



Everyone Plays a Role: Elevating Education Success Toolkit

GENERAL RESOURCES

- **Legal Center for Foster Care & Education:** The Legal Center for Foster Care and Education, a project of the American Bar Association's Center on Children and the Law, is a centralized source of information on foster care and education across the country. Their resources on updated federal guidance to support the educational success and stability of students in foster care, including summaries and short videos, can be found [here](#).
- **Treehouse – Pre-K – High School Academic Resources:** A collection of educational resources for students, caregivers, educators and more, created by Treehouse in Washington State.
- **Comprehensive Education Toolkit for Youth who are Systems Involved** (2025): This toolkit, created by the Alliance for Children's Rights in California, compiles three prior toolkits (for youth, court and legal partners, and school districts) and covers the rights of youth who are systems involved and their education rights holders, school stability, enrollment, credits and graduation, and school discipline.
- **Foster Love Project Black Hair Care Resources:** This page is designed to equip adults caring for black children around hair care. Hair care can deeply impact the confidence and self-esteem of young people in care and their ability to attend and engage in school.
- **Authentic Story Telling Toolkit: Supporting Young People in Sharing their Truth** (Juvenile Law Center, 2022): This is a toolkit for those working with youth to share their stories in youth-friendly and culturally competent ways.

YOUTH & LIVED EXPERTS

- **Connect with peers using the FosterClub app.** On this app, you can access programs and exchange tools and tips with people who get where you've been. You can also find opportunities and events, including live meetups and workshops.
- **Transition Toolkit (FosterClub):** FosterClub's Transition Toolkit is designed for foster youth aging out of care. The toolkit includes planning worksheets, record keeping, detailed maps, and resources.
- **Campus-Based College Support Program Guide** (National Research Collaborative for Foster Alumni & Higher Education): This guide is a living document on campus-based support programs across the U.S., including information for each state about tuition waivers, ETVs, and other programs to support youth with foster care experience pursue higher education.
- **Know Your Education Rights:** Check out [this resource](#) from FosterPower. While it is written for youth in Florida, it's a good starting place to know your key education rights.
- For resources about other post-secondary programs that have helped our lived expert speakers, see [JobCorps](#), [AmeriCorps](#), and the [WIOA Youth Program](#).

NATIONAL ADVOCACY

- **7 Ways the U.S. Department of Education Supports Children in Foster Care** (National Working Group on Foster Care & Education, 2025): A helpful messaging document when engaging in policy advocacy about the important role the U.S. Dept. of Education plays in supporting students in foster care.
- **National Datasheet** (ABA Center on Children and the Law, 2022): This datasheet summarizes available national data and research on educational outcomes for youth in foster care. For a quick snapshot of data findings, see **Fast Facts: Foster Care & Education Data at a Glance** (ABA Center on Children and the Law, 2022).
- **Understanding the Executive Orders** (All4Ed, 2025): A new explainer regarding the impact of Executive Orders, including their context, next steps, and key concerns. It cites to **EducationCounsel** for additional information on Executive Actions.

STATE & LOCAL
ADVOCACY

Who to contact?

- **State Educational Agency Foster Care Points of Contact** (U.S. Department of Education, March 2025): This is a directory of State Education Agency (SEA) Foster Care Points of Contact.
- **State Child Welfare Agency Education Contacts, Independent Living and Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Coordinators** (Children's Bureau, 2024): This is a directory of each State's Child Welfare Agency Education Contacts, Independent Living (IL) and Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Coordinators.

Sample state policies

- For a summary of promising state laws supporting students in foster care, see **Education for Students in Foster Care: Legislation Overview** (ABA Center on Children and the Law, 2025).
- **Graduation support:** For an example of a state law supporting credit transfers and making it easier for youth in foster care to graduate from high school, see **Pennsylvania's Act 1** and check out **ELC's Act 1 factsheet** and **self-advocacy tools**.
- **Tuition waiver:** For an example of a state law waiving tuition and fees for youth with foster care experience, see **Pennsylvania's Fostering Independence through Education Waiver**.



