

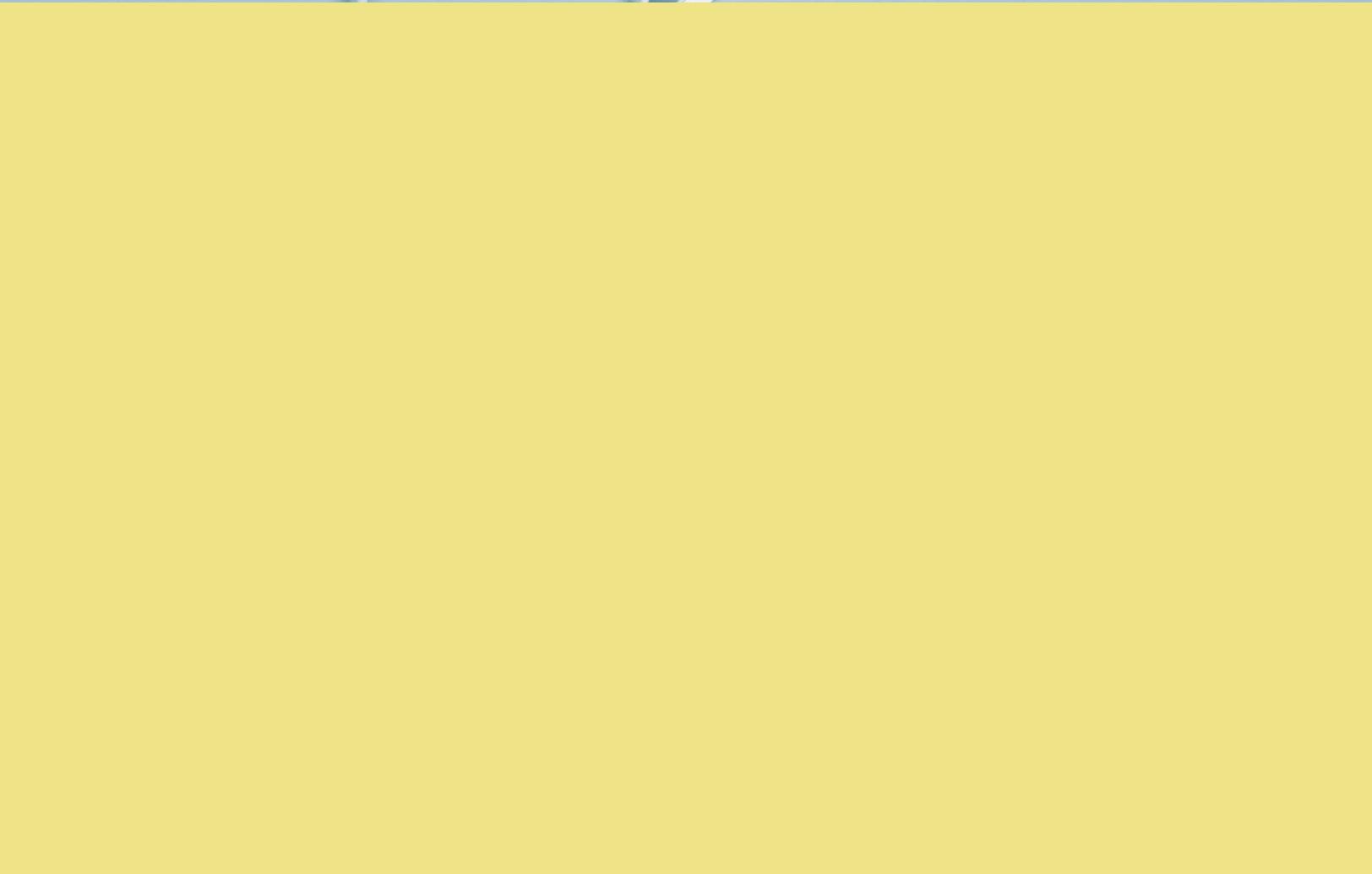


Name:

LET'S TALK!

MY PATH TO MY FUTURE.

- **WHAT IS PERMANENCY?**
- **DO I HAVE IT?**
- **WHY SHOULD I WANT IT?**
- **WHY SOME FEAR IT?**
- **HOW DO I GET IT?**



STATEMENT OF RIGHTS

for Children in Foster Care

As a child in foster care, these are my rights as long as they are in my best interest, will keep me safe, and won't go against the judge's orders.

I have the right . . .

1. To be placed in a safe and healthy home of a family member; a foster parent or foster home that I've lived in before; or a home that is as close to my own home as possible and with people who will be able to talk with me in my own language, if at all possible.
2. To be placed with my brothers or sisters, if possible.
3. To know about where I am going to live before I get there and maybe even get to visit the people or place first.
4. To know what is happening with me, my brothers/sisters, and my family.
5. To stay in the same school, if possible, and to get the best education I can get!
6. To be told at least five days before I have to move somewhere else, unless it's an emergency. And to be told why I am being moved in a way that I can understand. I will also have help moving my things, so I don't have to leave any of my belongings behind.
7. To clean clothes that fit and are right for the weather at the time.
8. To receive good medical, dental, eye care, counseling and other things I need to be healthy and safe. To receive only the medicine my doctors say I need for my health and well-being (and not too much!)
9. To have the right amount of privacy for my age for me, my things, and my conversations/texts. If I have a juvenile record, that is also to be kept confidential.
10. To not attend church or church-type events, if I am not ok with it and to freely enjoy my own religion.
11. To have a written plan for visits with my family and to be able to speak with my family and friends, if it is safe and fair.
12. To talk to my lawyer, caseworker or CASA on a regular basis and to have a private talk with the judge, if I don't feel like anyone on my team is helping or listening to my concerns.
13. To help my case worker make my own service plan, understand what it says, and sign it, if I am able.
14. To go to and speak at court hearings or family team meetings, if it is ok for kids to attend.
15. To be able to have all of the services, placements, care, treatment and benefits I need. I am to be treated equally with no bullying or revenge.
16. To join after school activities and social activities as long as it is family friendly and for my age group. (Like: sports, music, dance, scouts, etc.)
17. To get a job and learn job skills, if I am old enough, and learn to budget my own money. I also have the right to all of my important papers when I'm 18 and can learn about Independent Living Services.

Want to talk with someone about your rights?

First, try talking with your caseworker. If you have tried that and it hasn't helped or you are uncomfortable doing that then . . .

