP to discuss different IL options.
- The Department must conduct a transitional CFT at least 30 days, but not more than 45 days, before court jurisdiction terminates to determine if the child requires any additional guidance.



# Sample Independent Living Transitional Plan

IL Transitional Plan is developed in addition to the family case and permanency plan.

- Federal IL Case Plan- Required by 42 U.S.C. Section 675 (1)(D).
- Community Connections
- Family and Other Permanent and Lasting Connections
- Education Plan
- Health & Continued Support Services Plan
- Social Security Disability
- Parenting
- Transportation
- Money Management, Budgeting and Savings Plan
- Workforce & Employment Services
- Health Insurance
- Personal Documentation
- Probation & Parole
- Other: Credit Report, Health Care Power of Attorney



# Independent Living Services

- Daily Living Skills
- Money Management
- Decision Making
- Housing Assistance
- Prepare for Post Secondary Training and Education
- Mentors
- Financial Assistance with College or Vocational Schools
- Medical Coverage
- Counseling
- Assist with Obtaining GED/HiSET
- Assist with Ensuring Young Adult has all proper identification: birth certificate, social security card, Medicaid card and State ID
- Youth Leadership: Foster and Adoptive Youth Together (FAAYT)



# Chafee Funds

Chafee Enrichment Grant Funds available to youth ages 14-18 who are adjudicated a Ward of the Court.

Amount available per fiscal year:

- Age 14- \$300
- Age 15- \$350
- Age 16- \$400
- Age 17- \$750
- Age 18- \$750

These funds should be requested through the DFS IL Worker.



# Independent Living Agreement (ILA)

- Must be adjudicated as a ward.
- Youth must be at least 17 years old unless approved by DFS.
- Agreement allows youth to be paid instead of placement.
- Client must demonstrate IL competency.
- Client is living with unlicensed relative, fictive kin, or in a dorm.
- Client must be in school full-time that can be combined with employment.
- GPA of 2.0 or higher.
- Be able to utilize public transportation.
- Demonstrates controlled behavior and good decision-making skills.

# 4 OPTIONS WHEN A YOUTH TURNS 18

- Exit Care
- Remain Status Quo – in foster care and under court jurisdiction
- Voluntary Jurisdiction formerly “AB350”
- Funds to Assist Former Foster Youth (FAFFY) (formerly Step-Up)





# Status Quo

## Remaining a Ward:

- NRS 432B.040 – Child redefined as person who is below age 18 or if in school until graduation from high school.
- NRS 432B.591-595 – Child is a person who is: 1) under the age of 18, or 2) over 18 and remains under jurisdiction of juvenile court.
- If client is 18 and over, but still in high school, the client can choose to remain a ward.
- Licensed foster parent or fictive kin still receives financial support.





## Status Quo (continued)

- DFS caseworker remains assigned.
- Client must be fingerprinted if other children are in the home if placed in any licensed placement.
- If client is receiving RSDI (parent's death benefits) from Social Security, the client has until his 19<sup>th</sup> birthday as long as he is in high school.



# Voluntary Jurisdiction Formally Known as “AB350”

## General Information:

- NRS 432B.591-595
- Client agrees to remain under court jurisdiction, but no longer a ward.
- Client receives \$773 per month from age 18-21.
- Client maintains Fee for Service Medicaid from 18-21 (Aged Out Medicaid from 21-26).
- Client must be working on completing high school or high school equivalency.
- Following high school, young adult must continue with their secondary education or trade school or work at least 20 hours/week.
- Client must stay out of criminal trouble.

*Young Adults Must Make Good Faith  
Efforts Towards Their Goal*



# Funds to Assist Former Foster Youth “FAFFY”

## General Information:

- Wardship and court jurisdiction are both terminated.
- To assist former Nevada foster youth ages 18-21.
- Must be used for clients with SSI payments.
- Vendor pay with a valid lease up to \$773/month Young adult will receive remaining balance.
- HMO Medicaid – clients pay co-pays.
- Step-Up worker will assist with education, employment, welfare, and housing.
- CAP Attorney no longer on the case.

