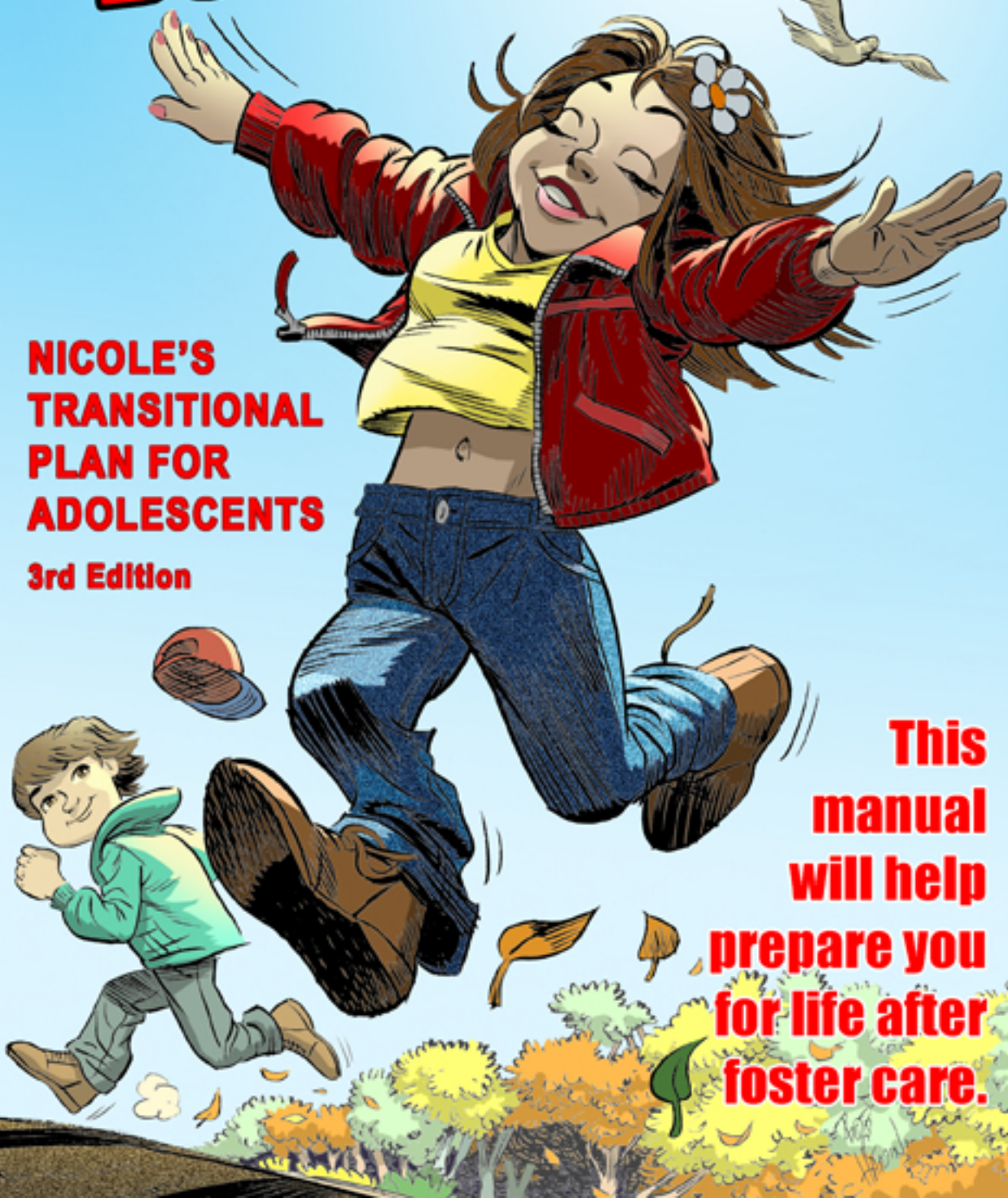


Aging Out Don't Miss Out!

