

**You're a young person in transition.** It's a trip and you are the

traveler! You're on your way to your next stop: independent young adulthood. **IT'S EXCITING:** when you get there, you'll have no state or foster care strings attached to you. You'll get to make your own decisions.

**IT'S SCARY:** times are uncertain. Young people are having trouble finding jobs, getting their lives going. At FosterClub, we believe in you. We built this toolkit to help you design a travel plan, working with your transition support team, that will create a map of what you have and what you need for your safe journey to adulthood.



*FosterClub's* **TRANSITION** *toolkit*

FosterClub members  
Lupe (Arizona), Mercedes  
(Wisconsin), Tyler  
(Florida), Nicole (Oregon),  
Anthony (Georgia)

[ in collaboration with FosteringConnections.org ]

a free tool for developing a youth-driven transition plan with a team approach

get educated      advocate  
speak up  
belong  
involved + informed



the national network for young people in foster care | [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org)



## a message TO SUPPORTIVE ADULTS...

*Everyone can use some help from a friend. As advocates for young people in foster care, we know these youth need support like all teens. Our experience at FosterClub tells us that having committed and reliable adult supporters is the number one indicator of success for a young person transitioning from foster care.*

*You can strengthen your role as a Transition Support Team Member for this youth:*

- *Read the information in this toolkit and visit [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org) for more tools to help youth prepare for life after foster care*
- *Visit [www.fosteringconnections.org](http://www.fosteringconnections.org) to learn more about the Fostering Connections Act*
- *Help the youth identify their strengths AND needs*
- *Make it clear how you are willing to support the youth*
- *Help keep the youth on track*
- *Celebrate success*
- *Remember that it's the youth's life — and it's their transition plan. Mentor away, but keep in mind that ultimately, they will be the ones living out the plan.*



## WITHOUT a ROAD MAP YOUR TRANSITION JOURNEY COULD BE TROUBLE.

Young people who “age out” of foster care – or turn too old to receive foster care services – often face the challenges of adulthood unprepared and without support.

Suddenly you age out and you’re hit with millions of adult decisions to make, like finding safe, affordable housing, setting up utilities, getting health insurance, finding transportation, getting a job and much more.

The fact is, most young adults in America can lean on their parents to help with some of this support into their late 20s. But as a young person in foster care, it’s possible

that you can’t count on support from your parents.

So you need to get a plan. Check out this FosterClub Transition Toolkit. It’s a map to guide you out of foster care and into safe independent adulthood. You can call it a “Transition Plan”.

### WHAT IS a TRANSITION PLAN?

#### **The government’s take:**

A recent federal law requires that all states must develop a transition plan for foster

youth during the 90 day period before the youth leaves foster care at age 18, 19, 20 or 21. The plan must be individual to the young person and developed with the young person. Among the issues to be addressed are specific options on housing, health insurance, education, local opportunities for mentors, and workforce supports and employment services.

**What FosterClub believes:**

The good part about this new law is that the Government states clearly that foster youth need a transition plan and that the youth needs to help develop it.

Our view is that it's your life. What happens should be your say, not just a

judge's or a caseworker's. And just 90 days to develop a plan for life? We believe that you owe it to yourself to get the facts and start working on your transition plans as early as you can. The sooner you can start, the more control you'll have. Two or three years before leaving the foster care system is not too soon to be working on your Transition Plan.

You've dreamed about those days of independence after foster care. With this Transition Toolkit, you can take charge and begin to make those dreams come true.

Visit us online at [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org) for stories about real youth aging out of the system.

## more ABOUT THE FOSTERING CONNECTIONS TO SUCCESS AND INCREASED ADOPTIONS ACT OF 2008 LAW (Public Law 110-351)

The new Fostering Connections law made major improvements to programs and policies related to older youth in foster care. Specifically, the Fostering Connections law provides new supports and services to promote permanency and the improved wellbeing of older youth in foster care. These include foster care, adoption, or guardianship assistance payments to children after the age of 18; a requirement that personal transition plans for youth aging out are developed within 90 days prior to youth exiting foster care; extending eligibility for Independent Living Program services to children adopted or placed in kinship guardianship at age 16 or older; and extending eligibility for education and training vouchers to children who exit foster care to kinship guardianship at age 16 or older ( those adopted after age 16 were already eligible).