Contact a Youth Advocate at OK Foster Youth Matters (1-800-522-8014) or;

File a complaint at www.okfosteryouthmatters.org

We are ALL here to help and you should feel free to contact us any time!



I DESCRIBE MY PERSONALITY AS

I AM GOOD AT

MY FAVORITE THING TO DO IN MY SPARE TIME IS

MY FAVORITE ANIMAL IS

MY FAVORITE FOOD IS

MY PET PEEVE IS

BY LOOKING AT MY ROOM, SOMEONE WOULD THINK I AM

MY FAVORITE TYPES OF MOVIES ARE

MY FAVORITE SPORTS ARE

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A JOB AS

I LIKE TO RELAX AND CHILL BY



Because
I matter

THIS MATTERS TO ME...

I am...

I wonder...

I want to be...

I see...

I need to know...

I pretend...

I feel....

I worry...

I cry...

I say...

I dream...

I try...

I hope...

I am happy when...

I like...

I get mad when...

I feel bad when...

I get scared when...



Self-Advocacy

Learning to self-advocate is a key step in becoming an adult and an important life skill. Self-Advocacy means looking out for yourself. It means speaking up instead of letting others speak for you and telling people what you need. No one is born with these skills, but everyone can learn them. As children enter adulthood it is important learn to start being your own advocate.

While others (caseworker, teachers, counselors, mentors, etc.) are still around to help, it is important to practice speaking up. Practice speaking for yourself in doctor's appointments, with waiters or salespeople. Remember - IT'S OKAY TO MESS UP! Even if you experience a few awkward moments, your confidence will build over time.



The Benefits of Self-Advocacy

Resilience.

When you advocate for yourself, you build a stronger sense of competence and automatically make yourself more resilient in tough situations. Children and teens who do not know how to express emotional needs can be more subject to burnout, resentment and unhappiness.

Learning to understand your own needs, and to act to ensure they are met, gives you more of a sense of control over your circumstances.

How are you resilient?

Confidence.

Speaking up builds self-confidence. Many children and teens lack the confidence and trust in their own voice to speak up. This can lead to social anxiety and a tendency to just go along with what others do. Self-advocacy can help teens recognize that they have the ability to impact their own circumstances.

How do you show your confidence?

The Benefits of Self-Advocacy

Decision-Making.

Children in care tend to have many decisions made for them. This can be disempowering, so it is important to request to be involved as much as possible in your case. Try to be aware of opportunities to make decisions and never be afraid to ask questions.

What decisions am I a part of?

What decisions do I want to be a part of?

I HAVE A QUESTION.

GOAL SETTING

It is important that we all set appropriate goals. However, goals may be different for each person. For example, a child who is 12 may have the goal of making the honor roll, while a 16-year-old teen may have the goal of obtaining his/her driver's license. Goals may also be short-term or long-term. A short-term goal is something that you feel you can obtain in a relatively short amount of time (e.g. remembering to do laundry or passing an exam). Long-term goals, however, aren't reached until after an extended period of time (e.g. going to and/or graduating from college). Take some time to consider some personal short-term and long-term goals and write them in the spaces provided on this page.

MY SHORT-TERM GOALS



MY LONG-TERM GOALS



CELEBRATE YOUR WINS!!!

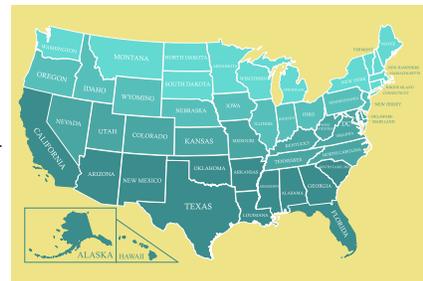
Don't let your success go unnoticed! Big or small, make sure you acknowledge any personal milestones or goals you've already reached! Share some of your successes below.



How do I feel about???

Making a line between the two images (center being neutral)
put a dash on where you feel you would fit best.

NEUTRAL
(Center)



What do I want in a

FAMILY



I want respect.

Have pets.

Understand LGBTQ.

I need privacy.

Let me have a phone.

Don't restrict me from areas of the home.

Give me an allowance.

Let me have Wi-Fi.

Treat me like everyone else.

Let me keep my faith.

Give me time to chill.

Let me be apart of family activities.

Keep me connected to my siblings.

Accept me for who I am.

Accommodate my needs.

Be active.

Support my goals.

Let me be mad every once in a while.

Understand my past.

Be a good cook.

Help me plan my path to my future.

Go to my games.

Let me have a job.

Have reasonable expectations.

Let me have a car.

Appreciate that I come from a different culture.

Be adventurous.

Have racial competency.

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

CIRCLE YOUR TOP 10 FAVES THEN UNDERLINE YOUR TOP FIVE FAVES.

LETS MAKE THIS A SUCCESS..

What should I expect
in a family?

What do I fear about
a new family?

What would be a deal
breaker about being
with a family?

What does a family need
to know about me?

What do I want to do
with a family?

How would I benefit from
having a family?

Expectations and norms are important.

(EVEN ADULTS HAVE RULES.)

What should a curfew be?

What are reasonable chores for me?

How important issues with a family get addressed?

How important is it to have a clean room?

What should my personal cleanliness look like?

What should snacks and meals look like?

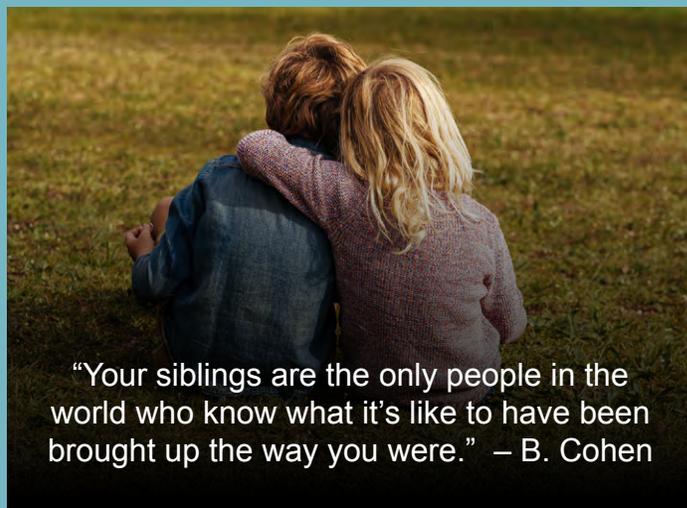
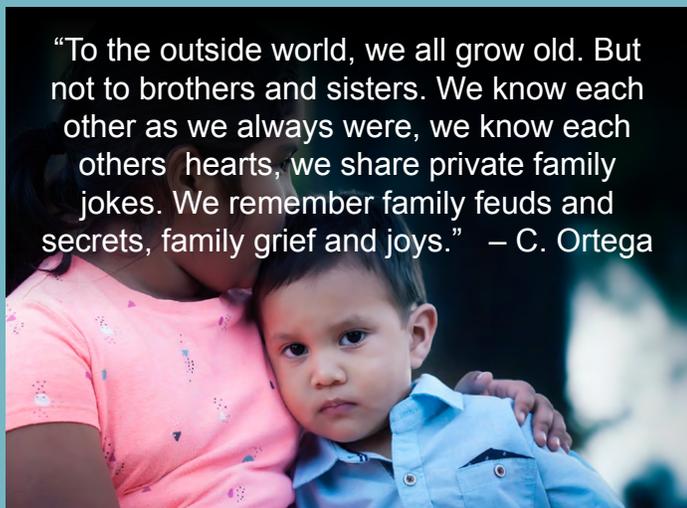
What does appropriate electronic time look like? TV? Cell phone? Wi-Fi?