# Step Up

- Operated by Clark County Social Service.
- Step Up oversees both Vol Jur and FAFFY.
- Drop-In Resource Center – near Charleston and Rancho.
- Step Up workers provide young adults with resources and ensure clients are compliant with program requirements.



Safe and Stable  
Housing



Postsecondary  
Education



Financial  
Capability



Employment & Career  
Development



Permanent  
Relationships



Physical & Mental  
Health

# Step Up – Program Requirements

In both Vol Jur and FAFFY, the young adult must:

- Must have contact at least via text, email or phone call every 30 days.
- Must maintain in-person contact with case worker every 90 days.





# Additional Benefits

Clients on Vol Jur or FAFFY will be eligible to receive:

- A one-time Move-In Stipend of up to \$1,000
- Educational Stipend upon receiving a high school diploma (\$500) or GED/HiSET (\$250)– encourage them to finish high school!
- 30-Day Bus Pass

The Step-Up drop-in center provides additional resources – small food pantry, toiletries, baby supplies, conference room, computer lab, etc.



# Resources for Pregnant Teens

- St. Jude's Pregnant and Parenting Teen Program
- Living Grace
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Women Infant Children (WIC)
- Urban League- Daycare
- Olive Crest Safe Families- Respite
- Even if youth are in care, their children do NOT have to become wards of the court!



# Housing Resources for 18 and Older

- Olive Crest Housing
- Graduate House
- El Shaddai Refuge Homes
- Shannon West Homeless Shelter
- Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth
- St. Judes, The Crossing





# Financial Assistance & Scholarships

Resources for College:

- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), Pell Grant
- Tuition Fee Waiver
- Education Training Voucher (ETV)
- Millennium Scholarship
- Otto Huth Scholarship Trust Fund
- CASA Foundation



# ETV – Education and Training Voucher Program

- \$2,500 per semester (\$5,000 per year).
- Must apply for financial aid with the FAFSA first.
- Can be received by current and former foster youth, including those adopted at age 16.
- Attend school at least half-time at an *accredited* school.
- Maintains a GPA of 2.0 and makes satisfactory progress.
- Eligible for 10 semesters at an *accredited* school or until the client reaches his 26<sup>th</sup> birthday (whichever comes first).
- Managed by Children’s Cabinet, Inc. in Reno, Nevada.



# What Happens if...

Common problems:

- No contact from clients past 60 days
- Incarceration
- No verification of attending school or employment
- Untreated mental health issues and/or substance abuse

The worker will contact the CAP to give notice that the client is being non-compliant in the program.

1. Non-Compliance Meeting
2. Administrative Review Team Meeting
3. District Attorney's motion to terminate court jurisdiction



# Special Education Considerations

- Transition Plan should be developed at age 14.
- IEP Transition Plan should be developed at age 16.
- Diploma Options:
  - Standard
  - Alternative
  - Adjusted



# Special Education Considerations

Vocational and Transition Assessments using Nevada Career Information System:

- Career and Technical Education (CTE)
- Magnet Schools
- Agency Linkage with Desert Regional Center (DRC)
- Job Discovery Program with Opportunity Village
- Nevada Job Connect



# Other Education Considerations

If your client still needs to complete high school:

- St. Louis Adult Education
- Desert Rose Adult High School
- Nevada High School Equivalency Exams:
  - HiSET
  - GED
  - TASC



# Employment Programs for Youth

- Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Job Corps
- Las Vegas Foundation for an Independent Tomorrow
- One Stop Career Center
- Nevada Job Connect Youth
- YouthBuild Las Vegas



# Common Issues that Arise

- Warrants for Unpaid Traffic Tickets
- Evictions
- Criminal Cases
- Custody/Child Support
- Fraud Activity on Credit Report
  
- Contact Pro Bono/CAP Liaison, Josie Techau or CAP Legal Advocate Jaymie Junsay. One of them will either have an answer, or will assist in finding one!

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# Community Resources

*Coming Soon!*

# **CAP Resource App!**

The App will be available to download and add to electronic devices. Young adults will have access to resources available to them 24/7.

