



Edition 11

# Gear Up to Learn More!

August/September Edition 2023

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It's that time of year again - the back-to-school season is here! As we gear up for a new academic year filled with learning and growth, iFoster is thrilled to bring you our latest newsletter, filled with exciting resources and opportunities tailored to support our amazing foster youth in their educational journeys.

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## Resources for You!

[Free Tech for Eligible Aetna Members](#)

[Join our National Phone Program](#)



Eligible Aetna Members can get a - FREE laptop, tablet, or cellphone depending on age, and state of residence. These Wi-Fi enabled laptops come with Microsoft Windows and Office and with a built-in camera. Our laptops are powerful tools for taking notes, attending Zoom meetings, writing essays or doing research. Please check out your state's flyer by clicking the button below for more details.

[Click & Scroll for More Details](#)



Stay connected with your peers, teachers, and the world with a NEW Android smartphone. These new smartphones come with unlimited talk, text, and high-speed data, including hotspot capabilities from T-Mobile at a significant discount! \$150 for a new phone, \$30 per month service. No carrier contract! iFoster registers youth anonymously on the T-Mobile network to ensure privacy & can turn phones off as needed (i.e. lost, direct request). Capture your precious memories with front and back cameras. Communication and access to information have never been easier!

[A New Phone is a click away](#)

### FREE K-12 Tutoring!



Are you looking for additional academic support? Look no further! iFoster offers FREE tutoring from our partner LearnToBe in any subject for current and former foster youth. We have partnered with vetted tutors from esteemed universities like UCLA, UC-San Diego, and Cornell University. Our tutors are matched to students based on their individual needs and studying preferences. We also have Spanish-language tutors available for ESL students. Let us help you reach your academic goals!

[Find a Tutor Today](#)

### FREE Up to 80% Off School Supplies



As you plan for the upcoming school year, iFoster has your back with incredible discounts on school supplies. Take advantage of our exclusive partnership with Office Depot and OfficeMax, and enjoy up to 80% off on over 300 office and school supply products. With over 3,000 products available with at least 15% off, you can gear up for success without breaking the bank. Remember, this discount is available only for online shopping.

[Start Saving Today](#)

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[Inside America's Critical Shortage of Foster Homes?](#)



iFoster's CEO and Co-Founder, Serita Cox, spoke with Meghna Chakrabarti on the weekly broadcast, "On Point," and discussed the root causes for the shortage of foster homes and what can be done to solve it. The program shared the experiences of four iFoster Peer Navigators, ENRIQUE (25, California), BRITTANY (24, Kentucky), JEWELL (25, Ohio), and GLENDA (27, Kentucky), who detailed their firsthand accounts of foster home shortages and the negative impact on young people relying on the child welfare system.

The lack of foster homes isn't a new issue in America, and to help with this national issue iFoster and AARP are partnering to help inform the 37 Million AARP members of the need and how they might become foster or kinship caregivers. A pilot series of 4 workshops and self-directed training will launch in September. Check out One Point's broadcast here and join the 1.9 Million weekly listeners. [Inside America's critical shortage of foster care homes | On Point \(wbur.org\)](#)!

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## Tips On Staying Cool While Preparing for Back to School



As we gear up for the back-to-school season, it's important to stay cool, both physically and emotionally. We understand that this time can bring about unique challenges for foster youth and the caring adults who support them. That's why we've compiled some helpful tips to make the transition smoother and more enjoyable for everyone involved.

1. Stay hydrated: Remember to drink plenty of water throughout the day, especially during those warmer school days. This will help keep you refreshed and focused. [Learn how to stay hydrated and other](#)

- [nutrition facts from Gaia.](#)
2. Dress comfortably: Choose clothing that is both appropriate for the weather and allows for comfortable movement. Wearing breathable fabrics can help you feel more at ease during long school hours.
  3. Create a routine: Establishing a consistent routine can provide stability and predictability, which can be especially beneficial to youth. Develop a schedule that includes time for study, self-care, and enjoyable activities to maintain a healthy balance. Start the school year off smart with this [SMART Goal Worksheet](#), you can also learn more about SMART goal planning [here](#).
  4. Communicate openly: Youth, don't hesitate to share your thoughts and concerns with the caring adults in your life. Likewise, caregivers create an open and supportive environment where foster youth feel comfortable expressing their needs and challenges. [Hear from Stefanie on ways to implement self-care tips to help you understand how you are feeling.](#)
  5. Seek support: Take advantage of the resources available to foster youth and the caring adults supporting them. Reach out to school counselors, foster care agencies, and community organizations for guidance and assistance. iFoster also offers life coach support for daily life issues. Sign up to meet with our [MSW Shania](#) today.