What should my grades look like?

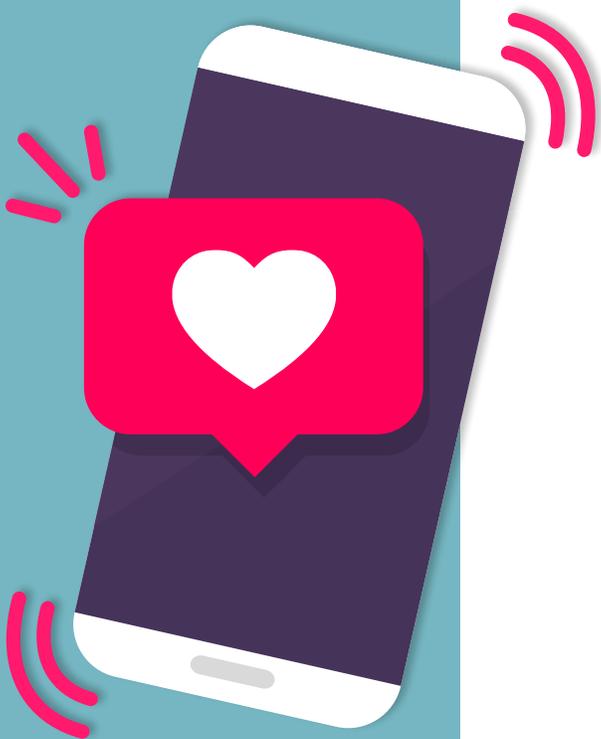
What kind of things should I get in trouble for?

What should happen when I get in trouble?

“Siblings will take different paths, and life may separate them. But they will forever be bonded by having begun their journey in the same boat.” – Unknown



WHAT SHOULD CONNECTIONS AND CONTACT LOOK LIKE BETWEEN SIBLINGS?



Separating from your sibling(s) and/or being adopted by a family who may have children can be stressful. Your mind may be filled with many questions and concerns.

Will I have new siblings?

Will my siblings be upset that I have new siblings?

Why did we separate?

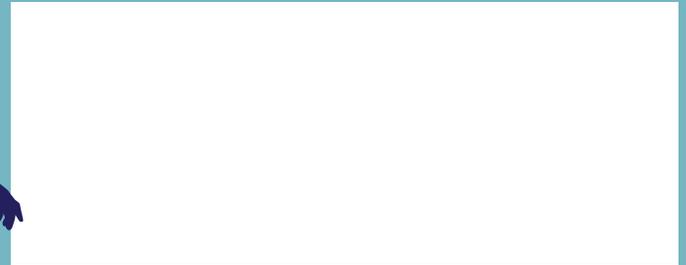
Are my siblings safe?

I wonder if my siblings think about me as much as I think about them?

1. How do I feel when I miss my siblings? (Ex: sad, stressed, etc.)



2. How do I react when I think about my siblings? (Ex: throw things, yell, cuss, etc.)



3. How would I feel if I gain new siblings? (Ex: not sure, happy, etc.)



No one can imagine how you are feeling or how your behaviors are affected by how much you miss your sibling(s).



WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING....

"I wish people understood a little bit more about what it meant to be adopted, what it means to be adopted." - Ben

"I speak openly about adoption because I think it's something that is part of me and nothing that I can really change or hide at any point because that's just me." - Lia

"When I was released, I ended up making the decision to go back home with my mother, which was supposed to be a permanent thing. But neither she nor I had got the help we needed.

So there were no nets to catch me before I failed."
- Jessica NFYAC

It's okay to think you have another mom 'cause I always thought I had 6 mom's, 3 dads, 5 brothers, and 8 sisters. I felt that they were a part of my (now colossal) family."
- Kiki5068

Adoption is second chance to be a normal teen.
- GiyGiy

"I just don't want to open myself up and get hurt all over again. I'm tired of getting attached to people that don't stick around." - (Name)

"Try to identify a support person – someone you can trust and really utilize them. Believe it or not, they do want you to call."
- Debbie

So, what do I think about this stuff?



MEDIA EFFORTS

Q: What are media efforts?

A: Media efforts refer to attempts to find adoptive homes by using social media and public media.

Q: What are some examples of media efforts?

A: Media efforts include photos (on social media and/or adoption websites), videos (television features and media spots), newsletters/publications and radio features.

Q: What type of information is shared?

A: The information shared includes a good color picture and a brief personal profile about you and what you are looking for in a family. News videos give you the opportunity to share your own information. *OKDHS does NOT share identifying information such as your last name or address. We take great care in ensuring your Online safety.

Q: How do I participate in media efforts?

A: All children 12 and older must complete and sign a media consent form in order to participate in efforts.

MEDIA EFFORTS



Continued

Q: What if I don't want to participate in media efforts?

A: No problem. However all children 12 and older must complete a WITHDRAWAL of media consent stating that they do not want to participate in media efforts. You may withdraw your consent at anytime.

