



National Edition 7

# Service Looks Good on YOU!

April Edition 2023

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April is National Volunteer Month! Volunteering is a great way to give back to our community, discover our strengths, flex our civic muscles, and find our collective voice for change. But, for young people volunteering has other benefits that are arguably equal if not greater value to our community—it helps them discover what they care about, builds their confidence and self-esteem, and builds relationships with others. In this edition, we will learn how iFoster’s TAY AmeriCorps are breaking barriers and helping build stronger communities throughout America.

## Resources for You

### Answer the Call to Serve!



There are so many ways to serve and make a difference. AmeriCorps is an opportunity for individuals of all ages and backgrounds to give their time and talent to strengthen communities. And you can get paid!

AmeriCorps offers opportunities with different time commitments and requirements, meaning you can serve in whatever capacity works for your goals and lifestyle. If you are a current or former foster youth, you could even apply to be an iFoster TAY AmeriCorps member!

[Find a Way to Serve](#)

### Ways to Save on Things You Love



**How to Get Discounts on Hundreds of Resources Through iFoster's Member Benefit Program**

If you're like us, you're always looking for ways to save money on the things that matter most: basic needs, clothing, supplies, and even cars and recreational activities. Now those discounts are more accessible than ever with iFoster Get Perks and Working Advantage!

Both iFoster Get Perks, and Working Advantage are similar—they both offer discounts on hundreds of items—but there are also some unique offers between the two.

[Watch and Learn More](#)

**Last Call for Foster Youth to GET PAID!**

**The Tax Clock is Ticking Don't Miss out on \$2k**



Did you know you can get a tax refund just for filing your taxes?

It's true! Filing your taxes is an excellent way to put extra money in your pockets. Most current and former youth even qualify for tax credits even if they haven't earned the minimum income required to file taxes. If you are a Cal foster youth between 18 to 25, this year, you can get a \$1,000 tax-refundable FOSTER YOUTH TAX CREDIT! Already 2,786 CA Foster Youth who have filed their taxes have received over \$3 Million in tax credits!

If you are looking for FREE face-to-face help with your taxes, [find a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance \(VITA\) program near you.](#)

For CA youth the VOICES Youth Program is offering in-person tax help. Schedule an appointment by calling 707-917-5904.

And, if you need help with that, we're here! iFoster is here to answer any questions and help you file your taxes for FREE.

Hey, you!

We know you're busy raising the next generation of the world. It's a tough job, but we want to help.

As a Foster, Kinship, Adoptive, Legal Guardian, and Bio caregiver, you're doing the hard work of raising your children—especially if they are young. And families can STILL claim the 2021 expanded Child Tax Credit until April 15, 2025. Every penny counts!

The Child Tax Credit can amount to up to \$2,000 per child and helps offset the cost of daycare, diapers, food and other necessities your kids require. The Young Child Tax Credit added an additional \$1,083 in 2022 for parents who have a young child under 6 years old.

If you are looking for FREE face-to-face, help with your taxes, [find a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance \(VITA\) program near you.](#)

