

# TRANSITIONING TO ADULTHOOD

## A Guide for Youth in Missouri Foster Care

Everyone encounters challenges during the transition from youth to adult. This guide provides information about programs and resources to assist you in facing these issues. The guide is divided into five sections: general information, education, employment, housing, and health care.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Tell your foster parent, social worker, mentor etc. that you want to be included in some of the meetings that are about you. They can help you select the meetings where you can have the most input. Talking about how you feel, without blaming others, is a good way to have your ideas count. If you are uncomfortable speaking in person, submit your ideas in writing.

The Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment, also referred to as Casey Life Skills, is a suite of comprehensive online assessments, learning plans, and learning resources that can be utilized for free to help engage young people in foster care whereby they can gain the life skills they need to exit care. The tools are strengths-based and were built and refined with user input and research. The assessments consist of statements about life skills domains deemed critical by youth and caregivers for successful adult living. <http://www.caseylifeskills.org/index.htm>



**MISSOURI'S OLDER YOUTH PROGRAM** provides a wide variety of assistance in areas that include emergency funds, job placement, financial management, housing, education counseling and training, and educational financial aid. To locate the program specialist in your area: <http://www.dss.mo.gov/cd/chafee/counties.htm>

In **YOUTHBUILD** programs, low-income young people ages 16-24 work toward their GEDs or high school diplomas, learn job skills and serve their communities by building affordable housing, and transform their own lives and roles in society. <http://www.youthbuild.org/site/c.htmlR3PIKoG/b.1223921/k.BD3C/Home.htm>

You should obtain a copy of your birth certificate, a Social Security card, and a state-issued photo ID card.

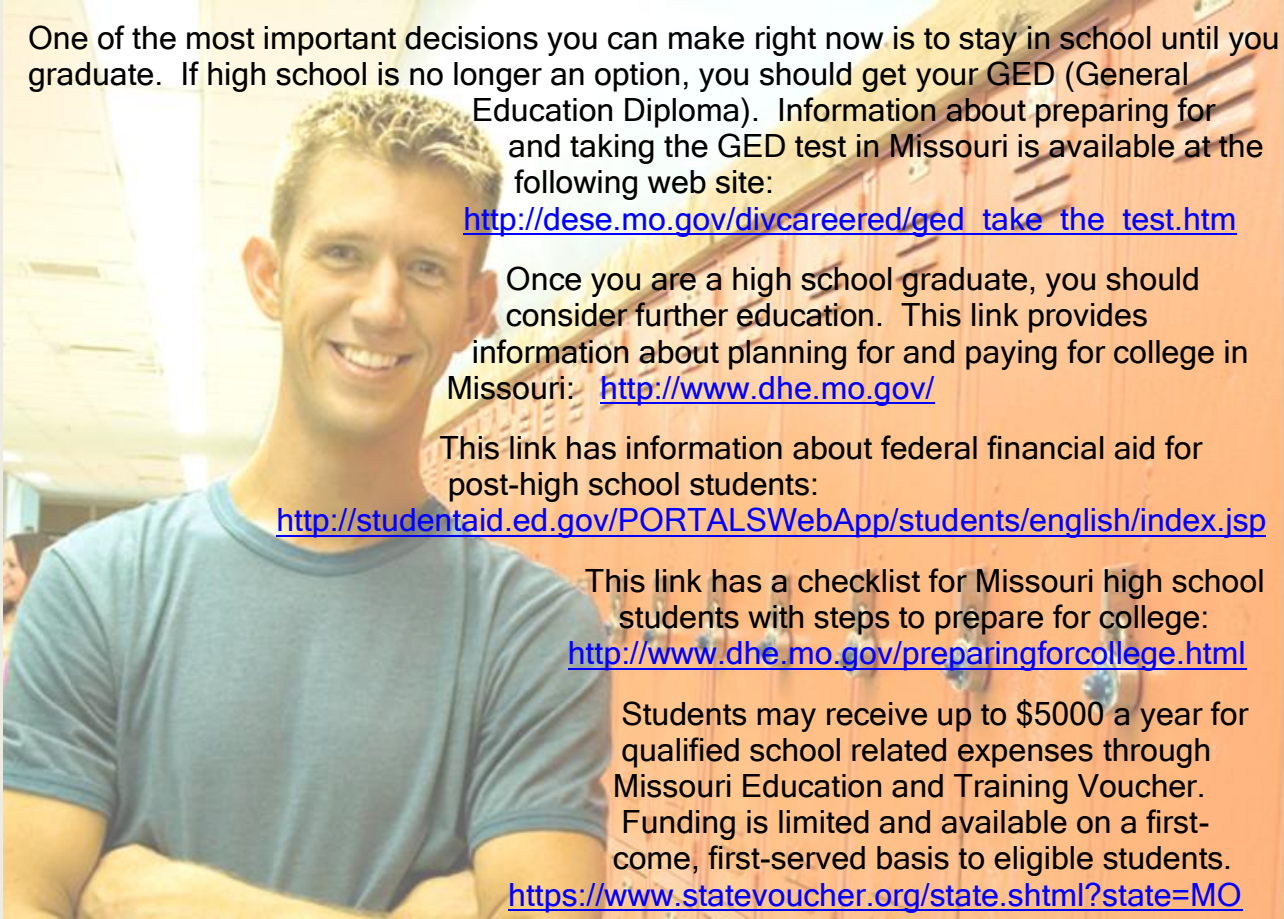
- Information about getting a Missouri birth certificate: <http://www.dhss.mo.gov/BirthAndDeathRecords/applications.html>
- Obtaining a Social Security card: <http://www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/>

