

# EDUCATIONAL PLANNING SUPPORTS AND RESOURCES

A range of supports are available to assist adult supporters and youth throughout the educational planning process.

## K-12 EDUCATION SUPPORTS

**High School Counselor:** The high school counselor is there to help the youth choose the right college or professional track, obtain a fee waiver for the SAT or ACT, and make sure they are taking the right classes to reach their goals. The high school counselor can act as a bridge between high school and life after high school. Caregivers should engage with the school counselor early and often. They are a free resource for families.

**Foster Youth District Liaison (AB 490 Liaison):** The Foster Youth Liaison can be found at each district in California and can help collect transcripts from different schools, help obtain partial credits to stay on track for graduation, identify tutoring resources at the district and in the community, and assist with graduation requirements for the youth.

**County Office of Education (COE) Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program (FYSCP):** FYSCP's are administered through county offices of education to provide support to foster youth. FYSCP's have the ability and authority to ensure that health and school records are obtained to establish appropriate placements and coordinate instruction, counseling, tutoring, mentoring, professional development training, college and career transition services and more. Contact information for each county can be found here: [www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/fy/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/fy/)

**Educational Rights Holder:** Unless the youth has been previously court approved emancipated, children and youth must have an educational rights holder from birth until their 18th birthday, at which time they hold their own educational rights. An education rights holder is appointed by the court and is responsible for protecting the child's rights and interests with respect to educational services, including any special education services. The educational rights holder may be the child's parent or legal guardian, foster parent, relative caregiver, CASA, or community member with a relationship to the child or youth. The educational rights holder may not be group home staff, case-carrying social workers, probation officers, or other professionals involved with the child or youth.

The educational rights holder determines where the child can go to school, what classes they can enroll in, and whether they need an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

**Academic Enrichment Programs:** Academic enrichment programs are experiences that extend beyond the youth's traditional school curriculum and encourage academic performance and college attendance. These programs can be offered during the school year or during the summer. Adult supporters can help youth find programs that fit their interests and goals. A guidance counselor can help students identify local programs either at their school or in the community. In some counties, programs exist specific just to foster youth.

## Child Welfare Resources

**Child and Family Team (CFT) Meetings:** The Child and Family Team Meetings can be used to make plans around supporting the youth in reaching their college goals and getting connected to supports and resources. This team can include birth family members, previous foster parents, and current foster family members. A great place to start these meetings would be to discuss the youth's college and career goals and interests.

**Independent Living Program (ILP):** The Independent Living Program is a voluntary program offered through the child welfare and probation department that provides training, services and benefits to assist current and former foster youth in achieving self-sufficiency. In California, each county has the flexibility to design services to meet a wide range of individual needs. Youth who were suitably placed in foster care or Kin-Gap at any time between the ages of 16-18 can request an ILP Transition Coordinator to assist the youth until they are 21. Youth and caregivers can find the contact information of their local ILP coordinator by reaching out to their youth's social worker or Probation Officer or viewing this roster found [here](#). The ILP Coordinator can also assist in determining the youth's eligibility.

**CASA:** Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) are judge-appointed volunteers who receive specialized training to advocate for a child's best interests in court. CASA volunteers work with legal and child welfare professionals, educators, and service providers to ensure that judges have all the information they need to make the most well-informed decisions for each child. Not every child or youth will have a CASA appointed, depending on local availability of volunteers.

## Community College Higher Education Programs and Benefits

**California College Promise Grant (formerly the BOG Fee Waiver):** Allows low-income students at community colleges to have enrollment fees waived.

Contact the college that you will be attending to find out how to apply for the fee waiver; you may be able to apply through [cccapply.org](http://cccapply.org) or via the FAFSA or CADAA. Foster youth can maintain this benefit regardless of academic performance once in college.

**California Community College Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS):** All community colleges offer EOPS to enable low-income, educationally disadvantaged students to complete their educational goals. EOPS offers academic counseling, book grants and more. These programs have limited space so it's important to apply as early as possible.