Get Tax Help Now

Find Out if You are Eligible Today

## Why We Serve



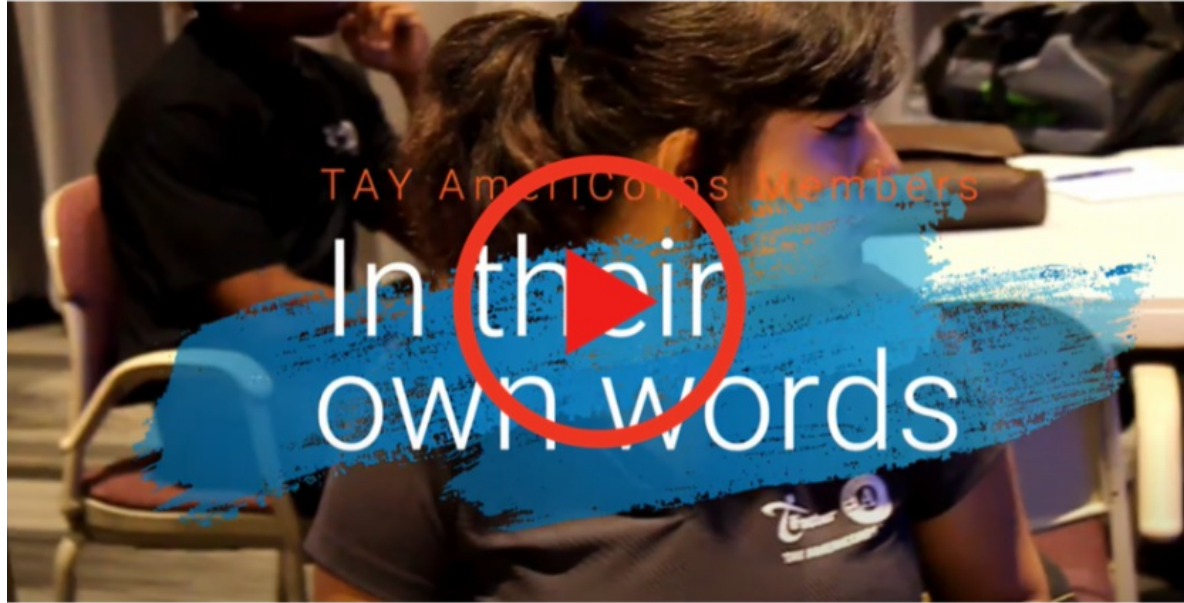
We're proud of the over 400 current and former foster youth who have served as iFoster's TAY AmeriCorps peer navigators since 2019. They make a difference every day in the lives of their peers and other vulnerable populations. They have helped over 50,000 of their peers get the resources they need when they need them. iFoster TAY AmeriCorps Members serve with an undying passion. And at the same time, they are improving their professional skills, which will help them achieve self-sufficiency and realize their desired career path.

When disaster struck, our peer navigators were there to help:

- During the COVID pandemic, they answered the call to help our most vulnerable residents get vaccinated and make over 125,000 life-saving and preventative medical appointments through our call center daily.
- When floods and hurricanes hit our country, they fielded over 500 calls for relief and set families up for disaster clean-up services.

Our peer navigators are trained specialists who understand the unique challenges of foster youth and their caregivers. They are available to provide referrals to resources, help apply for government benefits, assist with navigating the child welfare system, provide "How Do I" knowledge on all the things a youth needs to know as they age out of care and much more. They serve because they have been there themselves. And, because of their experience, they know what it takes to succeed after foster care! In honor of AmeriCorps week, we have started a new blog to share current and former peer navigators' stories that we would like you to [check out!](#)

WATCH: A 2022 Recap of TAYs serving their communities



WATCH: Hear what it means to be a TAY AmeriCorps Member in their own words

## A Heart of Service: How our iFoster TAY AmeriCorps help in their community!



iFoster deploys our trained peer navigator interns to local non-profits to expand their capacity to serve and have an impact. All at no cost to our agency partners or "host sites." An example is our iFoster TAY AmeriCorps work with Project Joy.

Project Joy is a great non-profit serving one of the poorest areas of Los Angeles County. Project Joy provides essential resources, job skills & empowerment workshops to vulnerable and homeless young adults and families. Since 2019 they have been a host for iFoster TAY AmeriCorps Peer Navigators, where our youth interns have helped them grow their capacity and reach to service more of their members.

Our interns have helped to expand the capacity of Project Joy, helping them serve more people than ever before. At Project Joy, our interns conduct outreach via phone, email, and advertisement design to inform youth about events. They have managed social media for and trained new hires on all outreach aspects, including targeting specific populations. They also coordinate Food and Clothing distribution events and help distribute items to community members.

The 3 AmeriCorps Alumni who interned with them have joined iFoster as full-time staff members, demonstrating their dedication to empowerment and development.

If this sounds like success—you're right. It is! And the good news is that iFoster is still looking for more host sites. So, if you are a program or agency serving foster youth and are interested in having interns help connect your clients to resources, answer the call of service like Project Joy and [complete this interest form](#) today.

## Did You Know?

### May is Foster Care Month

We're kicking it off with the release of our annual *Voice of Foster Care Community Report*.

This report represents the largest collaboration between current and former foster youth, caregivers, and frontline workers spanning the nation. Keep an eye out for next month's special edition newsletter with this year's results!

We will also be announcing our next round of collecting data for year three of the survey, which is open for responses from anyone in the foster care community!



During May, to celebrate, iFoster will be hosting a series of special events throughout the month. Stay tuned for more information!



For more information, please contact: iFoster Support at  
855-936-7837 / text 530-550-8001/ support@ifoster.org  
Must be an iFoster Member/ Register at www.ifoster.org, it's free!

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