FOSTERING POST-SECONDARY SUCCESS: SUPPORT PROGRAMMING FOR STUDENTS FROM FOSTER CARE

Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU)
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Produced By: Arisha Khan

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Introduction

The Students Society of McGill University (*SSMU*) has frequently undertaken efforts to enhance supports for students from underrepresented backgrounds, in turn fostering dialogue about issues and barriers to post-secondary matriculation for these groups. This work is in line with the SSMU's commitment to display leadership in the matters of equity, social justice, and human rights.[1] These efforts are also in alignment with McGill University's academic mission and priorities, such as the efforts of the Provost's Task Force on Indigenous Studies and Indigenous Education and the six-prong Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) Plan. The latter in particular states the need to increase the diversity and accessibility of a McGill education and provide service to the community and society.[2]

While investigating the need for targeted supports and increased diversity in the student body, the Society's research has revealed that there is a lack of representation of students from the foster care system at McGill. In contrasting the representation and success of these students at other institutions, it was determined that McGill does not provide the supports necessary to foster success in this population although the capacity certainly exists. However, many other institutions that have faced similar concerns have undertaken concerted and coordinated efforts to address this issue, with measurable improvements noted in both student representation and overall campus life. For example, administrators at the University of Seattle that we spoke to have had a steady growth of success in their program with graduation rates at 80% (from the average of 2%) resulting in enrollment and funding for the program to double since inception.

Recognizing these disparities, this report was commissioned in November 2016 in order to better analyze the scope of issues faced by students from foster care in accessing and completing a post-secondary education. Furthermore, it examines existing programming across Canadian and American universities in order to summarize best practices and recommendations for implementing similar programs at McGill.

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[1] Students' Society of McGill University, "Constitution of the Students' Society of McGill University," April 28, 2016.
[2] McGill University, "Strategic Enrollment Management Plan 2011-2016," March 13, 2011, https://www.mcgill.ca/studentlifeandlearning/files/studentlifeandlearning/d10-50strategicenrolmentmanagementplan.pdf.

Methodology

An initial environmental scan was conducted to explore the landscape of targeted supports available in Canada and the USA, followed by a literature review of precipitating factors and issues that thwart post-secondary attainment for students from foster care. To understand the viability of possible solutions, staff and directors from successful models were contacted to gather initial best practices and challenges vis-à-vis the initial stages of program development and implementation.

A survey was then sent out to SSMU members and other self-identified foster student groups to gain a more nuanced understanding of issues that they face at McGill. This sample included both registered students as well as those who are no longer enrolled at McGill. Excerpts from the survey are included throughout this report. It is of note that the with a total response rate of 33 (n=33) and 15 complete responses (n=15) the survey does not capture the full extent of the experiences of McGill students. However, only 4 McGill respondents noted having been involved with the child welfare system (n=4). These results are in line with an informal count by the McGill Scholarships and Student Aid Office (SSAO) who found that of 1500 students receiving support from Ontario Student Assistance Plan, only 1 was flagged with child welfare status but more cases have been seen by SSAO.

This apparent lack of understanding of the magnitude of students coming from precarious backgrounds including foster care was echoed as a concern from various departments at McGill when presented with the initial findings of the survey and report. As a first step, SSAO is attempting to reach out to government student-aid partners to see if such information is accessible. Additionally, McGill Enrolment Services will now be including a question regarding involvement in the child welfare system in the admissions survey for the incoming class of 2017.

Background: Child Welfare in Canada

Child Well-Being in Canada

Canada ranks far behind other countries with regards to child protection and wellbeing, frequently failing to abide by key international standards. The United Nation's Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) consistently lists Canada as ranking below its other economically prosperous, western counterparts. The UNCRC's last review in

2014 provided Canada with 47 recommendations to improve child welfare practices, most of which have been stagnant. Though reviews have cited pervasive issues such as relative child poverty and life satisfaction, homicides (serves as a proxy indicator for violence), and participation in post-secondary education, situations have not improved. These issues have resulted in Canada ranking 24th out of 26 countries evaluated.[3] These issues are exacerbated for children who have been in or are in state care.

In addition, the rates of children entering the care of child welfare authorities is exceedingly high in comparison to other countries and steadily increasing. In 2012, Manitoba was found to have the highest rates of children in care in the world, with 7.5% children placed in care for some period by the age of 7. [4] In contrast, the US rate of children in care is only 0.66%.[5] While there are a host of issues that contribute to these outcomes, factors such as funding incentives and minimal supports significantly increase the rate of children in care.

Child Welfare and Protection Services

"**Child Welfare**" or "**Child Protection**" **Authorities** are provisioned by the government to safeguard children from abuse and neglect. In Canada, where child protection services are provincially legislated, these authorities are either government-run or publicly funded private agencies (as is the case in Ontario) with powers of investigation and apprehension under provincial legislation. If children are deemed to be in need of protection, they are assigned to a range of possible placements such as foster care, group care, or residential facilities.

Due to poor regulatory and accountability frameworks, the child welfare system in Canada is extremely fragmented, resulting in children and youth often falling through the cracks. Issues of homelessness, drug addiction, and sex trafficking are rampant and foster youth fall far behind with regards to overall well-being when contrasted with their peers. Furthermore, Canada does not keep reliable statistics on children in care, making it difficult to compare rates and outcomes of children in out-of-home situations across

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[3] UNICEF Canada, "Child Well-Being in Rich Countries: A Comparative Overview," *UNICEF Canada*, 2016, http://www.unicef.ca/en/our-work/article/child-well-being-in-rich-countries-a-comparative-overview.

[4] Ruth Gilbert et al., "Child Maltreatment: Variation in Trends and Policies in Six Developed Countries," *The Lancet* 379, no. 9817 (2012): 758–72.

[5] J Thoburn, "Globalisation and Child Welfare: Some Lessons from a Cross-National Study of Children in out-of-Home Care," *School of Social Work and Psychosocial Studies, University of East Anglia* 228 (2007).

provinces.[6] This is important because policy makers generally require reliable statistical data to develop shared best practices. Unfortunately, without this vital information, policies that best serve children and youth cannot be developed.

A Note on Statistics and Semantics

2011 marked the first time that foster children were counted across Canada, however this indicator was only a self-report of children aged 14 and under in private households; data for youth aged 14-18 in care is not available on a national level. The census determined that there were approximately 29,590 (0.5%) foster children under 14 in private households; however, research estimates that there are approximately 100,000 children and youth involved with the child welfare/protection and youth justice systems at any given time with 75,000 in the former and 25,000 in the latter.[7,8]

As child welfare services fall under the jurisdiction of provincial and territorial authorities, each province has different legislation pertaining to child protection interventions. The age of protection or majority ranges from 17-19 years across the country (Appendix A), and the language used to classify services and the status of a child in care is varied. This report will focus heavily on the Ontario and Quebec child welfare systems and statistics due to the majority of McGill entrants being from these provinces.[9]

This report will utilize the term child welfare authority to classify the service that is mandated to provision child protection service. The term foster youth/student will be utilized to classify youth who have been serviced by these authorities as most targeted programs in post-secondary institutions utilize this language. Please see the vocabulary box below for commonly used terms.

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[6] A. S Jones and Nico Trocmé, "Children and Youth in Out-of-Home Care in the Canadian Provinces" (Child Welfare Research Portal Information Sheet, 2015).
[7] Ibid.
[8] Cheryl Farris-Manning and Marietta Zandstra, "Children in Care in Canada," *Child Welfare League of Canada*, 2003, http://cwrp.ca/sites/default/files/publications/en/ChildrenInCareMar2003Final.pdf.
[9] McGill University, "Enrolment Report Fall 2016. Total (FT and PT) Canadian and Permanent Residents Enrolment by Provinces at Admit Time and by Faculty," 2016.

In Care/Custody: Is used to describe children/youth who are removed from their parents' care and placed in the care and custody of the government. This includes foster care, group care, youth justice, mental health, and other residential facilities.

Temporary Care: Describes children/youth who have been removed from their parents' care and placed under the temporary guardianship of the government until next steps can be determined. This period is usually 3 months. (Other terminology: Temporary Ward, Temporary Custody Order.)

Permanent Care is when a child/youth is a permanent ward of the state; in other words when the government assumes full guardianship of a child until they reach the age of majority in their province/territory. (Other terminology: Crown Ward, Permanent Ward, Continuing Custody Order.)

Aging Out is a term used to describe leaving the care of the state. This age varies and is usually based on the age of majority in a province Supporting youth leaving care is a critical element of planning for the future of children and youth. (Other terminology: Leaving Care, In Transition, etc.)

Source: Child Welfare Research Portal, 2016.

Aggravating Factors

The structure of Canada's child welfare system is such that welfare agencies are incentivized to "game" the system. This is due to provincial funding models that elicit incentives, in turn generating actions which are not conducive to the well-being of children and youth such as not providing ancillary supports past the age of majority.[10,11]

These issues are especially severe for Indigenous communities, given that funding for Indigenous child welfare is provided federally. Provinces are therefore incentivized to take in more Indigenous children in order to increase federal reimbursements, often without full consideration of their resource capacity or the support needs of these youth.[12]

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[10] Commission to Promote Sustainable Child Welfare, "A New Approach to Child Welfare Funding in Ontario, Final Report," 2012.
[11] Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, "Chapter 3: Report on Value-for-Money Audits, Child Protection Services," in *Annual Report 2015* (Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2015), 116–66.
[12] Vandna Sinha and Anna Kozlowski, "The Structure of Aboriginal Child Welfare in Canada," *International Indigenous Policy Journal* 4, no. 2 (April 2013).

Due to the privatized nature of child welfare authorities such as in Ontario, children are often bounced in and out of care due to diffused public-private accountability and funding motivations stemming from their guiding legislation. Under the Child and Family Services Act, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) provides licensed nonprofit organizations—known as Children's Aid Societies, or CAS—with powers of investigation and apprehension of children and youth.[13] This legislated shift of responsibility from the Ministry to CASs in addition to limited oversight powers allows both parties to deflect the onus of adequately protecting and serving the children in their care.

Notably, under current Ontario legislation, these CASs do not fall under the mandate of any provincial oversight bodies, further perpetuating the issue of poor performance management. [14] These conditions create an environment where progress is thwarted because there are no barometers for success or clear standards for reporting, recourse, and investigation.