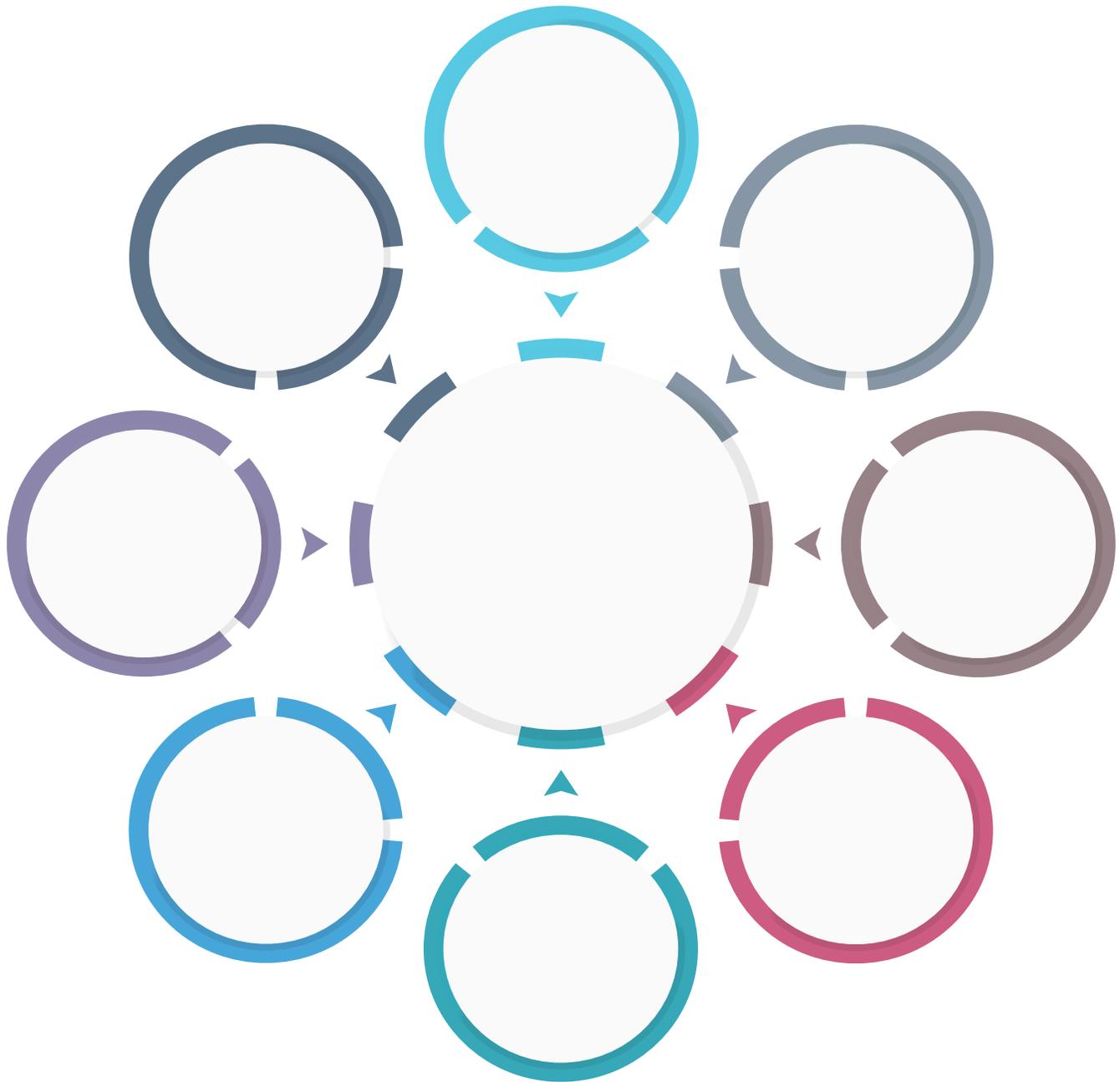
TYPES OF MEDIA EFFORTS	YES	NO	NOT RIGHT NOW
News videos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Internet videos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adoption websites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Newsletters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Traveling Heart Gallery	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Facebook	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Twitter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instagram	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Radio spots	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PROMOTE YOURSELF

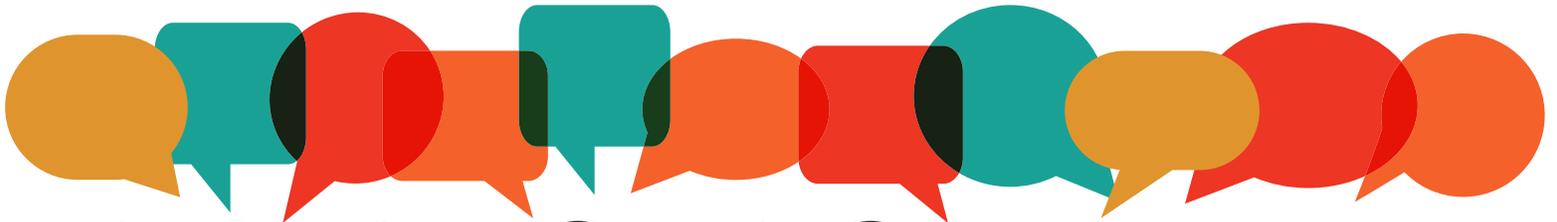
#MYPEOPLE

#MYTEAM

#MYCONNECTIONS



Relationship Key		Example of Systems	
Strong	—————	Extended family	Culture
Stressful	~~~~~	Health care	Church
Tenuous	-----	Friends	Work
Broken/ended	---//---//---//---	Social welfare	Recreation
		School	Courts



BUILD YOUR OWN TEAM

Think of all the positive people in your life right now who help and support you. How do they help you the most?

What kind of help and support do you think you need in the future?

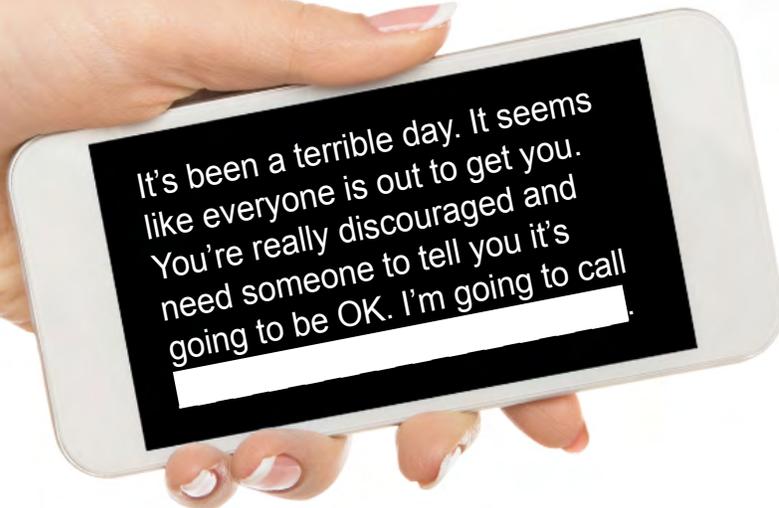
What are some of the traits of a supportive team member?