- Education
- Employment
- Family Planning
- Health
- Housing
- Legal



# Continue to Represent Former Foster Youth

Importance of continuing to represent clients between the ages of 18-21:

- Oftentimes the young adult needs additional support.
- Legal Issues: warrants, landlord-tenant, trafficking, sealing of juvenile record, pay-day loans, etc.
- Communication with other parties
- Non-Compliance with Vol Jur Program



# stepUP

stairway to independence

Program Overview

# Introduction

## What is the Step Up program?

- Clark County Social Service (CCSS) has operated the Step Up program through a collaborative agreement with Family Services (DFS) since 2010.
- Step Up is a Young Adult Program for youth who have “aged out” of foster care in Nevada. The goal is to assist these youth in making the transition from foster care to economic self-sufficiency (i.e. to prevent homelessness upon exiting care).
- To qualify, youth need to have turned 18 years old while in foster care in Nevada. Young adults can participate until age 21.
- Step Up is a voluntary program for young adults.



# Introduction

## What is the difference between DFS and CCSS?

- Clark County Department of Family Services (DFS) is the local public agency whose role is to help keep children safe. *Mission:* Protecting children from abuse and neglect by partnering with our community to build safe, nurturing and stable families, to support family preservation when possible, to provide permanent families for those children who cannot safely return home and to ensure the well-being of children in our care.

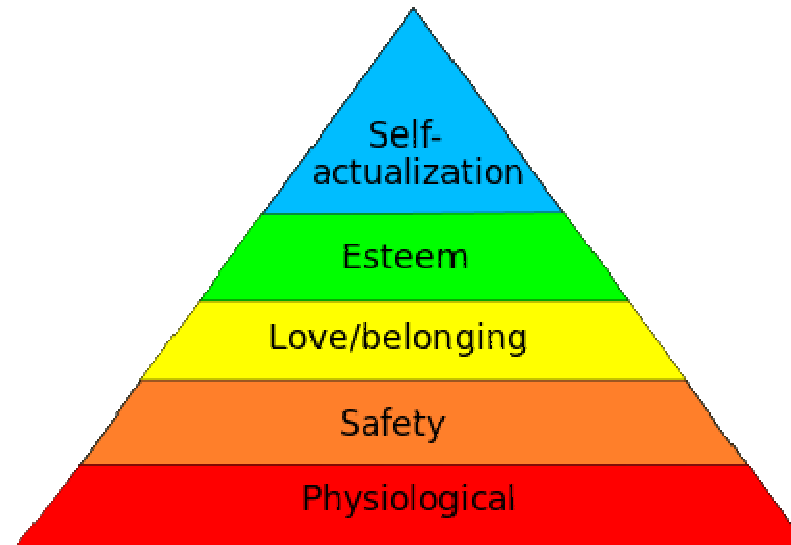
Services: Adoptions, Case Management, Child Abuse Hotline, Child Protection (CPS), Foster Home Licensing, Independent Living, Interstate Compact (ICPC), Parenting Project

- Clark County Social Service (CCSS) provides a variety of services for needy residents of Clark County who are not assisted by other state, federal or local programs. Social Service provides “aid and relief to the indigent.” *Mission:* Provide a safety net of human services to a growing community.

Services: Case Management, Coordinated Intake, Cremation/Burial, Financial/Transportation Assistance, Homemaker Services, Long Term Care, Medical Outreach, Senior Services, Step Up



# Aged-Out Foster Youth: Challenges



\*For youth aging-out, the transition to adulthood presents a number of challenges in meeting their basic needs. These are challenges that we work to address with the young adult, and they can include:

- \*Unstable housing or at-risk of homelessness
- \*Lack of adequate elementary and secondary education
- \*Lack of employment and job training
- \*Problems with physical health, behavioral health, and general well-being
- \*Lack of social connections



\*Source: Youth.gov <https://youth.gov/youth-briefs/foster-care-youth-brief/challenges>

# Nationwide Statistics



\*Approximately 415,000 children and youth are in foster care.