Although strides have been made in recent years, existing legal loopholes make it extremely difficult for many former youth in care to access necessary supports. In fact, while supports have increased for youth **aging out** of care, the rates of **permanent care** have been decreasing.[15,16]

The difficulty of accessing resources often increases as youth reach the age of protection (Appendix A) as and therefore expenses increase provinces and child welfare authorities

For example, in Ontario, under the Child and Family Services Act, a child may be considered to be under a Supervision/Protection Order (not in a placement), Temporary Care Agreement (three months), a Society Ward (over three months), or a Crown Ward (court ordered emancipation, generally after two consecutive years in care).[17,18] Although

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[13] Government of Ontario, "Child and Family Services Act," C.11 § (1990).
[14] Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, "Chapter 3: Report on Value-for-Money Audits, Child Protection Services."
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ministry of Children and Youth Services Government of Ontario, "Modernizing Ontario's Legislation for Child and Youth Services," accessed January 14, 2017, http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/professionals/childwelfare/modern-legislation.aspx.
[17] Government of Ontario, Child and Family Services Act.
[18] Government of Ontario, "Improving the Educational Outcomes of Children and Youth in Care," 2014.

they receive the same amount of funding for each child, with each step towards Crown Wardship, the government and presiding child welfare authority assume more liability and responsibility over the child (for example, after three months in care, the child welfare agency must fund medical and dental expenses).[19] As a result, children are often returned to abusive and trauma-inducing environments in order to reduce expenses, only to be apprehended by child welfare authorities once again,[20,21] leading to disruptions in education and overall stability.

Circumstances are similar in Quebec where the child welfare services are provisioned under the Youth Protection Act.[22] Youth protection services are more centralized in Quebec, with many children being serviced at one of 16 Youth Centers across the province.[23] Though at the time of this report there are no formally established pathways out of care and to education in Quebec, the legislation does allow for continued service past the age of 18 in accordance with the Act Respecting Health Services and Social Services. This might include assistance seeking welfare or transitionary housing supports.[24]

In summary, provinces are funded by the number of children they service in care. Because of the privatized nature of some child welfare authorities, this means that children are often bounced in and out of care due to unclear lines of responsibility and funding motivations that stem from provincial legislation.

[19] Government of Ontario, Child and Family Services Act.
[20] Government of Ontario, "Modernizing Ontario's Legislation for Child and Youth Services."
[21] Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, "Chapter 3: Report on Value-for-Money Audits, Child Protection Services."
[22] Government of Quebec, "Youth Protection Act," Pub. L. No. CQLR c P-34.1 (n.d.).
[23] M Simpson et al., "Quebec's Child Welfare System. CWRP Information Sheet #136E." (Centre for Research on Children and Families, 2014).
[24] Youth Protection Act, CQLR c P-34.1, s 64. http://canlii.ca/t/52t55#sec64 (Retrieved 2017-03-01).

Foster Care: By the Numbers

- One third of Canada's 32,000 homeless adult population are former foster kids
- 1 in 2 children are Indigenous, even though they make up only 10% of the total population under 25 (less than 10% of foster care providers are Indigenous)
- 60% of women under 24 are pregnant or an single parent
- Only between 30-44% graduate high school vs 81% of the general population
- Only 13% enrol in post-secondary programs—half the rate of their peers
- Less than 30% complete at least 1 year of college by age 23-24
- Less than 2% obtain a bachelor's degree

Figure 1. Source: Child Welfare Research Portal, 2016

Barriers to Education

Education is often viewed as a gateway to opportunity and self-sufficiency. However, for many young people in care, completing even secondary education can be a challenge. Abuse and trauma are difficult issues to deal with at any age; however, these issues are systematically exacerbated for children in care due to factors including inconsistent and unstable placements; repeated exposure to abuse; and lack of social, psychological, and educational supports. Notably, these intersecting issues impact all areas of a child's life, preventing them from thriving in their educational environments and complicating efforts to address barriers.

Mental Health Support

[McGill needs to] ensure that mental health and counselling and the walk in [urgent care clinic] are educated on foster care and adoption, including intersectionalities. When I first went to McGill Counselling for intake, I was feeling suicidal, hopeless, and unable to continue with school. However, the intake counsellor asked me about my history then focused on me coming from care and being adopted. While this might have been the root of my problems, she did not address my feelings at the time or inform me that Mental Health (for prescriptions) was a separate service.

Removal from an abusive home doesn't mean the trauma of past events disappears. The rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among children coming from foster care

were higher than among war veterans.[25] The National Youth in Care Network argues that children and youth require appropriate access to healing resources in order to deal with issues such as physical, emotional, and sexual abuse.[26] However, treatment services are often inadequate or non-existent. These unhealed traumas often resurface as "pain-based behaviors" in the form of acting out or misbehaving as children reach adolescence. Punitive sanctions as a result of displaying such behaviors can also have lasting repercussions.[27]

Experiences in foster care have been shown to create negative feelings towards therapy and seeking help for difficult emotions. For example, prescription medications may be associated with outside attempts to control behaviour or labels used to question competency in court proceedings.[28] Many young people leave care with mis- or over-diagnosed mental illnesses and reliant on using psychotropic medications that cannot be sustained without financial support.[29]

A paradox exists for many young people who have left care, whose experiences may leave them feeling more resilient and independent. However, the stresses of a new post-secondary environment coupled with repressed or unaddressed childhood trauma can lead to maladaptive behaviour and negative outcomes such as withdrawal from school. Further, even youth who have reached post-secondary may find it difficult to relate to or connect with their peers, as they may feel a need to stand on their own and lack similar familial support or relationship[30,31] However, the post-secondary experience can also normalize mental health challenges, given that many students receive professional help,

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[25] Casey Family Programs, "Improving Family Outcomes from Foster Care: Findings from the Northwest Foster Care Alumni Study," 2005.
[26] National Youth in Care Network, "Current Themes Facing Youth in State Care – Backgrounder Series #1–#5" (Ottawa, ON, 2005).
[27] Carrie Reid and Peter Dudding, *Building a Future Together: Issues and Outcomes for Transition-Aged Youth* (Ottawa, Ont.: Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare, 2006), http://www.deslibris.ca/ID/214708.
[28] Kyles, Natalie, Yvonne A. Unrau, and Katelyn M. Root, "Perceptions About Mental Health Among College Students with Foster Care Histories" (Western Michigan University, Centre for Fostering Success. 2016).
[29] Deborah Rutman, "When Youth Age Out of Care-Where to from There?: Final Report: Based on a Three Year Longitudinal Study" (School of Social Work, University of Victoria, 2007).
[30] Feight, Heidi et al., "Things for College Campus Staff and Faculty to Consider" (Research and Training Center for Pathways to Positive Futures, Portland State University, 2016).
[31] Reid and Dudding, *Building a Future Together*.

which can be a gateway to rebuilding trust with others and developing a supportive environment to succeed. [32,33]

Social Support

"I definitely felt like an outsider when I came here [McGill] and especially with respect to social class. Everyone else seemed to have stable families and no financial concerns. Being a former youth from care makes you feel like the odd ball, and attending a University like McGill definitely put an emphasis on being uncomfortable... What about the kids who made it on their own?"

"I wish I had more support in my first year from people who knew how to survive, could identify abusive relationships, and give me academic advice."

Transiency in the lives of children in care fosters mistrust towards institutions and the various authority figures that enter and leave their lives. Often changing placements and social workers multiple times per year, this can also contribute to a lack of lasting interpersonal relationships. Without a consistent home environment it is difficult to build stability in other facets of life, such as school, which in turn affects the ability to feel safe, secure, and develop personal attachments that develop resiliency against emotional and behavioral challenges.[34] Furthermore, this isolation also affects the ability to form peer and mentorship attachments that can act as a protective factor for youth. This detrimental effect is also prevalent in the research related to school permanency and post-care successes in education and overall well-being.[35] The "institutionalization" inherent in the lives of foster children make it extremely difficult to form a cohesive identity and develop relationships that lead to success.[36]

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[32] Martha Anne Kitzrow, "The Mental Health Needs of Today's College Students: Challenges and Recommendations," *NASPA Journal* 41, no. 1 (December 1, 2003): 167–81.
[33] Kyles, Natalie, Yvonne A. Unrau, and Katelyn M. Root, "Perceptions About Mental Health Among College Students with Foster Care Histories."
[34] National Youth in Care Network, "Current Themes Facing Youth in State Care – Backgrounder Series #1–#5."
[35] Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, "Chapter 3: Report on Value-for-Money Audits, Child Protection Services."
[36] National Youth in Care Network, "Current Themes Facing Youth in State Care – Backgrounder Series #1–#5."

Financial and Structural Support

"I had to be an adult when most others didn't. I don't feel like I relate to others my age and the intensity of school is sometimes too much to take. There is no trampoline, nothing to fall back on. It's just me and the debt I'm incurring. Besides the obvious financial difficulties, it's really hard when others have people that they can lean on and I can't."

Youth aging out of the system must be more resilient than their peers because their path to adulthood is largely navigated solo. This a distinct disadvantage in a country where over 40 per cent of 20 to 29-year-olds still live with their parents[37] and continue to rely on families, friends, and others for support, advice, and comfort even after leaving home.[38] During the time when most young people have the opportunity to focus on their studies and personal development, youth from care are faced with the stresses of adulthood.

With nowhere to go once they reach the age of majority—or if their provincial supports are unjustly terminated due to technicalities in legislation, many former youth in care unfortunately must face the reality of being without a home. This can be particularly challenging for anyone attempting to complete secondary school and pursue further education, due to the added stressors of paying rent and fulfilling new financial and legal responsibilities without guidance and mentorship.[39]

Notably, in Canada, one third of our homeless population comes from the child welfare system. This is to be expected as maltreatment, neglect, and trauma are key factors in mental illness and substance abuse, both of which contribute significantly to youth homelessness.[40] In such cases it may be impossible to thrive when you are busy trying to survive, which is the case for most youth in or emerging from care. Such circumstances clearly leave many youth without the skills or opportunities to succeed in secondary and post-secondary education.[41]

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[37] Statistics Canada, "Living Arrangements of Young Adults Aged 20-29. Families, Households, and Marital Status," 2011 Census of Population, 2012.
[38] Rutman, "When Youth Age Out of Care-Where to from There?: Final Report: Based on a Three Year Longitudinal Study."
[39] Ibid.
[40] The Conference Board of Canada, "Success for All: Investing in the Future of Canadian Children in Care," 2014.
[41] R Beaujot and J Kerr, "Emerging Youth Transition Patterns in Canada: Opportunities and Risks," *PSC Discussion Papers Series*, Article 1, 21, no. 5 (2007).