Who is on your supportive team now?

Who will be on your supportive team after you turn 18?

Where can you find more supportive team members?

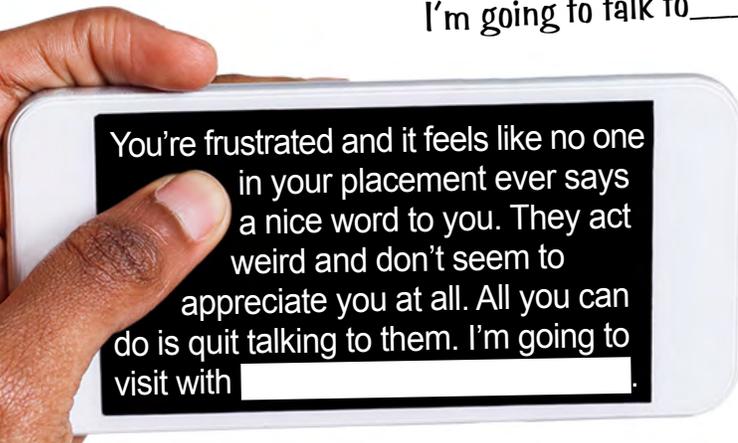
WHO'S GOT YOUR BACK?



You're depressed. You've been feeling this way for a long time. Every time you hear one of those checklist about depression, you think "that's me." Your foster mother knows you're blue and she does all this cheerful stuff and tells you everything is going to be OK. But it never is. I'm going to call _____.

You're feeling disappointed because a school dance is ahead, and you have a date but no money. You feel like calling the whole thing off. You need clothes to wear, transportation etc. Everything seems to cost. I can talk this over with _____.

You're struggling at school. For the last year, your grades have been down and you can't seem to get them up. Sometimes in class, you don't understand a word the teacher says. I'm going to talk to _____.



THE FEAR FACTOR...

THIS IS SCARY STUFF!!!

See if you can decode these fears. Try to list what fears may lead a foster youth to give the following excuses.

I already have a family.	Example: A youth may fear that loving their foster parents may mean they have to stop loving their bio-family.
I don't need anybody.	
I'm not moving again.	
I don't want someone telling me what to do all the time.	
I just want to live with _____.	
Why try? It won't work out anyway.	
I already have a family who will function just fine when I return back home.	
It was the state's fault that my family broke up.	
If I don't go back and get to know my bio-family, my roots, I'll never know who I am.	
Now that I am grown up, I can move back with my bio parents because they can't really hurt me anymore.	
My bio-family is nicer than any of the placements I've had. I'll be okay with them.	

COMING BACK FROM THE COME BACK RESILIENCE: THE COURAGE TO COME BACK When a plan doesn't work...

Rally your troops: “Your small support could accomplish a big dream.”
– Mohammed Rishad Sakhi

- Adult/Connection support
- Empathetic friends
- Counselors/therapists
- Express your opinion and ask questions
- Make healthy new connections
- *Keep the Hope*

Take a break: “Make a habit of two things: to help; or at least to do no harm.”
– Hippocrates

- Routines are important
- Focus on someone/something else that you can help
- Eat, rest and exercise properly
- *Keep the Hope*

Know your goals: “You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.” – C.S. Lewis

- Continue current goals
- Set new reasonable goals
- *Keep the Hope*

Nurture a positive self-view: “Stand as giants and walk as lions.”
– Skillet

- Remind yourself of your good attributes
- Trust yourself to solve problems and make appropriate decisions.
- Challenges are the text book of learning who you are. Learn.
- *Keep the Hope*

“Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you respond to it.”

– Charles Swindall



FUTURE

We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.
– Martin Luther King Jr.



Resilience:
The courage to come back.

LET ME WRITE THAT
DOWN REAL QUICK...



45 Suggested Supports...

*...that a Supportive Adult might offer
to a youth transitioning from care*

A HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Spending the holidays without a family and with nowhere to go is a significant issue cited by young people who have transitioned out of foster care. Extending an invitation to holiday celebrations, or birthdays can help a youth fend off the depression that usually sets in around these important times of year.

A PLACE TO DO LAUNDRY

Many adults can look back at the times they returned home as a youth with bags loaded with dirty clothes to wash. The offer to use laundry facilities can be a great way to keep a regular connection with a youth and provide them with a way to maintain pride in their appearance, regardless of an unstable housing situation.

EMERGENCY PLACE TO STAY

Statistics show 25% of young persons will spend at least one night homeless within the first 2-4 years of leaving foster care. The offer of an emergency couch to sleep on or a guest bedroom to stay in can reduce anxiety and keep young people safe during hardships. Supportive adults may want to specify limits in time or expectations (help with housework, etc.) as a condition of this offer.

FOOD/OCCASIONAL MEALS

A friendly, family-style meal every thursday evening or an invitation to Sunday brunch or a monthly lunch can provide a youth with a healthy alternative to the fast-food that often composes a youth's diet. It also provides a chance to connect and to role-model family life. An open invite to "raid the pantry" can be very comforting to young students or those on a limited budget and will help to ensure that the youth's health isn't jeopardized when funds are low.

CARE PACKAGES AT COLLEGE

Students regularly receive boxes of homemade cookies, a phone card or photos from their parents when away at college. A regular package to a foster youth who has transitioned from care reminds them of connections "back home", and allows them to fit in with their peers.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

An employer or person in a position to hire, can help by providing special consideration when hiring for a new position. A phone call to the youth inviting them to apply, help with a written application, coaching for a job interview are all ways to help. Supportive adults can offer a youth the chance to help with yard work, housecleaning, babysitting, etc. in order to earn extra money and to establish a work reference.

JOB SEARCH ASSISTANCE

Finding a job can be a daunting task for anyone. Advice, help filling out applications or creating a resumé, rehearsal of interview questions, transportation to interviews, preparation of appropriate clothing, discussion of workplace behavior, and just plain cheering on can help a youth successfully land a job.

CAREER COUNSELING

An adult working in the youth's field of interest can offer advice which could launch a youth's career. Youth particularly benefit from connections and introductions which lead to apprenticeships, job shadows, or other real-world experience. Supportive adults can help the transitioning youth make these contacts.