**NICOLE'S
TRANSITIONAL
PLAN FOR
ADOLESCENTS**

3rd Edition

**This
manual
will help
prepare you
for life after
foster care.**



Aging Out Don't Miss Out!

**THIS PUBLICATION IS DEDICATED TO ALL THE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO
WILL BE AGING OUT OF THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM.**

**WE KNOW YOU CAN MAKE IT.
WE HOPE WE CAN HELP IT HAPPEN.**

YOU ARE THE FUTURE.



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THIS GUIDE IS INTENDED TO GIVE INFORMATION TO TEENS INVOLVED WITH DYFS. IT EXPLAINS SOME OF THE PROGRAMS THAT MAY BE AVAILABLE TO HELP. IT ALSO TALKS ABOUT THE LAW AND THE RIGHTS OF TEENS. WHAT IS EXPLAINED IN THIS GUIDE MAY NOT BE THE SAME AS WHAT SOME TEENS HAVE ACTUALLY EXPERIENCED. NOTHING IN THIS GUIDE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED TO BE LEGAL ADVICE FROM A LAWYER. IF YOU HAVE LEGAL QUESTIONS THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO YOUR SITUATION, YOU SHOULD TRY TO TALK WITH A LAWYER AND ASK THEM THESE QUESTIONS.


NATHAN AND NICOLE ARE BROTHER AND SISTER. THEY HAVE BEEN IN FOSTER CARE FOR SEVERAL YEARS BECAUSE THEIR PARENTS HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO TAKE CARE OF THEM. NICOLE IS 17 AND LIVES IN A GROUP HOME. NATHAN IS 15 AND LIVES IN A FOSTER HOME. THEY REGULARLY GET TO SEE EACH OTHER AT THE DYFS OFFICE. TWO WEEKS AGO THEY WERE GIVEN A NEW DYFS CASE MANAGER, ALSO CALLED A "CASE WORKER" OR "WORKER."



I'M REALLY EXCITED BECAUSE I MET WITH OUR NEW CASE MANAGER, BILL, LAST WEEK. WE TALKED ABOUT HOW SOMEDAY I CAN LIVE ON MY OWN.

WE CAME UP WITH A PLAN CALLED MY "TRANSITIONAL PLAN FOR ADOLESCENTS".

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I'VE NEVER HEARD OF THAT.