\*While the majority (51%) of the approximately 238,000 children who exited foster care across the country were reunified, 9%, or approximately 22,000 youth, “aged-out” of the system.

\*Source: United States Interagency Council on Homelessness <http://usich.gov> (5/13/2016)



# Clark County Statistics

\*In Clark County, approximately 2,800 children and youth are in foster care at this time.

\*Annually, about **100 foster youth** turn 18 in Clark County and “age-out” of the foster care system.

\*Step Up serves approximately **300 young adults** aged 18 to 21 ongoing each month.



Safe and Stable  
Housing



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# History of the Step Up Program

The Step Up program began with the passing of Assembly Bill 94 during the 2001 Nevada State Legislative session. For the first few years this “FAFFY” account was “built up” by collecting a \$1 fee attached to documents that are recorded from County offices across Nevada. In 2003 a non-profit was contracted to begin the Step Up FAFFY program.

In Southern Nevada, the Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth (NPHY) was initially contracted by the Clark County Department of Family Services to spend the funds from the account to assist persons formerly in foster care in March of 2003. NPHY ceased operating the Step Up program in June of 2005.

The Step Up program was then contracted again to a different non-profit organization, Child Focus, in July of 2005. Child Focus ceased operating the Step Up program in August 2010.

Clark County Social Service then assumed operation of the Step Up program in September of 2010 and the memorandum of understanding between DFS and CCSS is in effect today (renewed every three years).



# History of the Step Up Program

The CCSS Step Up program operated originally from CCSS Pinto office and soon moved to the Ryan White Foundation office for several years.

In September of 2015, CCSS Step Up moved into it's own new youth-oriented drop-in center located near Rancho/Charleston.

In September of 2016, Step Up formally expanded to its second program, called the Voluntary Court Jurisdiction (VOL JUR) Independent Living Program. This program was formerly housed at the Department of Family Services since it was enacted in NRS in 2012.

In March of 2016, Step Up was awarded a grant, called the Homeless Prevention for Transition Age Youth (HPFTAY) emergency assistance program. This program concluded March of 2018 with 80% of participants in stable housing (homelessness prevented). *As of March 2019, a similar emergency assistance program called Low Income Housing Trust Funds (LIHTF-TAY) started that provides short term move-in and rental assistance for aged-out foster youth 18 to 25.*



# Drop-In Resource Center

- \* The drop-in center opened September 2015.
- \* The center is centrally located in Las Vegas (near Charleston/Rancho) and is close to a main bus route.
- \* The center features an open kitchen with snacks, several resource cabinets (hygiene, school supply, parenting supply), resource boards (medical, education, employment, legal, events, etc.), and computers with internet access that are open for the youth to use and print from.
- \* The Step Up drop-in center caters specifically to the aged-out former foster youth population. 30 Day CFT's (prior to aging out) are held here.



# Nevada Revised Statutes

## What laws do we have that address these issues?

- Step Up is a program based on two Nevada Revised Statutes:
  1. Funds to Assist Former Foster Youth (FAFFY) IL Program
    - **NRS 432.017 Account to Assist Persons Formerly in Foster Care**
  2. Voluntary Court Jurisdiction (VOL JUR) IL Program
    - **NRS 432B.591-595 Continuation of Court Jurisdiction**
- FAFFY was enacted in 2001
- FAFFY created an account that is funded by a collection of \$1 County Recorder Fees that are distributed annually by the State



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    - **NRS 432B.591-595 Continuation of Court Jurisdiction**
- VOL JUR was enacted in 2012.
- VOL JUR is very specific in NRS.
- VOL JUR outlined requirements such as:
  - Focus on completing school
  - 20 hours a week of School or Work
  - Required contact
  - Transition plan
  - Access to a Monthly Living Fund  
(i.e. *Rental Assistance fund*)



# Nevada Revised Statutes

## How does the funding help aged-out young adults?

Step Up Rental Assistance up to \$773.13 (per month)

Move-In/Deposit Assistance of \$1000

Graduation Stipend of \$500

Emergency Financial Assistance

Transportation (30-Day Bus Passes)

Resources (school supplies, hygiene, snacks, etc.)

