



California Edition 11

Gear Up to Learn More!

August/September Edition 2023

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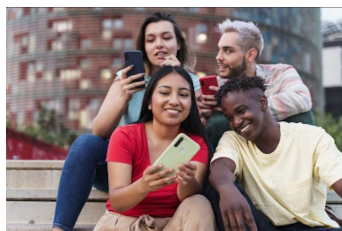
It's that time of year again - the back-to-school season is here! As we gear up for a new academic year filled with learning and growth, iFoster is thrilled to bring you our latest newsletter, filled with exciting resources and opportunities tailored to support our amazing foster youth in their educational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

Resources for You!

FREE K-12 Tutoring!



Free Smartphones with Hotspot



FREE Up to 80% Off School Supplies



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!

Stay connected with your peers, teachers, and the world with a FREE Android smartphone. These new smartphones come with unlimited talk, text, and high-speed data, including hotspot capabilities from T-Mobile. Capture precious memories with front and back cameras, and enjoy navigating the world with the largest 5G network in California. Communication and access to information have never been easier!

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.

Find a Tutor Today

A FREE Phone is a
Click Away

Start Saving Today

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 \(wbur.org\)](#)!

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!

College Corner

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

Exciting News for Foster Youth! Increased Funding for College

The State of California has increased funding for foster youth pursuing college [full-time](#). If you are enrolled in CA community college, CalState or UC school and taking a minimum of 12 units, you could see significant more funding coming your way if you receive a Middle-Class Scholarship and/or a Student Success Completion Grant. Be sure to ask your Financial Aid Office about it and show them your Ward of the Court or County Dependency Letter to prove you are a current or former foster youth. And great news - there is [no age cap!](#)

Student Success Completion Grant: Empowering Foster Youth

The Student Success Completion Grant for foster youth enrolled in CA Community Colleges. Foster youth

enrolled in 12 or more units will now receive an increased grant amount of \$5,250 per semester. You must be receiving CalGrant B or C and meet Satisfactory Academic Progress standards. [Read more with this FAQ.](#)

Middle-Class Scholarship (MCS): Unlocking Opportunities for Foster Youth

The MCS is a state financial aid program designed to assist low- to middle-income undergraduate students, including those pursuing a teaching credential. It provides a scholarship to eligible students enrolled in at least 12 units at a University of California (UC) or California State University (CSU), or those enrolled in a bachelor's program at a California Community College. Current and former foster youth will now receive 100% coverage of their Cost of Attendance (minus \$7,898 student contribution and any other federal or state aid received). This only applies if you have a Cost of Attendance greater than \$7,898. If you do, MCS will now cover 100% of anything over this amount. [Read more with this FAQ.](#)

No need to complete any additional application for either of these grants, the increase in award will be calculated automatically - BUT DO ASK your Financial Aid Office if you are an Student Success Completion Grant and/or MCS recipient and if you are getting the increase. Please note, not all colleges will be ready to implement these increases for the start fall semester so you might not see these increases until later in the semester or next semester

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:

California Specific

- [CSAC - Chafee Grant Home \(ca.gov\)](#)
- [California 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 \(fc2sprograms.org\)](#)
 - Connecticut, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.
- [Adopted/Foster Child/Orphan Scholarships - Scholarships.com](#)

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.

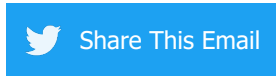
Introducing the iFoster Guaranteed Income Pilot Program!

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
Must be an iFoster Member/ Register at www.ifoster.org, it's free!

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