Systemic Barriers in Education

"My experience at McGill could never be conventional because of my Indigenous, bisexual, foster kid background. I do not fit in like the standard McGill kid and faced many more barriers to my education"

Perhaps one of the greatest barriers to educational attainment for foster children is the influence of skewed performance indicators and systemic inequity in the education system, leaving them to fall behind their peers. Without a caregiver or guardian keeping track of their education progression and advocating for their best interests, these students' needs are often not accommodated or addressed in school. This can lead to resentment towards the education system in addition to a lack of self-confidence in the ability to succeed.[42,43,44]

Secondary education is typically divided into academic, applied, and locally developed streams, the latter of which do not lead to a full diploma. Furthermore, there are a disproportionate number of students from disadvantaged backgrounds enrolled in lower level courses. This practice draws strong parallels to research on race and the achievement gap in the United States, where child welfare involvement is automatically associated with "at risk", and therefore low potential, labelling in education. [45,46] However, it is of note that pedagogy that employs anti-oppressive practice leads to more favourable educational outcomes for marginalized groups.[47]

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[42] Deborah Rutman, "Fostering Success: Improving Educational Outcomes for Youth In/From Care" (University of Victoria, 2016).
[43] The Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, "My Real Life: Report from the Youth Leaving Care Hearings" (Toronto, 2012).
[44] C McMillen et al., "Educational Experiences and Aspirations of Older Youth in Foster Care," *Child Welfare* 82, no. 4 (2003): 475–495.
[45] Roderick L. Carey, "A Cultural Analysis of the Achievement Gap Discourse Challenging the Language and Labels Used in the Work of School Reform," *Urban Education* 49, no. 4 (2014): 440–468.
[46] G. J. Sefa Dei, "Schooling as Community: Race, Schooling, and the Education of African Youth," *Journal of Black Studies* 38, no. 3 (November 9, 2007): 346–66.
[47] K. K. Kumashiro, "Toward a Theory of Anti-Oppressive Education," *Review of Educational Research* 70, no. 1 (January 1, 2000): 25–53.

Impact

"[I wish there were] better counselling services, training for staff and faculty on the realities of 'aging out' and attending PSE institutions, better funding, better housing, transition to PSE programs, career counsellors, sustainable funding and support to peer-led initiatives."

Despite the challenges they face, 70% of youth in Canada aspire to achieve a post-secondary education.[48] For those who manage to overcome systemic barriers and enter college or university, it is evident that we cannot rely solely on caregivers or provinces to provide support. Institutions must therefore develop a collaborative approach to programming and resources in order to ensure that these students do not simply fall through the cracks [49]

Several cost-benefit analyses in the United States and Australia have examined the impact of providing additional financing to young people past the age of 18. Research projects examine various indicators of future cost-savings and other societal benefits, however all reach the same conclusion: increased investments in youth transitioning from care will yield a net cross-benefit in the long term as there is a considerable reduction in expenditures in criminal justice, substance abuse and welfare spending and increases in earnings and taxes. While fewer analyses have been undertaken in Canada, emerging research indicates similar findings[50,51 52]

Furthermore, increased investment in students coming from foster care will contribute to economic growth. The Conference Board of Canada estimates that former foster children will earn approximately $326,000 less in income over their lifespan compared with those who were not involved in the child welfare system. This disparity is primarily due to three factors, low educational attainment, particularly lower rates of high-school graduation;

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[48] McMillen et al., "Educational Experiences and Aspirations of Older Youth in Foster Care."
[49] The Conference Board of Canada, "Success for All: Investing in the Future of Canadian Children in Care."
[50] Ibid.
[51] The Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, "25 Is the New 21: The Costs and Benefits of Providing Extended Care and Maintenance to Youth in Care Until Age 25," 2012.
[52] Marvin Shaffer, Lynell Anderson, and Allison Nelson, "Opportunities in Transition: An Economic Analysis of Investing in Youth Aging out of Foster Care in Their 20's," 2016.

poverty; and, poor mental well-being.[53] The Conference Board estimates that the economic cost of this lost productivity will be $8 billion over a 10-year period.[54]

More and more North American post-secondary institutions are beginning address this need for access to education by providing supports to assist former youth in care in attaining a post-secondary education. The supports provided by these institutions extends from financial aid such as tuition waivers, bursaries, and housing coverage, to comprehensive and targeted programs that extend into other aspects of student life. Examples include psychological and emotional support such as counselling and formal peer support, mentorship, and skills development initiatives that assist youth with the transition into adulthood.

Appendix B provides a cross-jurisdictional scan of current educational initiatives for youth from care at both Canadian and American institutions.

Moving Forward

McGill as a leading institution, prides itself on its commitment to providing a word-class innovative educational environment that fosters self-development and is accessible to all. The Principal's priorities outline strategies to further McGill as a pioneering institution that is grounded by a commitment to nurturing relationships and philanthropy within McGill and the global community.[55,56]

Unfortunately, it is evident from the environmental scan that Canadian schools as a whole are lacking in both financial support and targeted programming for youth coming from foster care. McGill in specific offers nothing in the way of dedicated resources. As a post-secondary institution, we can help provide the necessary support and community in order to prevent foster youth from becoming just another statistic.

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[53] Ibid.
[54] The Conference Board of Canada, "Success for All: Investing in the Future of Canadian Children in Care."
[55] "The Principal's Priorities | Office of the Principal and Vice-Chancellor - McGill University," *McGill.ca*, accessed January 14, 2017, http://www.mcgill.ca/principal/five-priorities.
[56] "Enhancing McGill's Community Partnerships | Office of the Principal and Vice-Chancellor - McGill University," *McGill.ca*, accessed January 14, 2017, http://www.mcgill.ca/principal/five-priorities/community-partnerships.

One of the Principal's commitments is to enhance McGill's community partnerships. This priority area focuses on establishing McGill's presence as a leading University collaborator for various industry, nonprofit and public organizations. Further, this priority emphasizes creating an institutional strategy to make McGill a welcoming and accessible place for students and faculty from a range of backgrounds. This commitment makes a strong case to initiate a cohort program for youth from foster care due to the public-private relationship necessary to implement such a program[57,58,59]

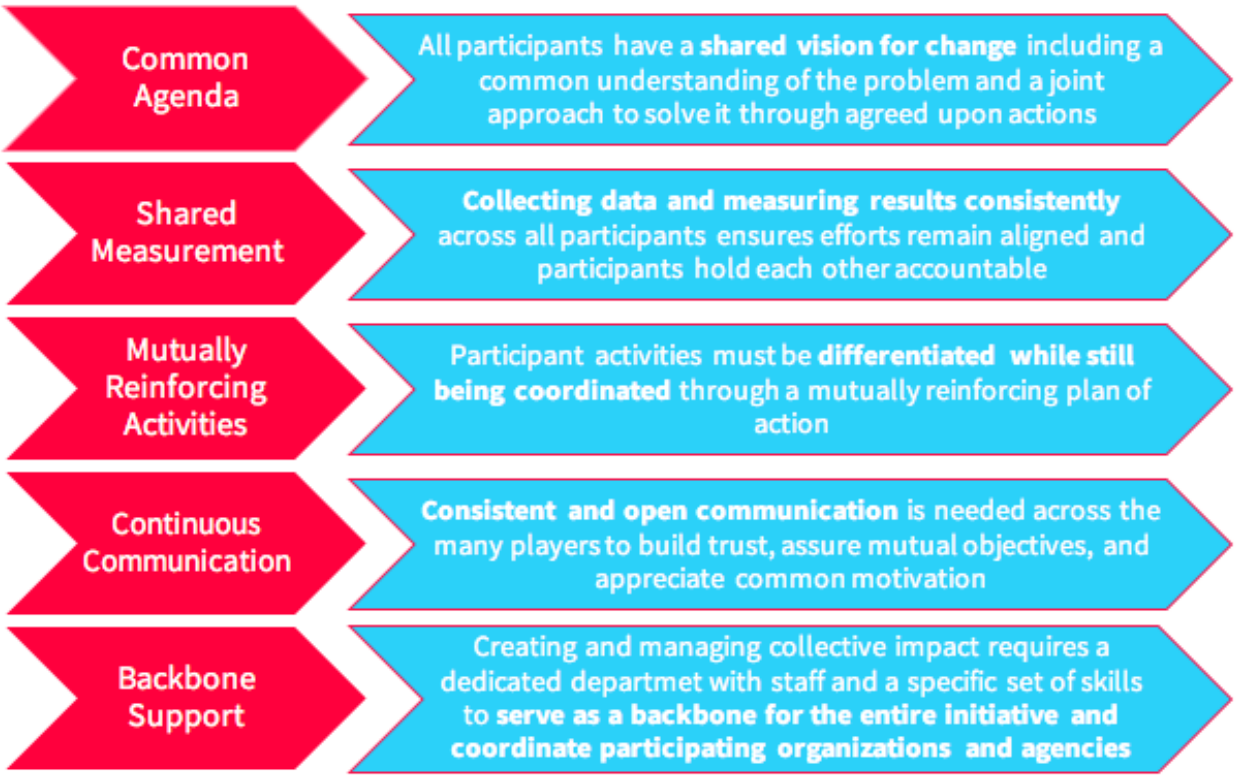

Figure 2. Collective Impact Framework: Five Key Conditions for Achieving Large Scale Change
Source: Adapted from Collective Impact Forum[60]

Moreover, McGill's commitment to innovation indicates a strong case for using a **Collective Impact[61]** approach (a five-prong framework premised on the belief that no

[57] Ibid.
[58] Ball State University, "An Overview of Post-Secondary Programs for Foster Youth," 2007.
[59] The Advisory Board Company, "Fostering Student Success: Building a Support Program for Students from Foster Care," 2009.
[60] "The Collective Impact Framework | Collaboration for Impact," accessed January 15, 2017, http://www.collaborationforimpact.com/collective-impact/.

single policy, government department, organization or program can solve complex social problems) to alleviate the hardships associated with life and educational attainment for foster youth. In line with current best practices for post-secondary integration of youth in care it is recommended that concerted efforts be undertaken to recruit and retain youth from care.

As a school that considers itself a progressive, world-leading institution, McGill has the opportunity to be a leader in provisioning targeted support programming. By offering supports that would enable youth from care to enter and matriculate, McGill would not only be improving its reputation by way of adding missing perspectives to academic discourse[62] and the diversity of the overall McGill population; it would also be contributing significantly to the economy. Further, for the few foster youth who are currently attending and may enter McGill during the next academic year, implementing a program would surely contribute to their success and completion of their program.

McGill currently provide services that could be modified to meet the needs of foster youth. In specific mental health supports such as is particularly vital to provide these initiatives during the first-year transition. Through following the recommendations below, McGill can help to develop a healthier, more supportive, and more diverse educational environment where all students have a chance to succeed.