- Locating a license office in Missouri to obtain either a driver's license or non-driver ID card: <http://dor.mo.gov/mvdl/offloc/>

**FOSTERCLUB** is a national online network for young people in foster care. The website provides multiple resources and a forum for people who are now or have been in foster care. Many others have gone through what you are now experiencing and you can learn from them. <http://www.fosterclub.com/>

The Food Stamps program provides financial assistance to purchase food: <http://www.dss.mo.gov/fsd/fstamp/index.htm>

## EDUCATION



One of the most important decisions you can make right now is to stay in school until you graduate. If high school is no longer an option, you should get your GED (General Education Diploma). Information about preparing for and taking the GED test in Missouri is available at the following web site:

[http://dese.mo.gov/divcareered/ged\\_take\\_the\\_test.htm](http://dese.mo.gov/divcareered/ged_take_the_test.htm)

Once you are a high school graduate, you should consider further education. This link provides information about planning for and paying for college in Missouri: <http://www.dhe.mo.gov/>

This link has information about federal financial aid for post-high school students:

<http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/index.jsp>

This link has a checklist for Missouri high school students with steps to prepare for college:

<http://www.dhe.mo.gov/preparingforcollege.html>

Students may receive up to \$5000 a year for qualified school related expenses through Missouri Education and Training Voucher. Funding is limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis to eligible students.

<https://www.statevoucher.org/state.shtml?state=MO>

You may prefer **vocational education** to learn a trade. Use this Missouri vocational schools link: [http://www.publicschoolreview.com/state\\_vocationals/stateid/MO](http://www.publicschoolreview.com/state_vocationals/stateid/MO)

Also see *Missouri's Older Youth Program* above.