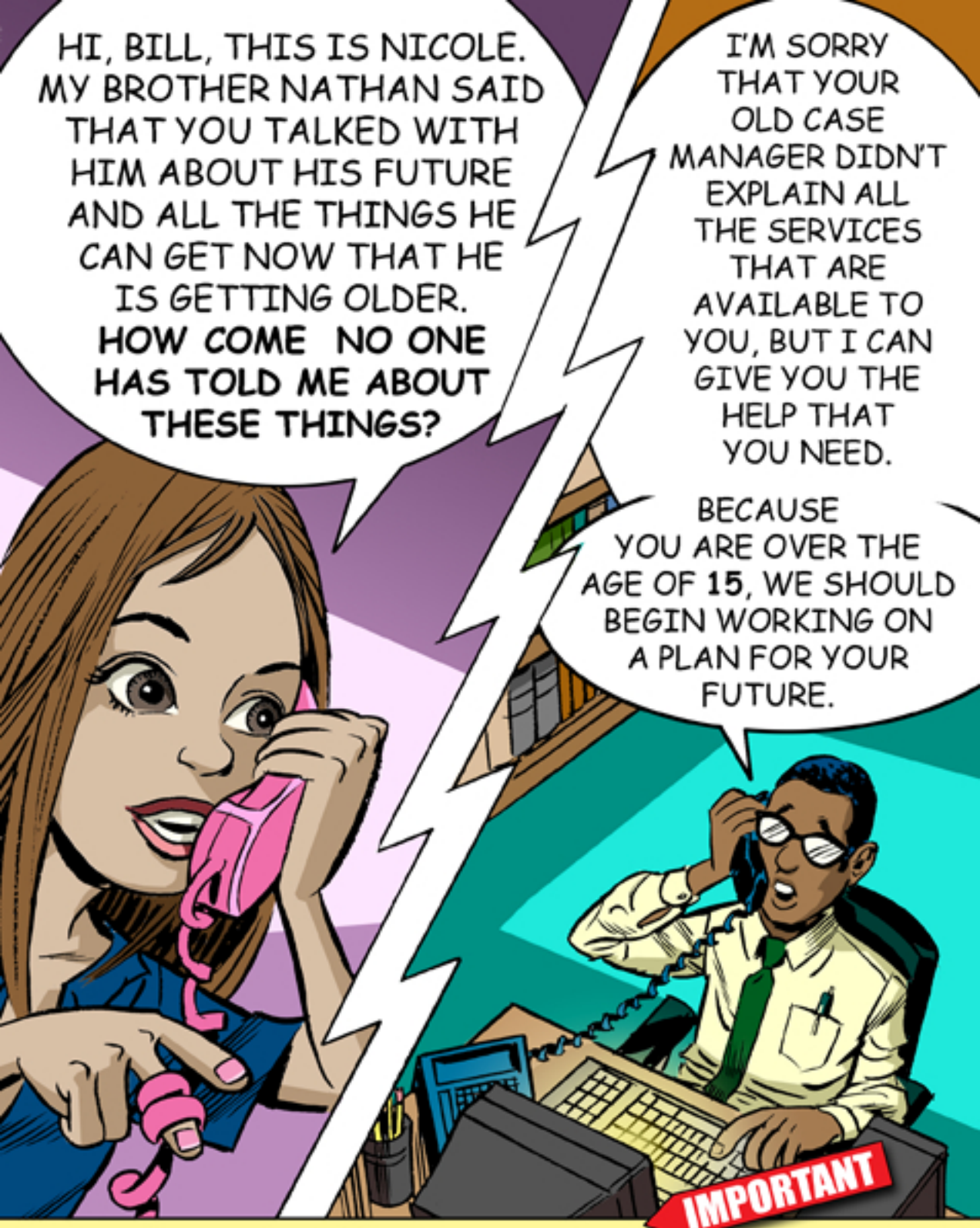
A comic book illustration showing a close-up of a boy and a girl. The boy, on the left, has brown hair and is wearing a red shirt. He is looking towards the girl with a slight smile. The girl, on the right, has brown hair and is wearing a blue shirt. She has a surprised or excited expression, with wide eyes and an open mouth. The background is a bright yellow sun in the upper right corner and a green area behind the characters. Two speech bubbles are present: one from the boy and one from the girl.

I DID NOT KNOW ABOUT IT EITHER UNTIL BILL TOLD ME. IT TALKS ABOUT FINISHING SCHOOL, FINDING A JOB, AND MAYBE GOING TO COLLEGE.

BUT I'M OLDER THAN YOU AND NO ONE HAS EVER HAD A MEETING WITH ME TO TALK ABOUT MY FUTURE.

IMPORTANT

IF YOU ARE HAVING PROBLEMS WITH YOUR CASE MANAGER, CALL THE SUPERVISOR AND TELL THE SUPERVISOR YOUR PROBLEMS. IF THE SUPERVISOR IS NOT HELPFUL, CALL THE CASEWORK SUPERVISOR WHO IS ABOVE THE SUPERVISOR. WHEN YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE REACHING SOMEONE AT DYFS BY PHONE, TRY GOING TO THE DYFS OFFICE. IF YOU CONTINUE TO HAVE PROBLEMS WITH DYFS, YOUR LAW GUARDIAN MAY BE ABLE TO HELP. YOU ALSO CAN CONTACT THE HELPLINE AT THE OFFICE OF THE CHILD ADVOCATE AT 877-543-7864 OR <http://www.childadvocate.nj.gov>.




HI, BILL, THIS IS NICOLE. MY BROTHER NATHAN SAID THAT YOU TALKED WITH HIM ABOUT HIS FUTURE AND ALL THE THINGS HE CAN GET NOW THAT HE IS GETTING OLDER. HOW COME NO ONE HAS TOLD ME ABOUT THESE THINGS?