Key Program Themes and Trends

The environmental scan revealed that numerous schools in the USA offer targeted program for student from foster care. These programs have been proven to be very successful in the realms of increasing academic success and the overall wellbeing of foster youth[63,64], thus leading to increases in demand and growth of successful models. An overview of the programs available can be found in Appendix B. It is of note that the most Canadian schools provided minimal support to supplement government assistance,

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[61] "Collective Impact Forum | Resources," accessed January 15, 2017, https://collectiveimpactforum.org/resources/channeling-change-making-collective-impact-work-webinar-presentation.

[62] This was also highlighted as one of the factors to growth and success of the University of Seattle's *Fostering Scholars* program during consultation with one of their program administrators.

[63] The Advisory Board Company, "Fostering Student Success: Building a Support Program for Students from Foster Care."

[64] Ball State University, "An Overview of Post-Secondary Programs for Foster Youth."

thus these recommendations come primarily from American schools The following categories as common components of programming for students from care:

- **Scholarships and Financial Aid (monetary and in-kind)**
    - Finances are the greatest student barrier to post-secondary attainment. Most schools offer dedicated scholarships for students coming from foster care. This includes housing, while residences also offer support during closures in recognition that not everyone has a family or home to go back to.
- **Program Administration**
    - In addition to acting as a dependable resource for students, dedicated staff are responsible for program coordination, communication, and collaboration with key offices across campus (e.g. financial aid, counseling center, academic advising, etc.).
- **Cohort Based Approach**
    - Programs examined favoured a cohort-based approach, whereby students were monitored more frequently and regularly engaged in targeted activities. Cohort based learning communities in general have been found to increase academic success and retention in university environments.[65]
- **Academic Support**
    - Essential services include designated academic advisors who serve to guide and mentor students with regards to their academics (with specialized training on the issues facing students from foster care) and conduct frequent check-ins.
    - Tutoring and coursework support along with skill and capacity building programming.
- **Social Development and Peer Mentorship**

[65] Corey A. Goldman, "A Cohort-Based Learning Community Enhances Academic Success and Satisfaction with University Experience for First-Year Students," *The Canadian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, December 31, 2012, 1–21.

- These include providing spaces for foster youth to support them during times of crisis as well for provisioning support and development programs (e.g. life skills).
- Peer mentorship programs were found to be most helpful after initial cohorts had matriculated. Please see Figure 3 for best practices pertaining to peer support.

- **Consultation and Evaluation**
  - Especially in the early stages of development, adequate consultation is vital to the success of programs. This includes consultation with community organizations, current students, foster youth in secondary school, and subject matter experts. In addition, most programs and institutions have dedicated advisory committees that are engaged with the broader community. These committees are involved at all levels of service provision from fundraising efforts to program coordination and insight.

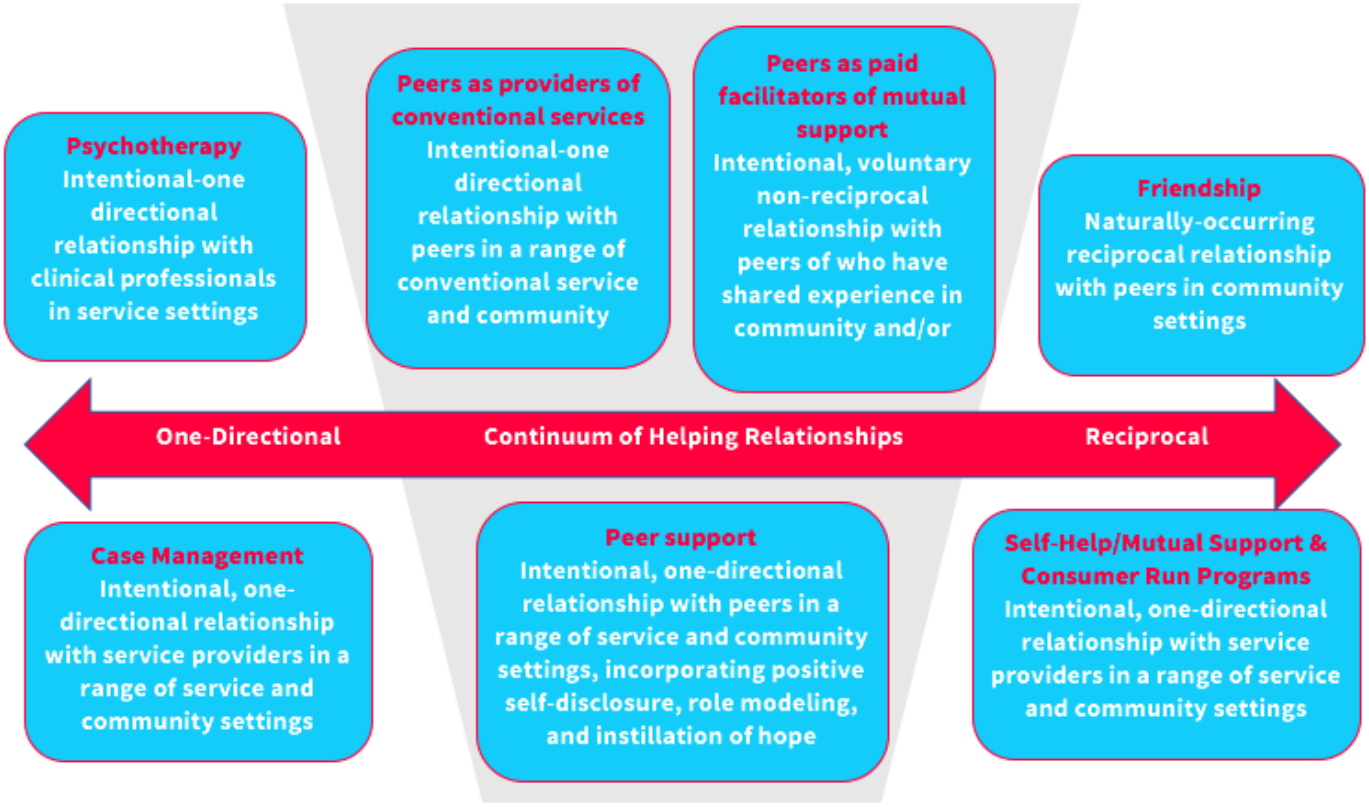

Figure 3. Continuum of Helping Relationships
Source: Adapted from Ontario Centre of Excellence for child and youth mental health p.666

[66] Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health, "Youth Peer Support in a Mental Health Context. Evidence In-Sight.," 2016, http://www.excellenceforchildandyouth.ca/resource-hub/evidence-in-sightdatabase.

Recommendations

In line with best practices for targeted programming as well as the needs expressed by the McGill student body (via consultation and the targeted survey), the SSMU recommends that McGill University take the following actions:

Recommendations

1. **Expand and Enhance Ancillary Support Resources**
2. **Improve Data Collection and Assessment**
3. **Implement Dedicated Recruitment and Enrolment Initiatives**
4. **Develop a Long Term Targeted Support Model**

1. Expand and Enhance Ancillary Support Resources

In order to improve the retention of current and future students from foster care, there must be adequate support measures in place to ensure their success. Following a holistic framework to provision vital supports is crucial and includes the following resources as a starting point.

- **Financial**: Dedicated bursaries, tuition waivers, and free or subsidized room and board (including year-round access to housing).
- **Academic**: Taking a case-management approach to supports by enhanced academic and career advising at regular intervals, course tutoring.
- **Social**: Developing frameworks for and implementing peer support and mentorship programming specific to the needs of foster youth.
- **Mental Health**: Building capacity to ensure coordinated access to treatment that employ best practices for working with students from foster care.
    - Developing peer lead frameworks of support (e.g. Wellness Recovery Action Plan [WRAP]).
    - It is important to note that the implementation of other ancillary supports combined with the community created by peers in a cohort program would automatically lead to an improvement in the state of mental health and wellness for students as students would be relieved from onerous burdens and have a support system.

2. Improve Data Collection and Assessment

In order to implement effective programming, the University must gain a better understanding of the number of students from foster care currently enrolled at McGill. Collaboration across various units at McGill will be vital to the success of any initiatives, including but not limited to Enrolment Services, Student Life and Learning, Scholarships and Student Aid (SSAO), and the Social Equity and Diversity Education (SEDE) Office:

- Gathering demographic data in enrolment and student aid applications via a specified indicator as well as any other surveys or applications that serve as a measure of student need.
- Holding focus groups and forums on the experiences of students coming from foster care (Café Collab series held by SEDE, inviting students and administrators from other institutions to discuss pertinent issues and best practices, etc.).
- Developing a long-term monitoring strategy that assesses the needs and experiences of students throughout their educational life-cycle in order to inform a holistic recruitment and retention plan.

3. Implement Dedicated Recruitment and Enrolment Initiatives

In line with Strategic Enrolment Management objectives,[67] the University should make a concerted effort to improve the accessibility of the McGill experience for students from foster care by implementing a targeted recruitment strategy and embedding the following into the work of Enrolment Services and related units:

- Undertaking formal consultation with McGill students and foster care networks in Montreal (e.g. the Montreal Youth in Care Alumni Association, Care Jeunesse, etc.) and other jurisdictions.
- Developing an outreach strategy to create pathways to post-secondary attainment for foster youth (e.g. Passport to College program in the USA).
- Creating a dedicated admissions stream for students coming from foster care
    - This could include implementing a transitional year program to assist students with acclimating to the pace of university and improving their chances at success.

[67] McGill University, "Strategic Enrollment Management Plan 2011-2016."

4. Develop a Long Term Targeted Support Model

In line with best practices at peer institutions, McGill should work towards developing a program structure that considers the full educational life-cycle of students coming from foster care. This would also allow for expansion to ensure that the need to support students from marginalized backgrounds is embedded in the ongoing work of the University. Initial steps to develop such a program should include:

- The creation of an ad-hoc working group consisting of relevant university departments, students, and community partners
    - This will also align and build upon the efforts undertaken by the Provost's Taskforce on Indigenous Education.
- Sending representatives to the *Blueprint for Success* Conference, which brings together post-secondary institutions to share best practices for creating and maintaining services for students from foster care.
- Liaising and visiting with institutions that have successful program models and surveying research in order to employ best practices and assist with the creation and implantation of a program framework at McGill.
- Establishing formal partnerships with donors and child welfare agencies in order to generate ongoing funding (e.g. government grants, relevant foundations and donors).
- Creating designated staff position (at least 1 full time equivalent) to initiate program model design and procurement of resources and external funding for program sustainability.
- The creation of a cohort-based comprehensive program that serves the needs of youth coming from foster care.
    - This program should cover financial resources, housing, academic guidance, life skills, community building, and a path to McGill for foster youth.