HOUSING HUNT

Securing a first apartment is a rite of passage to adulthood. But without guidance, finding housing can turn into an overwhelming experience. Youth leaving care often lack references or a co-signer which a supportive adult may be able to offer. Former foster youth may have opportunities for financial assistance, but may need help locating it or applying for it. Also, supportive adults can utilize apartment hunting as an opportunity to discuss other daily living challenges, like roommates, utilities, selecting a neighborhood, transportation to job and needed services, etc.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Extending an invitation to a youth to go bike riding, go bowling, shoot some hoops or to simply take a walk can promote health, relieve anxiety, and provide a comfortable way to connect. Recreational activities like cooking, woodworking, painting or playing guitar can provide an outlet for youth and help to develop skills. Other activities include going to a movie, playing cards or chess or Monopoly, taking photographs, going shopping or taking a short trip.

MENTOR

Mentors have proven to be an effective influence on youth. Whether a formal or informal mentor to a youth in care, the supportive adult can be a role-model, coach and a friend.

TRANSPORTATION

Youth often need help with transportation and may have no one to turn to. A supportive adult can be a transportation resource, specifying the limits of the offer, i.e. for school, to find employment, for medical appointments, to visit relatives, etc. Youth can often use help to figure out how to use public transportation.



❑ **EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE**

According to statistics, only 50% of foster youth will graduate from high school. These shocking statistics show that many youth in care struggle through school against terrible odds including multiple moves, learning disabilities, lack of parental support and missed time in class. A supportive adult can help by becoming a tutor, an educational advocate, or by simply providing advice when needed. Youth planning to attend college can use help with college applications, finding financial aid, and visits to perspective college campuses.

❑ **RELATIONSHIP/MARRIAGE/PARENTING COUNSELING**

Youth coming out of foster care often lack the skill to cultivate and maintain lasting personal relationships. In many cases, role-modeled relationships for the youth have included biological parents with dysfunctional relationships and paid caretakers from group homes or facilities. Supportive adults can provide frank discussions about relationships, marriage, the role of a spouse and how to be a good parent when the time comes.

❑ **ASSISTANCE WITH MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS/ CHAPERONE**

It can be scary attending a medical appointment all alone. A supportive adult can accompany a youth to a medical appointment or rehearse what questions to ask, interpret a doctor's instructions, or provide advice about obtaining a second opinion.

❑ **STORAGE**

Sometimes the life of a youth can be transient, moving from location to location before getting settled. The supportive adult can provide a safe place to store valuables and help ensure that the youth doesn't lose track of valuables, including photo albums, family keepsakes, and records.

❑ **MOTIVATION**

Everyone does better with a personal cheering section. The supportive adult may be the only one to offer encouraging words to a youth.

❑ **SOMEONE TO TALK TO/DISCUSS PROBLEMS**

When a youth transitions out of care, there are often moments of insecurity, loneliness and anxiety. The supportive adult can provide a listening ear for a youth to vent, offer advice and wisdom, or be a sounding board for ideas. It may be wise to establish "calling hours" to avoid late night or early morning calls, if that is a concern.

❑ **A PHONE TO USE**

Sometimes a phone is simply not an affordable luxury for a youth starting out on their own. A supportive adult could provide use of their phone as a message phone for the youth's prospective employers or landlords. Use of the phone can be helpful to keep in touch with caseworkers, siblings, parents, former foster parents, or to access resources in the community.

❑ **A COMPUTER TO USE**

Access to a computer is a valuable tool for a youth for school work, employment or housing search, or contact with siblings or other relatives. A supportive adult can provide this access from a computer at work or at home, and may want to establish limits in time, websites visited, or downloads that are acceptable.

❑ **CLOTHING**

A youth may need assistance and/or advise in purchasing or preparing clothing for events like a job interview, weddings or special occasions, or graduation. Sometimes special opportunities need special gear, like a school ski trip, a costume party, etc. A supportive adult can assist with laundry, ironing, mending, shopping for new clothes, or occasionally purchasing a new item. Improving a youth's personal appearance can boost self confidence.

❑ **SPIRITUAL SUPPORT**

Youth often develop the same spiritual beliefs as their parents. Youth coming from care may have lacked this spiritual guidance. A supportive adult can invite a youth to join them as they search for their own spiritual path. The adult can offer to explore religion with the youth and invite them to participate in church or other spiritual activities.

❑ **LEGAL TROUBLES**

A youth emerging from care who gets into legal trouble usually cannot afford legal advice. When youth have a tangle with the law, they often land in deeper trouble because of their lack of experience and resources in navigating the legal system. A supportive adult can assist by connecting youth to needed legal services. The supporter may also wish to provide preventative advice to the youth who may be headed for legal entanglement.



*JJ from Michigan,
FosterClub All-Star*

"Permanency is a feeling that is different for everyone, it is not bound by time nor can it be measured. It has to be discovered and often times it has to be tested, and rejected more than once before permanency can be established. Permanency is so hard to understand because it is a conceptual idea of an emotion and is received on both ends very differently for every person. There is no straight "by the book" definition of permanency because the emotions I feel cannot be felt by anyone else, and that's the great thing about it."

❑ **CULTURAL EXPERIENCE**

Supportive adults who share a cultural background with a youth may wish to engage them in cultural activities. Even if the cultural backgrounds are different, the youth can be motivated to participate in cultural events. Support can be given to examine cultural traditions and beliefs and encouragement given to take pride in their cultural identity.

❑ **APARTMENT MOVE-IN**

Moving is so much easier with the support of friends, from packing, to manpower, a truck to move, to help setting up the new apartment. The supportive adult can also invite the youth to scout through their garage or storage area for extra furniture or household items that might be useful.



☐ COOKING LESSONS/ASSISTANCE

Many times youth coming out of care have not had the opportunity to practice cooking on their own. Meal preparation is often a natural way to engage in meaningful conversation and build a relationship. The supportive adult may decide to take a youth grocery shopping, or help stock the youth's first kitchen with a starter supply of utensils, spices, cleaning supplies and food.

☐ REGULAR CHECK-IN (DAILY, WEEKLY OR MONTHLY)

Simply knowing that someone will be aware that you are missing, hurt or in trouble is important. A supportive adult can instigate regular check-in's with a youth transitioning out of care, easing feelings of anxiety and building confidence that someone is concerned about their safety.

☐ BILLS AND MONEY MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE

Sorting through bills and balancing a checkbook can be a particularly daunting task for a youth with a learning disability, deficient math skills or experience. Understanding how to maintain and obtain credit, deciphering loan applications, and budgeting are some of the items where a supportive adult can lend help.