Remember, together we can create an environment where we can thrive academically, emotionally, and socially. By implementing these tips, we can help set the stage for success as we embark on this new school year.

Wishing you all a fantastic start to the school year!

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## College Corner

Below are a few resources for our post secondary students to help them prepare for the upcoming school year and plan ahead for next.

### Scholarships

Scholarships can be a game-changer when it comes to making college more affordable. It's never too early to start planning for next year and exploring scholarship opportunities. Here are a few scholarships that you can start to explore for this year and the next:

#### Kentucky

- [Kentucky Scholarships - Scholarships.com](#)
- [Tuition Waiver Schools.pub \(ky.gov\)](#)

#### Ohio

- [The National Foster Parent Association - Youth and Continuing Education Scholarships \(nfpaonline.org\)](#)
- [Ohio \(fc2sprogram.org\)](#)
  - Foster Care to Success administers this federally-funded, state-run college grant program for foster youth in seven states (Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Maryland, Missouri, North Carolina and Ohio) and the District of Columbia. In most states, eligible students may receive grants of up to \$5,000 per academic year.
- [Ohio Scholarships - Scholarships.com](#)

#### Nationwide

- [The National Foster Parent Association - Youth and Continuing Education Scholarships \(nfpaonline.org\)](#)
  - [State Scholarships – Horatio Alger Association Students](#)
  - [Foster Care to Success | Information for Students \(fc2success.org\)](#)
  - [Casey Family Services Alumni Scholarship \(fc2sprogram.org\)](#)
    - Connecticut, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.
  - [Adopted/Foster Child/Orphan Scholarships - Scholarships.com](#)
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## Coming Soon

We have several exciting things coming up over the next couple of months and wanted to give a little preview:

### Voice of the Foster Care Community Survey - Year 3

Please join over 6,000 foster youth, caregivers and workers who have participated in the largest national survey of those with lived experience in foster care. Years 1 & 2 have raised the collective voice of the foster care community, resulting in the [Lived Experience Guide to Fixing Foster Care], which has been shared with Congress, Children's Bureau, and even profiled on NPR. Year 3 provides the special opportunity to share

your specific recommendations to improve the foster care system. Please stay tuned for your personal invitation to participate in this year's survey and have a chance to win great prizes!

### AARP Partnership

iFoster is partnering with AARP to launch a series of workshops to assist older Kinship Caregivers who find themselves involved with the child welfare system and need help navigating what they need to do to support their families. These workshops will be available to the AARP community starting in September.

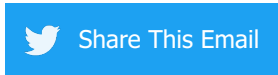
### Introducing the iFoster Guaranteed Income Pilot Program!

We are thrilled to announce that iFoster has been chosen as one of the prestigious pilot sites for California's Guaranteed Income (GI) Pilot Program. This groundbreaking initiative aims to make a meaningful impact on the lives of young adults who were formerly in foster care.

As part of this pilot program, iFoster will enroll 600 individuals in a randomized controlled trial. Out of these, 300 former foster youth will be randomly selected as program participants and will receive \$750 monthly for a duration of 18 months. This financial support is designed to alleviate some of the challenges that arise during the transition to adulthood.

This pilot program is a remarkable opportunity to explore the positive impact of guaranteed income on the lives of young adults who have experienced foster care. By participating in the trial or the research study, you have the chance to be part of something meaningful and help shape future policies and programs that can benefit all individuals in similar circumstances.

Stay tuned for more information on how to participate in these exciting initiatives. We will provide updates and guidelines to ensure a smooth and transparent process.



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

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