For the exact text, go to Section 475 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.675)



For more information visit *The Fostering Connections Resource Center* at [www.fosteringconnections.org](http://www.fosteringconnections.org). The Center serves as a library of child welfare information and resources to help states and tribes in their efforts to implement Fostering Connections.

# WHAT'S YOUR Transition PLAN?

You can take action now, invest in your future, and create your transition plan to really work for you.

The FosterClub Toolkit is a step-by-step transition plan. Here, you'll clarify your goals, gather up resources, build a Transition Support Team, honestly evaluate your assets, and sharpen your skills for life on your own. With FosterClub's Transition Toolkit as your guide, you can put yourself in the driver's seat to your future.

The FosterClub Transition Toolkit is built around ten different categories. You'll visit each category on your transition journey.

finances + money management

job + career \*

life skills

identity

permanence

education

self care + health \*

housing \*

transportation

community, culture & social life \*

In this Toolkit, these categories are shown as lines on a subway map (next page). Each stop on the subway map is an item for you to examine as you follow the path to leaving foster care.

\* *Complete these items to comply with requirements of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increased Adoptions Law.*

**WHERE TO START?** That's up to you. This map provides a quick overview of the ten different categories you'll want to check out. Just as a subway line contains many stops where you can get out and look around, each category "line" contains several stops to explore. You'll notice assets and skills you'll want to pick up at each stop as you journey on your transition to adulthood.





FosterClub  
member Alex  
from Colorado

## WHAT'S MY ROLE?

You can jump on board or sit and watch the Transition Plan going on without your input.

It's your life, and your participation in your Transition Plan will get you valuable connections and resources BEFORE you leave the foster care system. You're smart to take full advantage.

### **Have a say. Get control.**

If, at any time, you feel that you are not being heard or getting the support you need to create and carry out your transition plan, make sure you let someone know.

Don't miss any chance to speak in court or talk with a judge before you transition out of foster care. The judge holds the real power to get you the resources and services you need. Your transition plan will probably be reviewed by the court – so make sure you show up to answer any questions the judge might have and to speak up for what you care about.

*You don't have to do it alone:*

## GET YOUR OWN PERSONAL GPS: a TRANSITION SUPPORT TEAM

Planning for your transition to adulthood can be a little daunting. But don't worry – you can get your very own GPS system to guide you. By pulling together your Transition Support Team – you'll have access to guides who have already made the journey to adulthood. They can help show you the way and equip you with information, advice, and access to resources. They can help you stay on track and will be by your side to celebrate as you achieve your goals.

The size of your team is up to you. Try for at least two or three adult supporters. A member of your transition support team could be an adult who has supported you or given you good advice in the past, such as:

- a coach or teacher, a pastor or church member
- a neighbor or employer,
- a CASA, attorney, or guardian ad litem
- a relative, foster parent or guardian
- the parent of a friend or classmate
- someone with a career you are interested in: chef or cook, landscaper, engineer, artist or musician, retail buyer, mechanic, small business person, etc.

You can speak to your case worker or social worker about other possible members of your Transition Support Team.

Go Team!

# IN THIS TOOLKIT...

## overview & map pages

Each map page has a category such as HOUSING . The HOUSING line is divided into stops with challenges for you to consider. Visit each stop and work the challenges.

## Transition Planning Worksheets

When you've worked the challenges on the map pages, the transition planning worksheets will help you create a plan. Each of the worksheets has four parts:

**What I Have.** These are the assets that you already possess that will help you with the transition to adulthood. Only list items in this section that you ALREADY have.

**Resources Available to Me.** Use this section to document resources that are available from your foster care agency or other community resource.

**This is My Plan.** What do you want to accomplish? Use this section to document your goals and the steps you will take to get there.

**Readiness Scale.** Work with your Transition Team to score your readiness within each category. Read more on the following page.

## GET THE FASTPASS

The Transition Planning Worksheets in this toolkit are available online as a Microsoft Word document. You can type directly into the forms, which have fields that are expandable to accommodate longer answers.

Download at  
[FOSTERCLUB.ORG](http://FOSTERCLUB.ORG)



## TIPS FOR transition planning...

### Keep your transition plan in a safe place.

Some of the information you document may be personal. Protect yourself from identity theft by keeping your information secure.