☐ DRUG AND ALCOHOL ADDICTION HELP

A high percentage of youth in care have parents who had drug or alcohol dependency problems. Working with young people transitioning out of care to avoid these dangerous pitfalls and offering support if a problem should develop could help break a familial cycle of addiction.

☐ HELP WITH READING FORMS, DOCUMENTS, AND COMPLEX MAIL

Many youth in care have learning disabilities which may make complicated reading assignments all the more difficult. The supportive adult can make arrangements for a youth to collect materials for review on a weekly basis or to give a call on an as-needed basis.

☐ MECHANICAL AND/OR BUILDING PROJECTS

Youth may need help keeping an automobile in good repair. Teaching a youth about the care of their car can help them build self-confidence and skills that can last a lifetime. Helping a youth fix up their apartment or a rented home, or asking for their assistance in projects around your home, can teach new skills which may be put to use throughout life.

☐ HOUSEKEEPING

Some youth, particularly those who have lived in a residential facility or restrictive environment, may not have had real-life experience in keeping a home clean. The supportive adult can discuss cleaning supplies to use for particular household chores, how to avoid disease, and organization of clutter once a youth has transitioned to their own home.

☐ HOME DECORATING

Helping a youth decorate their home can be a fun and rewarding way to contribute to the youth's sense of pride and self esteem.

☐ VOTING

Youth in our society often form their first political impressions based on their parents' political beliefs. Youth in care often do not receive this role modeling. A supportive adult may wish to discuss current local, state and national issues, help a youth register to vote or take a youth to the polling location to vote.

☐ VOLUNTEERISM

Volunteering to help others or for a worthy cause is an excellent way to build self-esteem. Supporters can offer to engage a youth in their own good work or embark on a new volunteer effort together.

☐ FINDING COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Navigating through the maze of government agencies and myriad of social service programs is difficult at best even for a resourceful adult. The supportive adult can help the youth make a list of useful resources in the community and offer to visit them together.

☐ SAFETY AND PERSONAL SECURITY

The youth transitioning from care needs to take charge of their own personal safety. The supportive adult can encourage them to take a self-defense class, get CPR certified, get current on health and safety issues. The adult can take a tour of the youth's apartment and make suggestions regarding home safety, can help develop an evacuation plan, and make plans with the youth on what to do in an emergency situation. The supportive adult can offer to be called when something goes wrong, and offer to be listed as "person to contact in an emergency" on business forms.



Sharde from Indiana, FosterClub All-Star

"Permanency is important because if you spend your entire life moving around it doesn't give you a chance to get close to anyone, and you don't learn how to build those essential relationships you will need later in life. Moving around also influences you to run away from your problems."

☐ MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Some youth in care suffer from mental health challenges. Depression, attention-deficit disorder, eating disorders, and other illness may afflict the youth. It is suggested that the supportive adult educate themselves about any mental health disorders that are at issue.

☐ CO-SIGNER

Many times youth need co-signers to acquire housing, car loans, or bank accounts (particularly when the youth is under 18 years old). Consider the financial liability if the youth were to miss payments or not fulfill the financial agreement. It is suggested that an adult who acts as a co-signer closely supervise the arrangement until the youth has established a consistent pattern of responsibility.



□ **BABYSITTING**

If the youth is a parent, babysitting services can be the relief that is needed to keep a young family intact. In addition to providing a time-out, the offer to watch a child while the young parent gets other chores around the house accomplished (laundry, cleaning, etc.), provides an excellent opportunity to role-model good parenting skills.

□ **EMERGENCY CASH**

Most of us have experienced a cash shortage at one time or another as a youth. Youth coming from care usually lack this important "safety net". The supportive adult may wish to discuss up front their comfort level in supplying financial assistance. They would discuss what constitutes an emergency (not enough to cover rent? a medical emergency? cash for a date? gas money?).

□ **REFERENCE**

Many applications, including those for college, housing and jobs, require a list of references be provided by the applicant. If the supportive adult is able to give a positive reference for a youth, they should make sure a youth has their current contact information so that the supporter can be included on their list of references.

□ **ADVOCACY**

Sometimes youth have a difficult time speaking up for themselves in court, at school, with government systems, etc. Supportive adults can help a youth organize their thoughts, speak on their behalf, or assist in writing letters.

□ **INCLUSION IN SOCIAL CIRCLE/COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

Often youth in care have difficulty forming new friendships and relationships when they leave care. A supportive adult can extend regular invitations to the youth to attend social and community gatherings as an opportunity to form new friendships and make connections with people. Good opportunities to make new friends include family weddings, hiking trips, garden clubs, community service projects and volunteer opportunities, dances, sporting events, debate groups, community college classes, etc.

□ **ADOPTION**

Even for many older youth, including those over the age of 18, adoption remains a dream. An adult who is able to offer this ultimate permanent connection for a youth may make an initial offer to adopt through a Permanency Pact. Often youth may have fears about adoption, interpreting adoption to mean loss of contact with bio parents or siblings (this should be taken into consideration when discussing this option). Youth who once declined to be adopted often change their minds, so an adult may want to renew the offer from time to time.

About FosterClub



*FosterClub is the national network
for young people in foster care.*

Every 2 minutes, a child's life changes as they enter the foster care system. There are more than 513,000 young people living in foster care across the country, and FosterClub *is their club* — a place to turn for advice, information, and hope. Our peer support network gives kids in foster care **a new spin on life**.

At FosterClub's **web sites**, kids are asking questions and getting answers: www.fosterclub.com is for young people and www.fyi3.com is designed for youth transitioning from care. FosterClub's gateway for adults who support young people in foster care is www.fosterclub.org. Our **publications** supply youth with tools for success and also provide inspiration and perspective from their peers who have successfully emerged from foster care. FosterClub's **training and events** are held across the country and feature a dynamic group of young foster care alumni called the FosterClub All-Stars. **Outreach tools** designed to improve communication with young people in care and engage them in achieving their own personal success.

The members of FosterClub are resilient young people determined to build a better future for themselves and for other kids coming up through the system behind them. Their success depends on the generosity of concerned individuals and collaborations with partner organizations. If you would like to learn more about FosterClub or how you can support young people in foster care, visit www.fosterclub.org or call 503-717-1552. FosterClub is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. EIN 93-1287234.