## EMPLOYMENT

State of Missouri employment services information:

<http://www.mo.gov/working-in-missouri/job-seekers-employers/>

Job Corps training centers in Missouri:

<http://www.jobcorps.gov/centerlocations.aspx?statename=mo>

Information about joining the U.S. military:

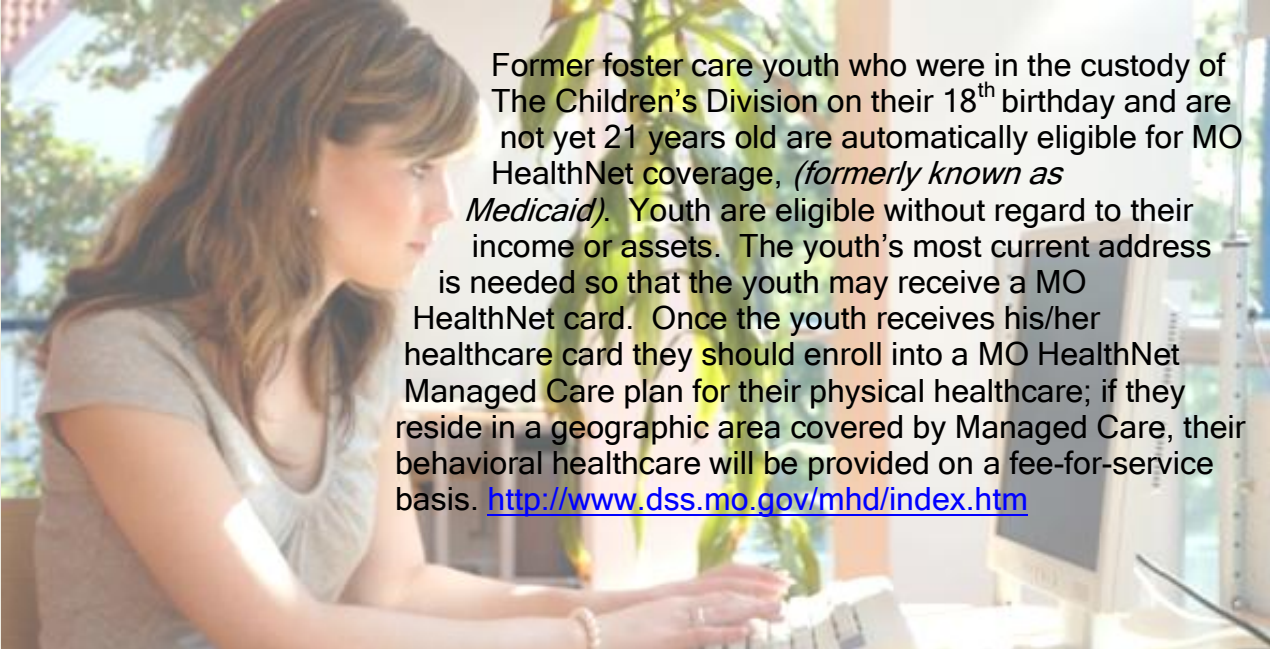
[https://secure.military.com/Recruiting/page1.do?ESRC=ov\\_rec\\_genrec.kw&nipkw=military%20recruitment](https://secure.military.com/Recruiting/page1.do?ESRC=ov_rec_genrec.kw&nipkw=military%20recruitment)

When you receive your first paycheck you should open a checking account at a local bank or credit union.

**DON'T PAY CHECK CASHING FEES!**

Also see *Missouri's Older Youth Program* above.

## HEALTHCARE



Former foster care youth who were in the custody of The Children's Division on their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and are not yet 21 years old are automatically eligible for MO HealthNet coverage, (*formerly known as Medicaid*). Youth are eligible without regard to their income or assets. The youth's most current address is needed so that the youth may receive a MO HealthNet card. Once the youth receives his/her healthcare card they should enroll into a MO HealthNet Managed Care plan for their physical healthcare; if they reside in a geographic area covered by Managed Care, their behavioral healthcare will be provided on a fee-for-service basis. <http://www.dss.mo.gov/mhd/index.htm>

## HOUSING

Get a reference letter from your foster home to show to prospective landlords.

Rental help in Missouri: <http://www.hud.gov/local/index.cfm?state=mo&topic=renting>

Missouri affordable housing locator: <http://ahl.mhdc.com/>

Also see *Missouri's Older Youth Program* above.



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