### Ask for info and advice.

The adults in your life have already made the transition to adulthood. Make use of what they know... ask adults you respect for information and advice.

### Revisit & revise.

Creating a transition plan shouldn't be a one-time event. Make time to check your progress, see how your readiness improves, and update your goals at least every 6 months.

### Jump in and learn more!

Go to [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org) to find resources for foster youth. Learn from your peers who are also making the transition from foster care to adulthood.



# Tracking your progress

OK, this section might really turn you off. You might hate keeping score. Or you might love it. This page explains the keeping score part of the worksheets, WHICH IS COMPLETELY OPTIONAL. So skip it if you dislike keeping score.

At the bottom of each Planning Worksheet is a “Readiness Scale.” You and your Transition Support Team can rate how ready you are on a scale from 1 (not ready at all) to 10 (completely ready) for each of the domains. Once you’ve completed a plan for all 10 domains, you can add up all of scores to get a total score. The overall goal is to track your progress, say, from month to month or year to year.

## READINESS SCALE

Needs work 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Prepared

Check this out: there’s no pass or fail on this chart, no perfect or horrible score, no lazy or workaholic score. The point system here is designed to only show part of your progress in working your Transition Plan.

Another point is that you should expect your “Readiness Scale” points to get higher as you get older. At 14 years-old you would not fill in the worksheet as completely as you would at 18. It just makes sense.

You may see that you are stronger in some categories than in others. Tracking shows where you can improve in a category or compensate by building up in other categories.

## GET STARTED!

The TRANSITION PLAN OVERVIEW WORKSHEET on the very next page is completely different than the other WORKSHEET pages. You’ll see that there is no “Readiness Scale”. You’ll also notice other unfamiliar concepts on the bottom half of the sheet.

That weird part is for your case worker or social worker or judge to fill out.

The top half of the form is for you to use as you work your way through FosterClub’s Transition Toolkit. Log in as you finish a category.

To complete the forms online, go to [www.fosterclub.org](http://www.fosterclub.org), click on Transition Toolkit, click on ‘download the templates in word format’.

Transition Plan Overview Worksheet		FosterClub Transition Toolkit	
<b>Youth Information</b>			
First Name and Initial	Last Name		
Care Number	Independent Living Provider or Case Manager		
Date Plan Completed	Six month follow up due	Projected emancipation date	
Birth date (mm/dd/yy)	Current age	Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
<b>Transition Domains</b>			
Completed domain:	Date of 1st score	Date of 2nd score	Date of 3rd score
<input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Job & Career <input type="checkbox"/> Financial <input type="checkbox"/> Life Skills <input type="checkbox"/> Community, Culture, & Social Life <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Identity <input type="checkbox"/> Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Self Care & Health <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please list):			
Total Readiness Score: _____			
<b>Additional Plans</b>			
Have other community partners created a plan on behalf of the youth? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
If yes, consider including as part of this transition plan in order to reduce redundant planning and improve agency collaboration in serving the youth.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Ansell Casey Life Skills Plan ( <a href="http://www.caseylife.org">www.caseylife.org</a> ) <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Education Plan (IEP) <input type="checkbox"/> Person Centered Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Treatment Plan and Discharge Plan (DBA, Residential, Mental Health, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Voc Rehab/IFE (Individual Plan for Employment) <input type="checkbox"/> Development Disabilities Individual Support Plan (DD-ISP) <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF/JOB) <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Investment Act (WIA) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please list):			
<b>Transition Team</b>			
Attach additional sheets as necessary			
Name	Role	Phone Number	e-Mail
Name	Role	Phone Number	e-Mail
Name	Role	Phone Number	e-Mail
I participated in creating and approve of this Transition Plan. Youth's Signature: _____			
<small>Visit <a href="http://www.fosteringconnections.org">www.fosteringconnections.org</a> for more federal and state information regarding the Fostering Connections to Success and Increased Adoptions Act (FCIA). From the FosterCare Technical Guide, copyright © 2012 by the National Foster Care Association. All rights reserved. This document is a copyrighted work of the National Foster Care Association. All rights reserved. This document is a copyrighted work of the National Foster Care Association. All rights reserved. This document is a copyrighted work of the National Foster Care Association. All rights reserved.</small>			

FosterClub  
member Jojo from  
California