I'M SORRY THAT YOUR OLD CASE MANAGER DIDN'T EXPLAIN ALL THE SERVICES THAT ARE AVAILABLE TO YOU, BUT I CAN GIVE YOU THE HELP THAT YOU NEED.

BECAUSE YOU ARE OVER THE AGE OF 15, WE SHOULD BEGIN WORKING ON A PLAN FOR YOUR FUTURE.

ALL YOUTH INVOLVED WITH DYFS SHOULD HAVE A TRANSITIONAL PLAN FOR ADOLESCENTS. EITHER YOUR DYFS CASE MANAGER OR A STAFF PERSON FROM YOUR GROUP HOME, LIFE SKILLS CLASS, OR TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM SHOULD START DEVELOPING A PLAN BEFORE YOU TURN 15. IF YOU ARE OVER 15 AND DO NOT HAVE A TRANSITIONAL PLAN FOR ADOLESCENTS, YOU SHOULD TALK TO YOUR DYFS CASE MANAGER.



BUT I THOUGHT MY
CASE WILL CLOSE
WHEN I TURN 18.
IS THAT TRUE?

NO!! NO CASE IS
AUTOMATICALLY CLOSED
ANYMORE. ALL YOUTH
WHO ARE INVOLVED
WITH DYFS WHEN THEY
TURN 18 HAVE A RIGHT
TO KEEP THEIR DYFS
CASE OPEN UNTIL
THEY TURN 21.

YOUR
CASE WILL
ONLY
CLOSE IF
YOU AND
YOUR CASE
MANAGER
AGREE IT
SHOULD BE
CLOSED,

...OR YOU DON'T
PARTICIPATE IN SERVICES
OFFERED BY DYFS, OR YOU
TURN 21.

IMPORTANT

IF DYFS CLOSES YOUR CASE BEFORE YOU TURN 21, DYFS MUST:

1. SEND YOU A LETTER 2 MONTHS BEFORE IT IS CLOSED. THE LETTER SHOULD SAY WHY THEY ARE CLOSING YOUR CASE; AND...
2. YOU MUST SIGN A FORM SAYING THAT YOU WANT YOUR CASE CLOSED AND GIVE THE REASONS WHY YOU WANT IT CLOSED.
3. IF YOUR CASE WAS CLOSED AFTER YOU TURNED 18 AND YOU ARE NOT YET 21, YOU MAY CALL DYFS AND HAVE YOUR CASE RE-OPENED IF YOU NEED HELP.

NICOLE MEETS WITH GROUP HOME WORKER, ANN.

LISTEN, ANN, I TALKED WITH MY NEW DYFS CASE MANAGER BILL. HE IS SETTING UP A MEETING TO DISCUSS MY FUTURE. I WAS HOPING YOU WOULD COME TO THE MEETING.

SURE. IS THERE ANYONE ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE AT THE MEETING? USUALLY WE PICK SOMEONE IN YOUR LIFE YOU ARE CLOSE TO. WE CALL THAT PERSON THE "CARING ADULT".

BETTY, A FAMILY FRIEND, HAS KEPT IN TOUCH WITH ME SINCE I LEFT HOME. I THINK I WOULD LIKE HER TO BE THE "CARING" PERSON FOR MY TRANSITION PLAN BECAUSE I FEEL SHE CARES ABOUT ME AND WE GET ALONG REALLY WELL.

GOOD CHOICE.

A woman with brown hair, wearing a yellow shirt and a white skirt, sits in a brown office chair with orange armrests. She has her arms crossed and is looking towards the viewer. The background shows a window with yellow light, a potted plant, and a desk with a blue flame-shaped object. In the foreground, the back of a person's head with long, wavy red hair is visible. Three speech bubbles are present: one at the top, one on the left, and one on the right.

BILL ALSO SAID HE NEEDS TO COLLECT MY RECORDS. WHAT DID HE MEAN BY RECORDS? WHAT IS USUALLY IN THESE RECORDS?