Assistance with employment (resumes, job search, referrals, etc.)

Assistance with education (enrollment assistance, financial guidance, etc.)

Assistance with medical (Medicaid enrollment or renewal, referrals, etc.)

Assistance to locate housing (affordable units, housing programs, etc.)

Quality and Individualized Case Management



# Expectations

*What do the program participants have to do?*



**Work and/or School 20 hours per week**





# Is it working? Show me the stats!

| Clark County Social Service Dashboard Report: Step Up               |               |            |
|---|---------------|------------|
| <b>Month - May 2019</b>   | <b>Total</b>  | <b>%</b>   |
| Total Step Up Participants (this month)                             | 249           | 100%       |
| VOL JUR Program Participants  | 229           | 92%        |
| FAFFY Program Participants  | 20            | 8%         |
| Total Young Adults Entering Step Up (last 12 months)                | 99            | -          |
| Total Young Adults Exiting Step Up (last 12 months)                 | 120           | -          |
| <b>Category - Education</b>   | <b>Total</b>  | <b>%</b>   |
| Attending High School/Equivalency (out of all total participants)   | 53            | 21%        |
| <i>Of those who have NOT graduated yet, what % are in school?</i>   | <i>53/150</i> | <i>54%</i> |
| Attending College (out of all total participants)                   | 32            | 13%        |
| <i>Of those who have graduated HS/E, what % are now in college?</i> | <i>32/150</i> | <i>21%</i> |
| Attending Trade/Vocational Program                                  | 23            | 9%         |
| Obtained High School Diploma  | 144           | 58%        |
| Obtained High School Equivalency (GED/HiSET)                        | 6             | 2%         |
| <b>Category - Employment</b>  | <b>Total</b>  | <b>%</b>   |
| Employed  | 153           | 61%        |
| Stable Employment (3 months or longer)                              | 100           | 40%        |
| <b>Category - Housing &amp; Outcomes</b>                            | <b>Total</b>  | <b>%</b>   |
| Stable Housing (3 months or longer)                                 | 209           | 84%        |
| <i>Young Adults Exiting Step Up (last 12 months)</i>                | <i>120</i>    | <i>-</i>   |
| Young Adults Exited to Literal Homelessness (last 12 months)        | 0             | 0%         |
| Young Adults Exited to Housing (Permanent and Temporary)            | 111           | 93%        |
| Young Adults Exited to Permanent Housing (HUD Definition)           | 100           | 83%        |
| <b>Category - Medical</b>   | <b>Total</b>  | <b>%</b>   |
| Medicaid/Health Insurance   | 243           | 98%        |
| Receiving Social Security   | 12            | 5%         |
| <b>Category - Other</b>   | <b>Total</b>  | <b>%</b>   |
| Military  | 2             | 1%         |





# Demographics

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| Total Young Adults Entering Step Up (last 12 months)  | 99    | -     |
| Total Young Adults Exiting Step Up (last 12 months)   | 120   | -     |
| Category - Demographics                               | Total | %     |
| Gender Female   | 139   | 57.4% |
| Gender Male   | 103   | 42.6% |
| Gender Other  | 0     | 0.0%  |
| Parenting (actively)                                  | 42    | 17%   |
| Pregnant  | 7     | 3%    |
| Hispanic Ethnicity Demographic                        | 60    | 24%   |
| Race: White   | 121   | 49%   |
| Race: Black or African American                       | 80    | 32%   |
| Race: Asian   | 7     | 3%    |
| Race: American Indian or Alaska Native                | 4     | 2%    |
| Race: Multiple Races                                  | 26    | 10%   |
| Race: Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander       | 4     | 2%    |



# Contacts

## **Step Up Supervisor**

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Social Work Supervisor

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## **Step Up Assistant Director** ***Clark County Social Service***

Randy Reinoso, MSW, LSW

Assistant Director, Social Service

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# Questions??

Thank you for coming and  
we hope to see you again  
soon!