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Appendix A: Provincial Child Protection Age and Guiding Legislation

Province	Child Protection Legislation	Age of Protection/ Majority/ Extended Provisions
British Columba	Child, Family and Community Service Act	• Age of protection – 19 years
Alberta	Alberta Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act	• Age of protection – 18 years
Saskatchewan	The Child and Family Services Act	• Age of protection – unmarried person under 16 years • Extended care provisions – 21 years permanent wards or long term agreement
Manitoba	The Child and Family Services Act	• Age of protection – 18 years • Extended care provisions – 21 years
Ontario	The Child and Family Services Act	• Age of protection – 16 years • Supervision orders until 18, or continued supports if not disrupted at 16 • Extended care provisions – 21 years, Crown Wards only
Quebec	Quebec Loi sur la protection de la jeunesse (Youth Protection Act). R.S.Q. c. P-34.1	• Age of protection – 18 years
Nova Scotia	Nova Scotia Children and Family Services Act (CFSA) 1990	• Age of protection – under 16 years • Extended care provisions – 21 years
New Brunswick	New Brunswick Family Services Act, S.N.B. 1980 c. F-2.2	• Age of protection – 16 years and included disabled persons under the age of 19 • Extended care provisions – beyond 19 years

Province	Child Protection Legislation	Age of Protection/ Majority/ Extended Provisions
Prince Edward Island	Prince Edward Child Protection Act, Island proclaimed April 2003, C-5.1	• Age of protection – 15 years • Extended care provisions – 18 years
Newfoundland and Labrador	Child, Youth and Family Services Act (CYFSA)	• Age of protection – under 16 years and Labrador • Extended care provisions – 21 years
Yukon	Yukon Children's Act	• Age of protection – 18 years • Extended care provisions – 19 years
Northwest Territories	Northwest Child and Family Services Act	• Age of protection – 16 years • Extended care provisions – 19 years
Nunavut	Nunavut Child and Family Services Act (CFSA)	• Age of protection – 16 years • Extended care provisions – 19 years

Based on data from the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Group on Child and Family Services Information, 2002 (as cited in Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile 2003), the Child Welfare Research Portal and the federal-provincial-territorial Continuing Committee of Officials on Human Rights. Source: Canada's Response to the UN Questionnaire on Violence Against Children. September 10, 2004.

Appendix B: Cross Jurisdictional Scan of Post-Secondary Support Programs

Canada

British Colombia

Vancouver Island University

Is a leader in providing access to post-secondary education for former youth in care. VIU was the first post-secondary institution in British Columbia to launch a Youth in Care Tuition Waiver program – which cancels tuition for eligible students who have grown up in the care system. This program is the first step in overcoming financial barriers that make it difficult for these students to consider and achieve success in higher education.

VIU welcomed 16 students into the program in 2013 and each year that number has grown. For the academic year 2016/2017 VIU will have 70 students supported by the Tuition Waiver program.

https://ur.viu.ca/tuition-waiver

https://news.gov.bc.ca/factsheets/supports-for-youth-formerly-in-government-care

Since the VIU launch, all 11 other BC universities have followed suit with similar programs. In addition to waiving tuition fees, many cover additional services such as living expenses, health care and life skills development. Additional services are offered in partnership with the provincial Agreements with Young Adults (AYA) program.

The AYA program covers costs like living expenses, child care, tuition and health care, while a former youth in care is attending school or a rehabilitation program. AYA is now also being expanded to include life skills programs, which help give young adults the tools and knowledge that they need to make positive decisions that can enrich their future. These Universities include:

The University of British Colombia

http://students.ubc.ca/enrolment/finances/awards/youth-care

https://studentaidbc.ca/explore/grants-scholarships/youth-educational-assistance-fund-former-youth-care

Simon Fraser University

https://www.sfu.ca/students/financialaid/youth-in-care/assistance-program.html

The British Columbia Institute of Technology

http://www.bcit.ca/files/finaid/pdf/youthincarewaiver.pdf

Langara

http://langara.ca/student-services/financial-aid/bursaries/youth-in-care.html

The Justice Institute of British Columbia

http://www.jibc.ca/student-services/financial-aid-awards/awards-bursaries-scholarships/youth-care-tuition-bursary

Manitoba

University of Winnipeg

The University of Winnipeg is committed to breaking down the barriers to university education for Youth in Care. The Youth-In-Care Tuition Waiver Program is a part of the Opportunity Fund, and it is intended to cover undergraduate tuition fees. Tuition Waivers are based on the individual financial need of the applicant and will be selected by the Awards and Financial Aid Office in partnership with the Child and Family Service Authorities and the Province of Manitoba.

http://uwinnipeg.ca/awards/of.html

http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/uw-news-action/story.771/title.uwinnipeg-first-to-offer-youth-in-care-tuition-waivers

The University of Manitoba

The University of Manitoba has established a fund in support of the Youth-In-Care Tuition Grants. The grants provide an opportunity for youth, who are or who have been in the care of Child and Family Services in Manitoba, to attend post-secondary education. The grants will support the costs of undergraduate tuition up to a maximum of $5,000 per year for a maximum of 4 years for each recipient.

http://umanitoba.ca/student/fin_awards/scholarships/3709.html

Ontario

Tuition support is offered in partnership between the Ontario government and 29 postsecondary institutions including all universities and one third of the colleges. Ontario changed the program after launch to cover 50 per cent of tuition costs for Crown Wards only (a very small subset of the total in care population) The participating institutions now cover the remaining cost of tuition for up to four years of postsecondary study.

https://osap.gov.on.ca/OSAPPortal/en/A-ZListofAid/PRDR013107.html#P41_3042

Participating Colleges	**Participating Universities**	
Collège Boréal	Algoma University	Trent University
Cambrian College	Brock University	University of Guelph
Canadore College	Carleton University	University of Toronto
Centennial College	Lakehead University	University of Waterloo
Conestoga College	Laurentian University	University of Windsor
Confederation College	McMaster University	Western University
Fleming College	Nipissing University	Wilfrid Laurier University
Humber College	OCAD University	York University
La Cité Collégiale	University of Ontario Institute of Technology	
Lambton College	University of Ottawa	
Northern College	Queen's University	
Sault College	Ryerson University	
Sheridan College	Saint Paul University	
St. Lawrence College		

USA

Aquinas College - Fostering Success Scholarship Initiatives

In an effort to remove barriers to higher education for young adults aging out of the Michigan Foster Care System, Aquinas College has created the "Fostering Success" Scholarship Initiative. This initiative will ensure that total assistance from scholarships and grants (including ETV funds, see below) will cover tuition, room, board and book costs for up to two prospective students each academic year.

https://www.aq.aquinas.edu/undergraduate-admissions/aquinas-college-fostering-success-scholarship-initiative

Arizona State University Foster Youth Bridging Success

Bridging Success connects foster youth to ASU and supports them until they graduate with a college degree from the Downtown Phoenix, Polytechnic, Tempe, or West campuses.

If you are an incoming freshman or new transfer student, you can participate in the Bridging Success Early Start program. This is a free, intensive, and fun six-day program where you move on campus early, meet other incoming students, and learn about life on campus. You get connected with key faculty and staff who are here to support your success and start building your own success team network. Plus you start building friendships with fellow Bridging Success students.

https://students.asu.edu/foster-youth/bridging-success

Baker College - Living Independently Networking Knowledge (LINK)

Baker College's Living Independently Networking Knowledge (LINK) program advises and supports youth in all areas of life skills. The program's staff assist youth in moving toward self-sufficiency in both campus and community environments by helping them to develop working relationships with appropriate and relevant campus departments and community partners. The program also assists youth to secure basic needs such as housing, utility costs, food and clothing, as well as provides eligible youth crisis counseling and intervention. Additionally, eligible youth benefit from their relationship with a trained mentor.

http://www.baker.edu/

Ball State University - Guardian Scholars

The Ball State University Guardian Scholars Program is designed for Indiana students attending Ball State University who are either current or former foster youth. The Guardian Scholars Program provides not only scholarship support, but also a variety post-secondary support and referral services to help eligible recipients achieve their goal of a baccalaureate degree at Ball State University.

http://cms.bsu.edu/academics/centersandinstitutes/ssrc/guardianscholars

Boise State University - Impact Scholars Program

The mission of the Impact Scholars Program is to increase enrollment, retention and graduation rates of former foster youth who attend Boise State University. By engaging, supporting, and equipping students to take ownership of their college experience, Impact Scholars become authors of personal and community change. The program objectives are to; Engage Impact Scholars in academics, campus life and leadership development to help them take full advantage of college; Support Impact Scholars with financial planning, academic assistance and mentorships to promote retention and well-being; and equip Impact Scholars to achieve educational and career goals by creating opportunities for networking and civic engagement.

https://deanofstudents.boisestate.edu/impact-scholars/

Buena Vista University - Guardian Scholars

The Guardian Scholars program seeks to provide financial support, emotional and academic support, and a close personal mentor that will help the recipients meet their individual needs. The program does not provide assistance for tuition, but rather assists students with other incidentals that may not otherwise be available to students that have been in the foster care system.

http://www.bvu.edu/admissions/guardian-scholars/

California State Polytechnic, Pomona - Renaissance Scholars

Renaissance Scholars is a comprehensive program that enables former foster youth to attend one of the nation's finest universities and successfully complete a bachelor's degree. This innovative program draws on Cal Poly Pomona's Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) and the Casey Family Programs' “It's My Life” framework for transitioning foster youth.

The purpose of the program is to provide former foster youth with educational experiences and a nurturing environment that can afford them the opportunity to obtain a college degree. The program meets the needs of students by providing workshops, mentoring, tutoring, academic advising, seminar classes, year-round housing, financial assistance, and community building activities. RS graduates are successful due to the comprehensive support structure, have earned advanced degrees, have become educators, counselors, social workers, business owners, and productive and engaged citizens.

http://www.cpp.edu/~ssep/renaissance-scholars/index.shtml

California State University, Channel Islands - PATH Program

The PATH (Promoting Achievement Through Hope) Program is a student support program that empowers foster youth through higher education. The program seeks to meet the unique needs of foster youth, and encourage them to become self-supporting, role models, successful professionals, and conscious community leaders. It is also designed to improve access, retention and graduation rates. Further, the purpose is to provide former foster youth with the tools necessary to succeed in college and ultimately graduate from California State University Channel Islands (CI).

http://www.csuci.edu/path/index.htm

California State University, Chico - Educational Opportunities Program

The Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) is designed to improve the access and retention of low-income and first-generation college students at CSU, Chico. EOP applicants must have the motivation to succeed and have the potential to perform satisfactorily at CSU, Chico, but may not have been previously able to realize their potential because of their economic or educational background. California residents and students who qualify for an AB540 non-resident tuition exemption are eligible to apply for the program.

