

Extended Foster Care: Let's Finish the Job! **HB 1735 (Rep. Tina Orwall) / SB 5740 (Sen. Joe Fain)**

Help support our state's most vulnerable young people

Vision

Youth aging out of Washington's foster care system are provided safe and appropriate housing that prevents entry into homelessness, and supports their transition into adulthood with the resources necessary to achieve their educational, career, and social goals.

2015 Goal

PASS AND FULLY FUND legislation authorizing the Extended Foster Care Program to include the fifth and final category outlined in the Fostering Connections Act: youth with documented medical conditions. This will ensure ALL youth aging out of care have the opportunity to maintain safe housing until age 21.

Current Policy

The Extended Foster Care Program allows youth remain in care until age 21 in order to achieve a high school diploma or GED, pursue their post-secondary education, participate in programs that break down barriers to employment, and work for 80 hours or more per month. This is an entitlement with a partial federal funding match.

Extended Foster Care Facts

- According to Children's Administration, approximately 500 youth age out of foster care each year.
- Allowing youth to remain in care until age 21 results in over \$2.00 for every dollar invested.¹
- According to a 2012 study, approximately 56 percent of young adults aged 18-24 still live with their parents.²
- In Washington state, 35 percent of youth who age out of care at age 18 experience homelessness within one year.³

¹ California's Fostering Connections to Success Act and the Costs and Benefits of Extending Foster Care to 21, Courtney, et al. <http://fosteringmediaconnections.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/Californias-Fostering-Connections-to-Success-Act-and-the-Costs-and-Benefits-of-Extending-Foster-Care-to-21.pdf>

² A Rising Share of Young Adults Live in their Parents' Home, Pew Research Social & Demographic trends. <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2013/08/01/a-rising-share-of-young-adults-live-in-their-parents-home/>

³ The Housing Status and Well-Being of Youth Aging Out of Foster Care in Washington State, DSHS Research and Data Administration

The Youth Perspective

"Having a disability makes life more complicated. I often go at a slower pace which can create barriers in the world. Extended Foster Care would have helped me and given me support to be successful in life and to take the time that I needed to reach my goals."

- Bunthy "Max" Ream, Alumnus of Care, 1987– 2014
*Max left his peers too soon, but was a staunch supporter of Extended Foster Care.
We wish to honor his memory by including his words.*

For questions or comments, please contact:

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Join us in Olympia for Youth Advocacy Day on Friday, February 27th, 2015!