**Campus Support Programs (CSP) for Foster Youth:** Many community colleges have support programs specifically for foster youth. Services can include assistance with admissions, financial aid, housing, orientation, advisement, counseling, and tutoring. Program names, services and eligibility vary by campus. Visit: [cacollegepathways.org/search-foster-youth-programs/](http://cacollegepathways.org/search-foster-youth-programs/)

**NextUp, also known as Cooperating Agencies Foster Youth Educational Support (CAFYES):** Students under age 26, who were in foster care on or after their 13th birthday and enrolled in at least 9 units at one of 26 colleges with a NextUp (CAFYES) program, qualify for special assistance including one-on-one support, book vouchers, and additional financial resources. To find out which colleges have programs visit: [nextup.cccco.edu/](http://nextup.cccco.edu/)

**Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE) and CalWORKs:** CARE programs offer additional assistance to EOPS students who are single head of-household parents who receive public assistance (cash aid) from CalWORKs/TANF. Students may be eligible to receive grants, childcare assistance, job placement assistance, and under certain conditions, post-employment skills training, and instructional services.

**Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS):** These programs provide assistance and accommodations for students with physical, mental and/or learning disabilities that facilitate them in achieving their educational goals. They can provide note-taking assistance, special test-taking conditions, interpreters, and assistive technology.

**Foster Youth Success Initiative (FYSI) Liaisons:** Every community college has a foster youth liaison designated to assist foster youth in accessing financial aid, scholarships, student services, and resources.

**Physical and Mental Health Services:** May include physical exams, family planning, pregnancy testing, prescription refills, and counseling for grief or loss, emotional difficulties, worry and anxiety.

**Priority Registration for Foster Youth:** Allows foster youth who were in care at least one day after the age of 13 to register for classes before the general

student population. Visit the website of the college you plan to attend for more information as deadlines vary by campus.

**Rising Scholars:** These programs serve students who have been impacted by the criminal justice system. Learn which colleges offer this program by visiting: [risingscholarsnetwork.org](http://risingscholarsnetwork.org)

**Dream Centers:** Located throughout many community colleges, these centers and programs provide a safe space, supportive network and access to resources to support students that are undocumented.

**The California College Promise Program:** Some, but not all colleges, offer this program. Program services and eligibility criteria vary across campuses, however, at a minimum, students must be full-time (12+ units), first-time students who are CA residents or meet AB 540 criteria. Many colleges that offer this program waive tuition fees and also offer additional supportive services for eligible students. Contact your college to learn more.

## CSU and UC Programs and Benefits

**Application Fee Waiver:** Foster youth are likely to qualify for a waiver for the \$55 application fee for CSUs and \$70 fee for UCs. You can submit an application fee waiver to up to four campuses each.

**Campus Support Programs (CSP) for Foster Youth:** Most CSU and UC campuses have programs specifically for foster youth that can include assistance with admissions, financial aid, housing, advisement, counseling, tutoring, mentoring, life skills, and employment and career planning. Program names, services and eligibility vary by campus. Visit: [cacollegepathways.org/search-foster-youth-programs/](http://cacollegepathways.org/search-foster-youth-programs/)

**Educational Opportunity Program (EOP):** EOP is designed for students who have not been able to realize their educational potential because of their economic or educational backgrounds. The program provides admission and academic assistance and, in many cases, offers financial assistance to eligible students. EOP accepts students who do not meet regular admission criteria, as well as those who qualify for regular admission. Be sure to apply for EOP when you are completing your undergraduate application for admission. EOP is available at all CSU's and some UC's.

**Students with Disabilities Services:** Each UC and CSU has a disability student services center. These programs provide assistance and accommodations for students with physical, mental and/ or learning disabilities that facilitate them

in achieving their educational goals. They can provide note-taking assistance, special test-taking conditions, interpreters, adaptive equipment and more.

**Priority Housing:** Foster youth can receive priority in on-campus college housing, and some students can stay on campus year-round including holiday breaks. Contact your college to learn more.

**Priority Registration for Foster Youth:** Current and former foster youth in California receive priority course registration at all CSU and most UC campuses. This benefit makes it much easier to enroll in competitive classes. At the CSU's, this benefit is for youth who were in foster care at least one day after the age of 13. Eligibility varies across the UC's. Visit the website of the college you plan to attend for more information.

**Resources for undocumented students:** Many campuses across the CSU's and UC's provide Dream Centers or other support services and resources for undocumented students. Contact your college to learn more.

## INFORMAL SUPPORTS

Many people touch the lives of foster youth, and all of these people may serve as informal supports for educational planning and encouragement. Coaches, peers, mentors, teachers, other resource parents, family members, and community members comprise a youth's support system and can engage youth in conversations about college and professional goals, providing both practical advice and emotional support. A person does not have to have an official title to support youth.