California State University, Dominguez Hills - Toro Scholars

Toro Guardian Scholars, also known as TGS, at California State University, Dominguez Hills is dedicated to supporting college students that have transitioned from the foster care system. We provide a unique program that connects students to a wide range of services and resources that will guide them throughout their educational journey. The objective of our services is to assist young adults as they continue to expand their

educational and interpersonal skills on their path to becoming future independent leaders and role models within the community.

California State University, East Bay - Renaissance Scholars
Renaissance Scholars exists to promote the holistic development and graduation rates of former foster youth attending CSU East Bay by providing comprehensive support services through collaboration with a variety of university departments and community organizations.

California State University, Fresno - Renaissance Scholars Program
The Renaissance Scholars Program (RSP) at California State University, Fresno is under the auspice of the Educational Opportunity Program. It is a comprehensive support program that supports ambitious, college-bound individuals, formerly in foster care. The program is committed to providing a system of support and experiences that will empower students to grow into self-sufficient adults and future leaders in the community.

http://www.fresnostate.edu/studentaffairs/rsp/index.html

California State University, Fullerton - Guardian Scholars Program
The Guardian Scholars Program assists former foster youth in their efforts to gain a college education by offering scholarships and support services necessary for their academic success. The Guardian Scholars Program provides the opportunity to change individual lives and make dreams come true.

Each fall semester we hope to admit 10 to 15 new students into the Guardian Scholars Program with an ultimate goal of serving forty scholars in the program at one time.

http://www.fullerton.edu/guardianscholars/

California State University, Los Angeles - EOP Foster Youth Program

California State University, Monterey Bay - Guardian Scholars
California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB) recognizes that students that have a foster youth background often have overcome more obstacles, have less support, and fewer resources than most entering students. To help meet these unique needs, the CSUMB Guardian Scholars Program was developed. A student does not have to be an EOP student to be a part of the CSUMB Guardian Scholars Program, however, we strongly encourage entering students with a foster youth background to apply to EOP as most are

eligible, and they can take advantage of the unique benefits of EOP.A resource guide for Guardian Scholars participants.

http://fosteringsuccessmichigan.com/network/california-state-university-monterey-bay-guardian-scholars

California State University, Northridge - Resilient Scholars
The Resilient Scholars Program identifies student's potential for success at the pre-college stage and continues through an interactive admissions process. A limited number of candidates who may not be regularly admitted to the university but who have demonstrated that they have the motivation and potential to graduate are granted special admission consideration. Our program methods benefit former foster youth by providing multiple campus resources. Students will have access and a personal point of contact with over 20 campus departments including the health and counseling centers, financial aid and admissions & records, the career center and student housing.

http://www.csun.edu/csun-eop/eop-resilient-scholars

California State University, Sacramento - Guardian Scholars Program
The mission of the Guardian Scholars Program is to improve the life and success rate of former foster youth by administering helpful services such as professional mentoring, academic advising, career counseling, financial assistance, scholarships, and community building events that are all essential for learning, growth, and success on a college campus. We are committed to doing outreach in the community and creating meaningful opportunities for current students at Sac State in order to improve the livelihood of foster youth students.

http://www.csus.edu/gs/index.html

California State University, San Bernardino's - EOP Foster Youth Program
Cal State San Bernardino's Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) Foster Youth Program was established in 2003. The Program is committed to providing comprehensive support services to EOP eligible, current and former foster youth as they transition into the university and through to graduation. The success of the EOP Foster Youth Program is a result of services provided through the collaborative efforts of various campus departments at Cal State San Bernardino and community partners.

http://undergradstudies.csusb.edu/eop/english/fosteryouth.html

California State University, San Marcos - ACE Scholars Services
ACE Scholars Services is a comprehensive program that supports former foster youth in their efforts to obtain a college education. The primary objective of the program is to meet the unique needs of students who are former foster youth and to improve their rates of matriculation, graduation, and career success.

http://www.csusm.edu/ace/about-ace.html

California State University, Stanislaus - Promise Scholars
The mission of the Promise Scholars Program is to provide ambitious college-bound students from foster care situations access to the promise of a better future through post- secondary education. The Promise Scholars Program is committed to providing the avenue and support services needed for former foster youth to succeed in college and build a brighter future for themselves through higher education.

http://www.csustan.edu/promise-scholars

California, Pepperdine - Guardian Scholars
The Guardian Scholars program is a comprehensive program of financial aid, life coaching, and mentoring, housing and personalized attention. It enables emancipated foster youth to successfully engage in attending a college, university or vocational school, which fits their educational preparedness, degree objectives and long-term career goals. Its mission is: “Making Dreams Come True”.

College of St. Joseph - STEPS: Students Taking an Effective Path to Success
STEPS is the first full-time residential program in New England designed specifically to meet the needs of youth transitioning from years of foster care into college. The program provides a supportive, year-round “home” for 15 students in order that they may develop valuable work skills and receive personalized career and socio-emotional supports while earning a college degree. Program outcomes of CSJ’s STEPS initiative to date greatly exceed the national average in both persistence and graduation rates for these underserved students.

http://www.csj.edu/admissions/undergraduate/steps/#.VT5g8K1Viko

Colorado State University - Fostering Success Program
The Fostering Success Program (FSP) is a network of students, staff, and faculty who connect to form a support system for Colorado State University (CSU) students who have experienced foster care, kinship care, group homes, ward of court, orphan status, or

other independent backgrounds. The Fostering Success Program creates a safety net of support and resources for independent students starting with the application process and continuing all the way through to graduation and career placement. While we strongly encourage student participation, the Fostering Success Program is a voluntary group and students can elect not to participate.

http://oas.casa.colostate.edu/fostersuccess

Eastern Michigan University - Mentorship Access Guidance in College (MAGIC)
Mentorship Access Guidance in College (MAGIC) exists to increase the graduation rates among foster care alumni, encourage a successful transition into adulthood, and promote workforce readiness. We do this by providing life skills training, mentorship, housing stability, social enrichment, and financial literacy. MAGIC is a federally-funded support program on campus that is designed to provide EMU students who were formerly in foster care with the necessary independent living skills to encourage a successful transition into adulthood, completion of a college degree, and career entry.

http://www.emich.edu/magic

Ferris State University - Ferris Youth Initiative
The Ferris Youth Initiative was developed to increase higher education opportunities for young people who are low-income orphaned or who have aged out of the foster care system. A major objective of our program is to provide support that promotes success and general well-being of our participants throughout their undergraduate experience while attending Ferris. Pairing our participants with a faculty or staff mentor is one way of accomplishing this objective. Recipients of the FYI Scholarship will receive up to $4,000 per year, to be applied to any direct cost at Ferris State (tuition/fees, room/board, and/or books/supplies). The FYI program is limited to 20 students.

http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/president/DiversityOffice/fofyi/

Florida International University - Fostering Panther Pride
To address the needs of students coming from former foster care and/or homeless backgrounds, FIU has launched an initiative to offer appropriate and customized services that will provide these students with opportunities to succeed academically and graduate in good standing from a top-tier public research university.

http://engagement.fiu.edu/growing-talent/fostering-panther-pride/index.html

Florida State University - Unconquered Scholars Program

Uniquely situated as a department in both the Division of Academic Affairs and the Division of Student Affairs, The CARE Center is designed to provide transition, engagement, and academic support services for traditionally underrepresented and disadvantaged populations at The Florida State University. The CARE Unconquered Scholars Program is designed to provide additional academic and personal support to students who were previously classified as foster care, homeless, ward of the State, or relative care.

http://care.fsu.edu/College-Programs/Unconquered-Scholars-Program

Humbolt State University - Elite Scholars

ELITE Scholars (Excelling and Living Independently Through Education) is a support program committed to empower current and former foster youth succeed in navigating the pipeline in the pursuit of attaining a quality college education. The staff provides students with a broad array of support services to build a strong foundation for their educational endeavors.

J. C. Smith University - Guardian Scholars

The Guardian Scholars Program at J.C. Smith University (JCSU) grounds its program by incorporating community partners to serve youth from ages 16 to 22 who will age out or have aged out of foster care. The goal is to dramatically affect retention and graduation rates of former foster youth.

http://www.jcsu.edu/about/foster-care-initiative/phasing-up-to-new-possibilities-program2/guardian-scholars-program

Kalamazoo Valley Community College - Campus Support Program

The program is also partnering with the Seita Scholars program at Western Michigan University to provide mentoring and peer to peer guidance. The program is connected to key campus champions in a variety of offices across campus that are committed to supporting students from foster care by providing opportunities and resources. The program provides coaching services, as well as, support around non-academic needs such as housing, transportation and healthcare.

http://www.kvcc.edu/

Kennesaw State University - Campus Awareness, Resource & Empowerment (CARE) Center

The Campus Awareness, Resource & Empowerment (CARE) Center is a multifaceted campus-based service designed to offer support to students dealing with homelessness or are at-risk of being homeless, food insecurities and who have been or are in foster care. The CARE Center provides case management, a food pantry, scholarships, linens and personal care items and limited financial supports. When students are in need of clothing and/or shoes, the CARE Center maintains collaborative partnerships with community consignment shops. This program operates purely on the generosity of donations, both tangible and monetary.

http://sss.kennesaw.edu/care/

Lansing Community College- Fostering Stars

The Fostering Stars Program provides a wonderful opportunity and a supportive network for students currently engaged in or aging out of the foster care system. Some of the services provided in this program include: advising, academic support, counseling, community outreach, transportation assistance, specific emergency assistance, care-packages, one-on-one mentoring, group membership and networking opportunities.

Additionally, students involved in this program will be able to connect with an independent life skills coach who is trained in providing guidance, empowerment and improvement in all areas of life. A life skills coach seeks to empower others by helping them make, meet and exceed goals. They work to improve outcomes for students by tapping into their full potential and shedding new light on difficult life situations.

http://www.lcc.edu/supportservices/fosteringstars/

Loyola Marymount - Guardian Scholars

The Guardian Scholars program is a comprehensive program of financial aid, life coaching, and mentoring, housing and personalized attention. It enables emancipated foster youth to successfully engage in attending a college, university or vocational school, which fits their educational preparedness, degree objectives and long-term career goals. Its mission is: “Making Dreams Come True”.

