

Fostering Forward

A monthly tip sheet to navigate through foster care



Love Has No Age Limit

More than 23,000 children age out of the U.S. foster care system every year. One in five of these youth will become homeless after turning 18. You can help teens not be one of these statistics.

Engaging Our Teens in the Community

Are you struggling with after school care for your teen or want to provide them with the chance to connect with other teens? We created a list of opportunities in the community to keep your teen engaged in positive activities. They include sports, homework help and teen activity centers. [Click here for a list of teen activities.](#)

“Right now YOU have the power to say, ‘I will not let their story end like this.’”

Mental Health for Teens

Most teens have endured trauma in their lives prior to coming into foster care. It is important to provide support and allow teens to positively cope with these experiences. Teens may not understand the importance of maintaining mental health at first, but will open up to it over time with your encouragement. [Click here for a list of mental health services.](#)

Signs & Symptoms of Trauma

To best understand our teens, we need to recognize the warning signs.

- Withdrawn
- Isolated
- Defensive
- Confrontational
- Low self-esteem
- Difficulty focusing
- Weight gain
- Weight loss
- Aggression
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Low academic performance
- Truancy



5 Reasons to Foster Teens



Teens reach milestones, too.

Just like babies learning to walk, teens have “firsts.” Such as getting their drivers licenses, joining their first sports team, getting a job and graduating high school. Be the person that gets to share these special moments with them.

Teens deserve positive role models.

Often times teen have been through several different homes and have developed a sense of mistrust. Make teens feel like they have someone to turn to when things get rough.

Help teens develop their full potential.

Everyone has their own interests and talents. Help teens flourish by encouraging them to graduate high school, college, and find a career that helps them find their purpose.

Help them build their toolbox.

Teens often need resources to help them succeed, but they may not realize this or understand how to access them. Assist teens with enrolling in therapeutic or special education services.

Teens want to be part of a long term family.

Teens typically have never experienced what it's like to be part of a stable loving family. Too often, teens will age out of foster care without having anyone to turn to for holidays, school breaks or other life events.

Support for Foster Parents with Teens

Parenting a teen can be stressful at times. It is important to know who you can turn to for extra support.

“You can't pour from an empty cup.”

Respite: It's okay to take a break and treat yourself to self care. We encourage you to contact the Family Case Manager or your Licensing Specialist to give yourself time to recharge.

The Team: Sometimes situations may be difficult to tackle by yourself. Reach out to the Family Case Manager, Licensing Specialist, the teens teachers, coaches, therapist and doctors for guidance.

Foster Community: Fostering is a unique experience. Connect with other foster parents who are able to relate.

CoffeeShop: This is a unique opportunity to connect with foster parents parenting teens. Take an hour each month to enjoy a coffee and learn from a representative from various teen community organizations.

Do You Foster a Teen or Older Youth?

I WANT TO INSPIRE PEOPLE. I WANT SOMEONE TO LOOK AT ME AND SAY "BECAUSE OF YOU, I DIDN'T GIVE UP."

First off, **THANK YOU** for opening your home to one of our older youth in need of a safe and stable family. Over 23,000 teens in America will age out of foster care every year with no home, no family, and no positive role model to turn to for direction. Our teens need love and stability just as much as our infants, our toddlers, and our preschoolers.

Where:

Colectivo
1701 N. Lincoln Memorial Dr.
Milwaukee, WI 53202

When:

The First Monday of Every Month
5:30pm-7:00pm

Who:

Current foster parents & anyone considering fostering a child



What is CoffeeShop?

CoffeeShop is not a training or a class, it is simply a chance to connect with other foster parents who have cared for, are currently caring for, or are considering caring for an older youth or teen in foster care. CoffeeShop will feature a different “Special Guest” each month who will be able to provide insight and information about different resources for teens throughout Milwaukee County.

For additional information, or if you are interested in being one of our “Special Guests”, please contact Sarah Sergeant at **414-231-4867** or **ssergeant@chw.org**.