The pinwheel is an enduring symbol of the happy, carefree childhood all kids deserve. For more than 513,000 youth living in the U.S. foster care system, childhood has been interrupted by abuse, neglect or abandonment. FosterClub's peer support network gives kids in foster care a new spin on life by providing information, resources, encouragement and hope.

the national network for young people in foster care

FOSTERCLUB



PERMANENCY PACT

In an effort to support and sustain an on-going connection between a youth and supportive adult,

NAME OF SUPPORTIVE ADULT

pledges to provide specific support to, and has been accepted as a contributor of such support by,

NAME OF YOUTH

Confirmed this _____ day of _____, 20____. As witnessed by:

FACILITATOR

Contact info for supportive adult	
Phone, Cell:	
Home address:	
email:	

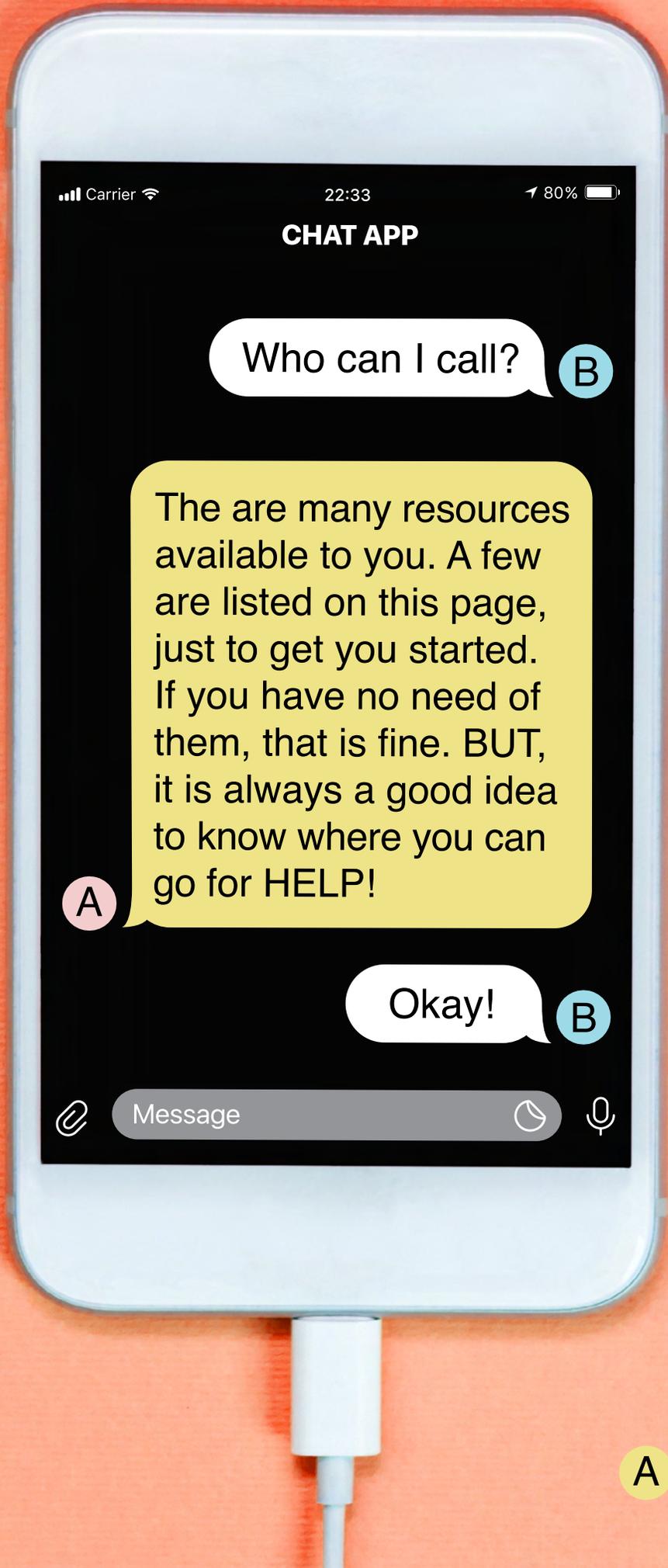
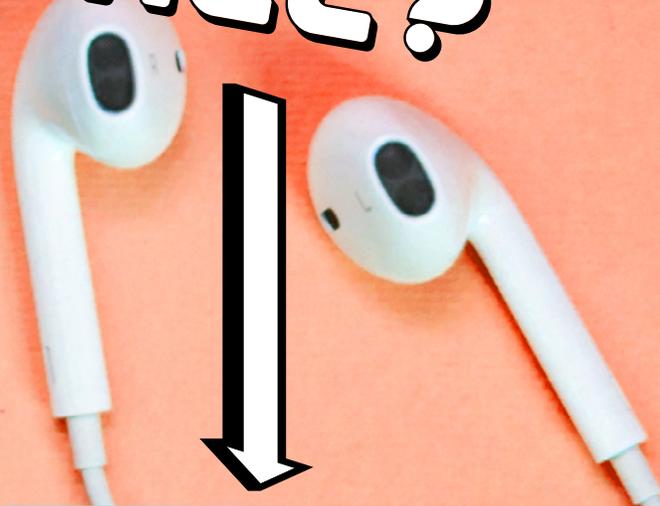


Child Welfare Services

This Permanency Pact is a pledge by a supportive adult to provide specific supports to a young person with a goal of establishing a lifelong, kin-like relationship. Supports to be provided include:

- A computer to use
- A home for the holidays
- A phone to use
- A place to do laundry
- Adoption
- Advocacy
- Apartment move-in
- Assistance w/medical appointments
- Babysitting
- Bills & money management
- Care packages at college
- Career counseling
- Clothing
- Cooking lessons/assistance
- Co-Signer
- Cultural experience
- Drug & alcohol addiction help
- Educational assistance
- Emergency cash
- Emergency place to stay
- Employment opportunities
- Finding community resources
- Food/occasional meals
- Help reading forms, complex docs.
- Home decorating
- Housekeeping
- Housing hunt
- Job search assistance
- Legal troubles
- Mechanical/building projects
- Mental health support
- Mentor
- Motivation
- Recreational activities
- Reference
- Regular check-in
- Relationship/marriage/parenting
- Safety & personal security
- Social circle/community activities
- Someone to talk to/discuss problems
- Spiritual support
- Storage
- Transportation
- Volunteerism
- Voting

**WHO YA
GONNA
CALL?**



General information: **211**

Yes I Can!

1-800-397-2945

Youth Mobile Crisis

Helpline: **1-833-885-2273**

Free medical clinics:

freeclinics.com

Youth Services of Tulsa

(transitional living):

1-918-582-0061

Catholic Charities

(transitional living):

1-800-375-8514

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