Metropolitan State University of Denver - Student Academic Success Center

The MSU Denver Fostering Success Program supports independent MSU Denver student who come from foster care, kinship care, group home, or orphaned backgrounds. The

goal of the Fostering Success program is to create a community of support for students and help them reach the goal of graduation and securing a job after graduation. The Fostering Success program consists of a network of MSU Denver Faculty and Staff dedicated to walking alongside students and supporting them in all areas of life.

https://www.msudenver.edu/sas/fosteringsuccess/

Miami University - Regionals – REACH

In an effort to support Miami University Regionals students who have experienced foster care "foster care liaisons" are provided for all students who were formerly in foster care. We realize that foster care alumni students face unique challenges when they transition out of care and into the college environment. We are here to help explain the terminology as well as the steps involved with coming to college. We will help you navigate through financial aid resources and other campus offices and community resources available to help you succeed.

http://www.regionals.miamioh.edu/fostercare/

Michigan State University - Fostering Academics Mentoring Excellence (FAME) Program

The MSU FAME Program is a resource center for MSU students who have been in the foster care system or other out of home placements. FAME exists to provide a supportive network for foster care alumni on campus and connect them to supportive services to ensure their success as college students and support them toward graduation. Key components of the FAME program include: Individual Coaching, Mentoring Program, Care Package Delivery during final exams, Interactive website for service linkages, Campus Champions in various departments throughout the University, Financial Assistance Fund, Student Activity Board, which provides leadership and advocacy experience and individualized life skills training and development. FAME also offers a college and adult life preparatory summer camp for current high school students in foster care, which is held annually in August.

http://socialwork.msu.edu/outreach/foster_youth_alumni_svcs.php

Middle Tennessee State University - Next Step

For students coming from a foster care situation or for those who have been living as independent minors or in homeless situations, it can be especially difficult simply because it is hard to know where to begin the journey or know who to turn to or trust. That is why Middle Tennessee State University, in conjunction with the Department of

Children's Services, and the Tennessee Youth Advisory Council, created Next Step. Next Step provides additional support for our students coming from these difficult situations.

http://www.mtsu.edu/nextstep/

Northern Arizona University - Blavin Scholar Program
Students who are Arizona residents seeking an undergraduate degree and who have demonstrated financial need and experience in the foster care system are eligible - Full time enrollment is required. Eligible students include those that have been in foster care on or after their 16th birthday and have either a high school diploma or GED. They must be accepted into or enrolled in a degree, certificate or other accredited program at a college, university, technical, or vocational school.

The Arizona Transitional Independent Living Program (ILP) is another service provided for former foster youth. Financial assistance and support is available in the areas of counseling, housing, employment, and education.

Northern Michigan University
Northern Michigan University (NMU) is a Fostering Success Michigan Designated Campus Champion (DCC). NMU has staff or faculty on campus who is willing to be identified as a resource partner for any students from foster care attending that institution. Contact information is listed below.

Resources for students with experience in foster care are the result of a team effort. The staff includes professionals from Student Support services, Financial Aid, and the Dean of Students office. NMU offers several housing options for students, including "over-the-break" housing. Please contact the NMU Dean of Students Office for more information. NMU also partners with a variety of service agencies in the Marquette area.

http://www.nmu.edu/dso/node/75

Northwestern Michigan College - yourNMC Program
The YourNMC program at Northwestern Michigan College is designed to help current and former foster youth who are transitioning into college life and adulthood. This program will provide students with hands on support as they get connected with NMC's campus. Supports include: mentoring, financial assistance, academic and personal support, and ongoing activities to get connected to campus life. Through the YourNMC program, students are assisted in navigating though the college system from admissions until graduation. Counselors, faculty, students and staff work together with the student to

achieve academic and personal success. Connections to local resources are also available, including a Department of Human Services education planner and MI Youth Opportunities Initiative resources.

http://www.nmc.edu/your-nmc

Ohio University - Task Force - REACH

The Foster Care Task Force is working to make staying in college and earning a degree easier for former foster youth*. We can't do the hard work--we can't write the papers and take the exams--but we can help you navigate the system. We know how Ohio University works and want to eliminate (or at least reduce) any obstacles that may impede your progress.

http://www.ohio.edu/univcollege/fostercare/

Portland State University - Futures Program

FUTURES looks to enhance self-determination in freshman, sophomore, or junior college students at Portland State University and Portland Community College who have lived experience in the foster care system. Upper division students, known as near-peer coaches, offer support regarding relationships, communication skills, careers, and academics. Near-peer coaches connect their students to Campus Champions, who serve as resources within the different departments at PSU and PCC. Additionally, students and their mentors participate in leadership and community building workshops twice a term.

http://sturner429.wix.com/campuschampions#!about/caoo

Rutgers University - Transition for Youth & SHIP

The Summer Housing and Internship Program (SHIP) is a twelve-week program from May/early June to August that offers an alternative to recipients of the New Jersey Foster Care (NJFC) scholarship who lack the financial, family and social connections to secure safe and stable housing during the summer months. 40 New Jersey Foster Scholars are given the opportunity to receive quality housing (at either Rutgers' Camden, New Brunswick, and Newark campuses, or Montclair State University) and paid internship positions throughout the summer months. SHIP also offers a 3-credit course, counseling, weekly workshops, and recreational activities.

http://socialwork.rutgers.edu/InstituteForFamilies/officeofchildwelfareinitiatives/TFY/Projects/SHIP.aspx

Saginaw Valley State University-Delta College - (F.A.S.T.) Program

The F.A.S.T. Program is designed to aid current and former foster youth who are transitioning into college life and adulthood. This program will provide them with personal and academic counseling, life skills training, and pair them with a peer mentor who can also provide support. Each individual has varying needs and the F.A.S.T. Program is able to look at these specifically and provide services. Navigating the university system can be difficult, and the F.A.S.T. Program can guide eligible students through this system with the aid of a trained Life Skills Coach and peers who know how to help.

https://www.facebook.com/FASTatSVSU?ref=ts&fref=ts

Sam Houston State University - Forward Program

Sam Houston State University-Huntsville has Project Forward which serves as a resource to help and empower former foster youth by providing the support system necessary to pursue higher education and to build meaningful relationships within the university that are important to successful and professional achievements.

http://www.shsu.edu/dept/fye/forward/index.html

San Diego State University - Guardian Scholars

The SDSU Guardian Scholars Program is committed to helping students exiting the foster care system, are wards of the court, under legal guardianship or unaccompanied homeless youth by providing a comprehensive, holistic support program to help them achieve the goal of a college degree. SDSU helps Guardian Scholars navigate the unknown waters of a college education through access to key campus resources when they are most needed.

http://studentaffairs.sdsu.edu/EOP/Content/Guardian%20Scholars.html

San Francisco State University - Guardian Scholars Program

SF State University's Guardian Scholars Program (GSP) is a comprehensive program of the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), in collaboration with the School of social work, serving former foster youth who are pursuing their undergraduate degrees. SF State GSP is tailored to fit the needs of undergraduate students who are current or foster youth. The individual case management services offered through GSP augments EOP's current academic focus. Each year, the program admits both first-time freshmen and transfer students. The combined partnership of SF State's Educational Opportunity

Program (EOP) and the SF State School of Social Work defines a commitment to student success and academic achievement.

http://fosteringsuccessmichigan.com/network/www.sfsu.edu/~eop/gsp/index.html

San Jose State University - Guardian Scholars Program

Seattle University - Fostering Scholars****
The Fostering Scholars program was established in 2006 at Seattle University in order to promote the educational attainment of current and former foster youth. The program is designed to identify students whose achievements and goals mirror the University's mission and to allow these exceptional students to fully focus on their goals by providing financial, academic, and personal support towards the completion of an undergraduate degree.

http://www.seattleu.edu/fosteringscholars/

Sullivan - Deckard Scholars Opportunity Program - Cleveland State University
The Sullivan-Deckard Scholars Opportunity Program provides opportunity for highly motivated youth who are aging out of foster care to pursue an undergraduate degree. Scholars must be Ohio residents. The program offers the benefit of a world-class education at Cleveland State University with a system of support that is customized and structured to meet their academic, social and financial needs.

- **Scholarship features include:**
    - Funding for tuition, books, and fees
    - Personal Laptop computer
    - Campus housing and an approved campus meal plan
    - On-campus employment through work-study
    - Academic support including tutoring, coaching and advising
    - Access to career related internships through the Career Success Network
    - Professional mentoring and support

https://www.csuohio.edu/engagement/sullivan-deckard-scholars-opportunity-program

Texas State University, San Marcos - FACES: Foster Care Alumni Creating Ed Success
The mission of FACES is to create a campus-wide network of support to assist students who grew up in the foster care system achieve educational success by focusing on

recruitment, retention, and graduation. Mentors and Advocates provide support to foster care alumni through FACES in a variety of ways.

http://www.studentsuccess.txstate.edu/programs/Foster-Care-Alumni.html

Texas Tech University (TTU) - Pegasus Program

The Pegasus Program seeks to make exploration, innovation, and academic success attainable realities for First Generation College (FGC) Students. First year students are assigned mentors who are other students of TTU.

http://www.depts.ttu.edu/diversity/pegasus/

Texas Women's University - The Frontiers Program

The Frontiers Program is set to begin in the 2012-13 school year and will provide specialized services including career development, leadership training and networking opportunities to 15 foster youth over the next three years. Financial support in the form of stipends will be offered to allow participants time for classes, studying and taking part in campus programs. Participants also will receive a laptop computer to increase their access to technology.

http://www.twu.edu/twunews/press_releases/12-Frontiers-Program.asp%20%EF%BF%BC

UC, Santa Barbara - Guardian Scholars

The Frontiers Program is set to begin in the 2012-13 school year and will provide specialized services including career development, leadership training and networking opportunities to 15 foster youth over the next three years. Financial support in the form of stipends will be offered to allow participants time for classes, studying and taking part in campus programs. Participants also will receive a laptop computer to increase their access to technology.

http://www.twu.edu/twunews/press_releases/12-Frontiers-Program.asp%20%EF%BF%BC

University of Alabama - Alabama REACH

Alabama REACH is a threefold program, REACH Back (future students), REACH Up (current students), and REACH Out (community members), bridging high school to post-secondary to community. REACH serves as a resource hub to help students access the needed services on campus, as well as cultivate meaningful relationships off campus.

