

# HOW TO HELP TEENS AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE

Each year, thousands of foster children age out of foster care nationwide and attempt to begin life on their own, often without a strong support system. Here are some simple ways to help them make this difficult transition.

- Donate school supplies or household goods to your local DHS office.
- Mentor teens on how to open a bank account and budget.
- Teach a cooking class.
- Show teens how to shop for groceries.
- Teach teens how to change a flat tire or other skills.

We Care  
We Act  
We Change Lives



## CONTACT

Phone: 501-682-8770  
Facebook: @archildwelfare

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# PREPARING TEENS IN CARE TO BE ADULTS

## EXTENDED FOSTER CARE

Teens may choose to remain in foster care until their 21st birthday if they meet education, treatment, or employment requirements. This is called extended foster care.

## EXTRA SUPPORT

Funds are available to help with education for eligible youth (not to exceed \$5,000 in one year). DCFS also can help pay for job training, housing, and basic necessities.

## AFTER CARE

Even when teens leave care at age 18, DCFS can help pay for education or training programs, housing, insurance, transportation, or utility bills/setup (up to \$2,000).

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*At DCFS, we have one primary value that drives every decision we make:*

*Every child in Arkansas deserves a safe, stable family every day.*

## TRANSITIONAL YOUTH SERVICES

Transitional Youth Services prepare teens in foster care for a successful transition to adulthood and to ensure they have access to an array of resources.

When a teen in care turns 14, or if he or she comes into care at 14 or older, then the teen is eligible to receive transitional youth services.

The services are tailored to best fit the teen's needs and circumstances. Let's talk a little more about those.

## THE TRANSITIONAL PLAN

The center of DCFS' efforts to prepare a teen for adulthood is the Transitional Plan. It contains life skills and resources for a successful transition into adult life.

The plan is developed by the teen and his or her Transitional Team -- people identified by the teen as important (e.g. foster parents, bio family, AAL, CASA, mentors, therapists, teachers, and coaches).

The plan focuses on education, employment, health care, housing, and more. It also includes important documents such as a birth certificate and health and education records.