GENERAL

- **Key Federal Laws: Supporting Students in Foster Care** (ABA Center on Children and the Law, 2025): This is a guide to the federal laws impacting the education of students in foster care, including ESSA, Fostering Connections, the IDEA, key provisions of Title IV-E, and data sharing.
- **Educational Decision Maker (EDM) Toolkit** (Education Law Center & CASA of Philadelphia, 2018): This toolkit, while written for Educational Decision Makers of students in foster care in Pennsylvania, contains helpful information for anyone engaging in educational advocacy on behalf of students– including tools for assessing what a student needs to be successful, ensuring school stability, communicating with schools, school discipline, and tips for successful advocacy on behalf of youth in residential settings. For more resources on school discipline, you can check out **ELC-PA's Suspension and Expulsion Toolkit** (2024).
- **Counsel for Kids | 10 Ways Counsel for Kids Advance Children's Educational Rights** (Counsel for Kids, 2024): This one-pager outlines how attorneys representing children in foster care can advance their educational interests.
- **Schools as Partners in Education Advocacy for Foster Youth: Tips for Attorneys on Engaging Schools** (ABA Center on Children and the Law, 2017): This article provides tips for lawyers on approaching schools, sharing information, and school advocacy.

SPECIFIC ISSUES

- **An Attorney's Guide to Early Childhood Education** (ABA Center on Children and the Law, 2017): This article outlines what early childhood education supports are available for very young children.
- **Tips for Lawyers Representing Children in Foster Care Who Need or Receive Special Education Services** (Leslie Seid Margolis, Disability Rights Maryland, 2024): This article outlines the steps that lawyers representing children in foster care who need special education services should take to ensure their educational needs are met.
- **School Stability for Students with Disabilities in Foster Care: The Intersection of Federal Laws** (ABA Center on Children and the Law, 2022): This resource helps educational advocates understand how federal laws protecting the rights of students with disabilities and protection the school stability rights of students in foster care intersect.
- **The FAFSA Simplification Act: The Impacts on Youth With Experience in Foster Care and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth** (Youth Law Center, 2023): This guide outlines key changes from the FAFSA Simplification Act (2021) and acceptable documentation for youth who were in foster care at age 13 or older to establish their “independent status.”
- **The Court's Role in Supporting Education for Court-Involved Children** (ABA Center on Children and the Law, 2017): This is a profile of three courts in Nevada, Ohio and New York that use strategies to help children succeed in school, and include tips on how courts can successfully focus on education.

• **SCHOOL STABILITY:**

- This [ESSA Implementation Toolkit](#) (ABA Center on Children and the Law, 2017) outlines how state and local education agencies can implement the school stability and immediate enrollment requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

• **TRANSPORTATION:**

- For a sample worksheet to develop a transportation plan between a local educational agency and local child welfare agency, see [Pennsylvania's Transportation Plan Template](#) and [Transportation Plan Guide](#).

• **INVOLVE PARENTS:**

- Parents play an important role in education planning for their children in foster care. Advocates for Children in NY has several resources to help schools and families understand their rights, including ["What You Need to Know About Students in Foster Care,"](#) [Parent Education Bill of Rights](#), and [this guide](#) for NYC child welfare agencies about supporting parent involvement in education.

• **ADDRESSING TRAUMA:**

- [Helping Traumatized Children Learn: Creating and Advocating for Trauma-Sensitive Schools](#) (2025): This Guide outlines a process for creating trauma-sensitive schools and a policy agenda to provide the support schools need to achieve this goal. The Guide is a project of the [Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative](#) (a collaboration between Massachusetts Advocates for Children and Harvard Law School), which houses [tools and resources](#) on creating trauma-sensitive schools.

• **SHARING INFORMATION:**

- [Educational Information Sharing – What School Staff Need to Know](#) (ABA Center on Children and the Law, 2025): This guide, part of a larger [National Data Toolkit](#), clarifies which parties may access information and records and when to consult with the child welfare agency to ensure student privacy rights are protected.

• **PROMOTING ATTENDANCE & ENGAGEMENT:**

- [Attendance Works](#) houses tools and resources to promote student engagement and combat chronic absenteeism, including [Student Attendance Success Plans](#).

• **SUPPORT STUDENTS RAISED BY KIN:**

- [Five Actions for Supporting Students and Caregivers in Kinship/Grandfamilies](#) (Generations United, 2024): This toolkit outlines actions K-12 school professionals can take to support students who are being raised by grandparents and other kin.