REACH's programmatic goal is to graduate individuals who will be successful personally and professionally.

http://reach.ua.edu/

University of California, Berkeley - Cal Independent Scholar

The Cal Independent Scholars Network Program (CISN) provides support and resources to incoming freshman, transfer, and continuing students who have recently emancipated from foster care, or are orphaned, and certified independent by the Financial Aid Office. By providing individual support, guidance, and resources to assist students in their transition to Cal, we facilitate their academic progress, personal development, and promote the realization of their educational and career goals.

http://trsp.berkeley.edu/cisn.shtml

University of California, Davis - Guardian Scholars

Guardian Scholars is a comprehensive program committed to providing services and support for former foster youth to maximize educational opportunities. Professional staff and peer advisors, in partnership with a variety of on-campus units and external agencies, work to best meet their academic and personal needs.

http://success.ucdavis.edu/programs/gsp/index.html

University of California, Irvine - Guardian Scholars

The Guardian Scholars program is a comprehensive program of financial aid, life coaching, and mentoring, housing and personalized attention. It enables emancipated foster youth to successfully engage in attending a college, university or vocational school, which fits their educational preparedness, degree objectives and long-term career goals. Its mission is: "Making Dreams Come True".

http://www.orangewoodfoundation.org/programs_scholars.asp

University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) - Guardian Scholars Program

The UCLA Guardian Scholars Program provides support to UCLA students who are current or former foster youth. Through individual mentoring and referral to campus resources, the Guardian Scholars Program works to support student's academic achievement and personal development and promote the realization of student's educational and career goals.

http://fosteringsuccessmichigan.com/network/www.guardianscholars.ucla.edu

University of California, Merced - Guardian Scholars

University of California, Riverside - Guardian Scholars
Operated under the Office of Foster Youth Support Services, the Guardian Scholars Program provides a network of resources to students who are transitioning from the foster care system to adulthood in order to facilitate their successful pursuit of higher education. The program draws on the resources, strength, and support of our community to provide scholars (aged 16-25) with a comprehensive college experience and the opportunity to explore and realize their full potential.

http://guardianscholars.ucr.edu/index.html

University of California, San Diego - Guardian Scholars
At UC San Diego, all former foster youth are included in the Guardian Scholars Program, even if the student is not receiving funding for a Guardian Scholarship. This is an inclusive program where all former foster youth are invited to participate and enjoy the special privileges offered by the campus to welcome and support former foster youth. The program provides more than scholarship funds — it's designed to help ensure your academic success, to offer support services and experiences that encourage active participation in campus life, and to provide career-development skills for life after graduation.

https://students.ucsd.edu/finances/financial-%20aid/types/scholarships/guardian.html

University of California, Santa Cruz - Smith Renaissance Society
We help young people who are, or were, foster, homeless, and runaway youth, or orphans without family support, to have bold dreams and to see higher education as a path toward achieving those dreams. The Smith Renaissance Society helps clear the way for a robust and successful college experience for those students who enroll at UC Santa Cruz.

http://smithsociety.ucsc.edu/index.html

University of Colorado at Boulder - Guardian Scholars
Launched in 2008, the University of Colorado at Boulder's Guardian Scholars Program exists to enable former foster youth to earn their undergraduate degree at Colorado's flagship university.

University of Houston - Urban Experience Program

The mission of the Urban Experience Program expands opportunities for educationally and economically underserved citizens. The components of the program promotes scholarship, community service, and personal and professional development; through mentorship and internship as a conduit for the development of well-trained professionals.

http://www.uh.edu/uep/

University of Massachusetts, Boston - U-Access

The ultimate goal of U-ACCESS is to support students so that they can achieve academic success without being derailed by complex non-academic issues in their lives. Hopefully, with such support, these students will successfully complete their degrees at UMass Boston, stop the cycle of poverty and educational attrition, and improve their life choices and opportunities.

http://www.umb.edu/life_on_campus/uaccess

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor - Blavin Scholars Program

The Blavin Scholarship is a need-based award that provides $2000 to $5,000 per student, per year. Staff works closely with the Financial Aid Office and scholars to determine need, and revisits this regularly. Support services include: Guidance through the admission and transition process, one-on-one support, access to support staff 24/7, 365 days a year, liaisons in important campus offices who are familiar with the program and the specific needs that may arise for our scholars, group gatherings aimed at improving scholars' life skills and social supports, and emergency financial assistance. Each Blavin scholar is matched with a mentor selected from U of M's faculty and staff. Our mentors have similar interests to our scholars and are often academically relevant, though they also provide emotional and social support.

University of Michigan-Flint: Mpowering My Success

University of Michigan-Flint Mpowering My Success program provides previous foster youth admitted to the University with life skills assessment and training, weekly meetings with a Life Skills Coach Mentor, contact four hours per month, financial support including emergency funds, champion advocates working on the student's behalf, on campus housing assistance, including during school breaks, and helpful guidance for success in college and life.

https://www.umflint.edu/finaid/mpowering-my-success

University of San Diego - Torero Renaissance Scholars

USD's Foster Care Collaborative provides outreach, support and guidance to ensure the well-being, retention and persistence to degree of Toreros who have at one time since the age of 13 been in foster care, or considered a ward of the court and/or orphan.

http://www.sandiego.edu/studentaffairs/resources/foster-care-collaborative.php

University of Southern California - Trojan Guardian Scholars

The Guardian Scholars program is a comprehensive program of financial aid, life coaching, and mentoring, housing and personalized attention. It enables emancipated foster youth to successfully engage in attending a college, university or vocational school, which fits their educational preparedness, degree objectives and long-term career goals. Its mission is: "Making Dreams Come True".

http://dornsife.usc.edu/trojan-guardian-scholars/

University of Texas, Austin - Horns Helping Horns

This organization helps any student without parental support with financial and non-financial support, along with mentoring opportunities.

http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/nss/hornshelpinghorns.php

University of Texas, El Paso (UTEP) - Foster, Homeless and Adopted Resource Program (FHAR)

Foster, Homeless, Adoption Resource Program (FHAR) connects foster, homeless and adopted individuals through education and advocacy with resources that will assist holistically with their UTEP experience.

http://fosteringsuccessmichigan.com/network/UTEP-FHAR%20Program

University of Texas, San Antonio-ACCESS Center Lab

The ACCESS Center Lab which is focused on providing resources for foster youth considering college or job training. This program partners with Baptist Child and Family Services, Project Quest, Angels' Crossing, Casey Family Services and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA).

http://fosteringsuccessmichigan.com/network/university-of-texas-san-antonio-access-center-lab

University of Washington - Champions Program

The mission of the University of Washington Champions Program is to provide holistic support for youth and alumni of foster care, ensuring academic success and preparation for lifelong achievement after graduation from postsecondary education.

http://depts.washington.edu/omadcs/champions/

University of Wisconsin - Stout

Fostering Success provides assistance to students currently in and aged out of the foster care system and homeless youth in order to increase the number of disadvantaged youth enrolled in and graduating from higher education. This is done through intentional outreach to middle and high school students as well as support for enrolled students. Fostering Success delivers higher education information & support directly to foster or homeless youth and stakeholders from the community through seminar days and an overnight camp geared towards college readiness. We retain these students on campus by utilizing Positive Youth Development strategies, employing Fostering Success Scholars, and hiring a Fostering Success Liaison who is a former foster youth and graduate of UW-Stout. By putting foster and homeless youth in visible positions, we challenge the stigma on campus, empower those with an interest as change-makers, and directly invest in those who need our support.

http://www.uwstout.edu/admissions/foster-youth.cfm

Washington State University - Fostering Cougar Champions: Passport to College Scholars Program

Through the Passport program, WSU students who have been in the foster care system can access significant support from freshman year through graduation, with targeted assistance in academic, personal/social, financial, and career areas.

http://universitycollege.wsu.edu/units/Passport/index.html

Washtenaw Community College - REACH Program

The REACH (Realizing Educational Achievement Can Happen) Program at WCC is based in the Student Resource Center. Their goal is to assist the college in providing students with a positive learning experience while attending WCC. REACH provides a case management model advocating on behalf of all students to help them overcome barriers that impede their success, and to promote an educational environment that values diversity, inclusiveness, and quality. REACH offers academic and career advising; education plans;

grants for tuition, books, on and off campus childcare; bus tokens; a career mentoring program; and an emergency food pantry. An on-site Life Skills Coach will assist students as needed.

http://sites.wccnet.edu/srwc/

Wayne State University - Transition to Independence Program (TIP)
TIP Wayne State works to increase college access and improve graduation rates of foster care youth in Southeast Michigan through research, advocacy, financial, and academic support, all while helping students to create lasting personal and professional connections. TIP partners with several departments across campus including Financial Aid, Counseling, Admissions, Student Disability Services and Housing departments to name a few. All units house designated champions that have participated in a series of trainings to become more sensitive to the unique needs and challenges of foster care youth. There are no age restrictions put on foster care youth in accessing services offered by campus champions. TIP also works with a plethora of off-campus partners who provides students with access to a number of free services ranging from assistance with legal issues to ETV enrollment. Students also have opportunities to engage in various leadership programs across Detroit and Southeast Michigan.

http://www.tipwaynestate.org/index.html

West Texas A&M University-Buff Connections Horns Helping Horns
West Texas A&M University is pleased to offer Buff Connections to assist and empower foster care alumni to utilize available support systems resulting in a successful college experience. Buff Connections currently includes four individuals who are committed and available to provide students with a personal and trustworthy contact on campus.

http://www.wtamu.edu/advising/buff-connections.aspx

Western Michigan University - Seita Scholars Program
The Seita Scholars Program is a tuition scholarship and campus support program for Western Michigan University students who have lived some or all of their teenage years in foster care. The Seita Scholarship requires that students participate in the Seita Scholars Program and is only offered to fall semester admits to WMU.

http://wmich.edu/fosteringsuccess/seita

Wright State University - Independent Scholars

The Wright State University Independent Scholars Network (ISN) is a program for admitted Wright State University students who have been impacted by foster care. This program offers a bridge to students who emancipate from foster care or disengage from the adoption process into their new home at Wright State. ISN offers a wide range of services, including help with living arrangements and employment opportunities.

http://www.wright.edu/independent-scholars/

Appendix C: Notable Research and Resources

Please find below a compilation of some exemplary reports and resource materials.

California College Pathways: Host of the annual Blueprint conference on best practices to increasing the post-secondary success of foster youth. Their website contains a host of resources pertaining to foster youth and educational attainment.

Canadian Child Welfare Research Portal: Statistics and information on child welfare research and policies.

The Conference Board of Canada- Success for All: The Economic Case for Investing in the Future of Canadian Children in Care

Education Advisory Board- Fostering Student Success: Building a Support Program for Students from Foster Care (PDF)

Fostering Change Initiative (Vancouver Foundation) - Opportunities in Transition: An Economic Analysis of Investing in Youth Aging out of Foster Care

- Opportunities in Transition: Summary Report (PDF)
- Report 1: Educational, Economic, Social, and Wellness Outcomes (PDF)
- Report 2: The Costs of the Adverse Outcomes (PDF)
- Report 3: Opportunities for Increased Support (PDF)

Ontario Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth – 25 is the New 21: The Costs and Benefits of Providing Extended Care and Maintenance to Ontario Youth in Care Under 25 (PDF)