

Need to Know Series:

Find, Seek, and Secure: Supportive Adults & Permanency Resources



Youth In Progress

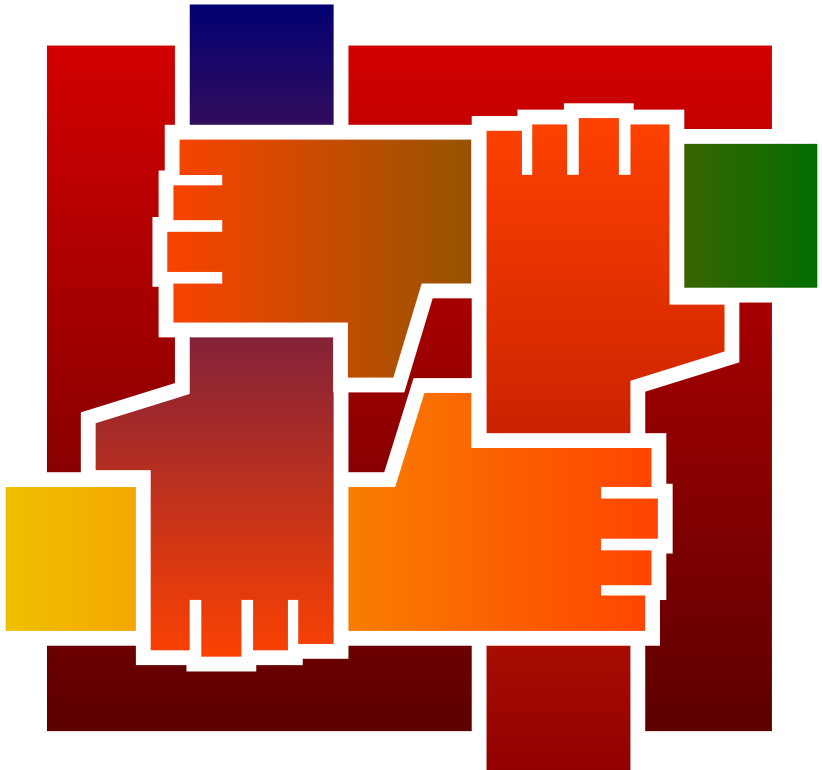
New York State Foster Care
Youth Leadership Advisory Team

“The mission of Youth In Progress is to enhance and advance the lives of today’s and tomorrow’s youth by supporting their sense of self and responsibility. To do this, we pledge to educate everyone involved in the various systems Youth In Progress members represent to the realities of this experience.”

www.youthinprogress.org

What is the key to young people succeeding?

The key to succeeding is having a supportive adult, whether it is family or someone else, in your corner.



“Knowing how to get a job, find housing, and have appropriate money management skills are very important to anyone in the journey to success, but all of this does not really matter unless you have a healthy support system—people in your life that care about you and your well-being and who are willing to support you in any of your future endeavors.”

– Youth in care

What is a supportive adult?

It is a caring, committed adult who has been determined by a social services district to be an appropriate and acceptable resource for you. This person can provide emotional support, advice, guidance and help you make the transition from foster care to responsible adulthood. Some examples of a supportive adult could be:

- 🌀 Parents, relatives, current and former foster parents, neighbors, parents of close friends, your worker, or other responsible adults whom you trust and with whom you feel or may have felt safe.



Why is having a supportive adult important?

Because youth need a person to:

- count on
- be a positive role model
- turn to for guidance and support
- share accomplishments, special occasions and holidays



“I could talk to my high school art teacher about almost anything. When I told her I was in foster care she was very supportive. She found out I wouldn’t be spending Thanksgiving with anyone and invited me over. Even after I graduated she called and asked me over for Thanksgiving dinner. It made me feel cared for and thought about.”

– Youth in care






“I was able to succeed in school and take on everyday challenges because of the supportive adult (foster parent) in my life always standing in my corner.”

– Former foster youth



Where do I find supportive adults?

Supportive adults are all around you. Ask your worker for help in finding supportive adults. Remember to utilize the adults you already know that are working with you while you are in care, assisting you to develop your skills and reach your goals. You can have many supportive adults that help you with many different things. You can never have too many supportive people helping you succeed. Remember:

-  Look into your past to seek out options. Where appropriate, explore establishing or re-establishing a connection with members of your birth family, extended family members such as grandparents, older siblings, aunts, uncles, or cousins.
-  Locating absent parents may lead you to other extended family members.
-  People already in your life or people who may come into your life through work, school, or other activities can also become supportive adults.





What can supportive adults help me with?

Supportive adults can assist you with many different things. It all depends on what your needs are and what the supportive adult is willing and able to provide. They could help you in some of the following areas, but not limited to:

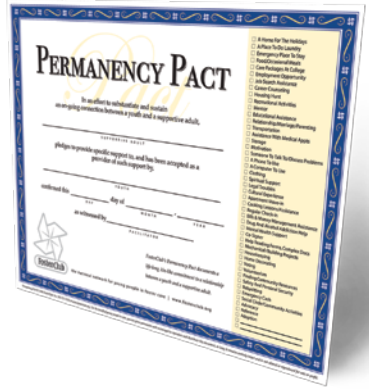
- 🌀 Transition planning
- 🌀 Trial and final discharge
- 🌀 Emotional support
- 🌀 Financial assistance
- 🌀 Work life and careers
- 🌀 College

Creating & establishing these relationships

Once you have identified a supportive adult, the next step is having conversations with that person and your worker to help them understand your needs and for you to understand where and what they can help you with. To get these conversations going, you and your worker or potential supportive adult(s) can use a tool like the permanency pact to help you set healthy boundaries and realistic expectations for your relationship.



Permanency Pact: FosterClub’s new free tool designed to encourage life-long, kin-like connections between a young person and a supportive adult. Download a free PDF of the publication at: www.transition.fosterclub.com/article/permanency-pact



Remember, one person may not be able to meet all of your needs. Having many different people helps to create a supportive network to assist you in reaching your goals.

For more information, see:

The John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resource/chafee-foster-care-program>



What's **YOUR** region?



find contact information on
YouthInProgress.org

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