RECORDS ARE ANY PAPERS OR INFORMATION THAT EXPLAINS THINGS ABOUT YOU: SUCH AS YOUR BIRTH CERTIFICATE, YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY CARD, YOUR MEDICAL RECORDS, AND SOME SCHOOL RECORDS.

YOUR DYFS CASE MANAGER HAS THESE RECORDS IN CASE YOU EVER NEED THEM FOR ANYTHING, LIKE A JOB OR SCHOOL APPLICATION. YOU CAN ALWAYS ASK TO SEE THEM AND GET COPIES.

WHAT ABOUT
INFORMATION ABOUT MY
PAST AND MY PARENTS?

YOUR DYFS
RECORD ALSO INCLUDES
INFORMATION ABOUT
WHY YOU BECAME
INVOLVED WITH DYFS,
YOUR DYFS PLACEMENTS,
AND INFORMATION
ABOUT YOUR BIRTH
FAMILY. YOU MAY NOT
BE ABLE TO SEE ALL OF
THESE RECORDS, BUT YOU
CAN ASK QUESTIONS
ABOUT THESE THINGS
AND GET A REPORT FROM
DYFS ABOUT YOUR BIRTH
FAMILY AND YOUR TIME
IN FOSTER CARE.

THANKS, ANN.
I'VE LEARNED A
LOT TODAY.

IMPORTANT

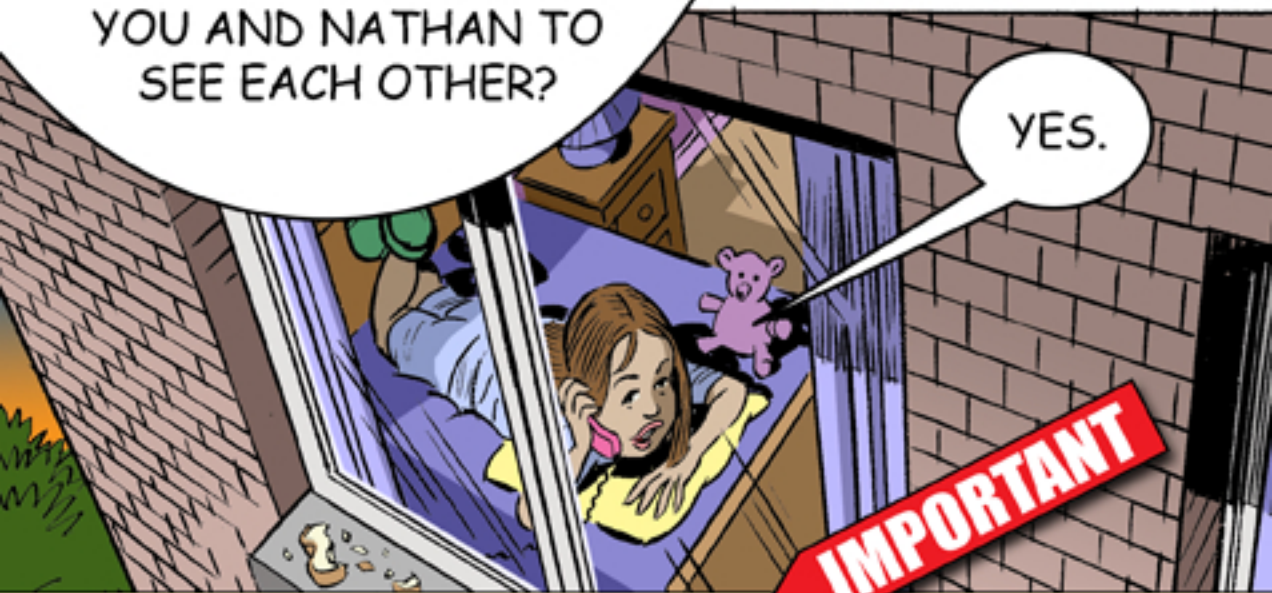
ASKING QUESTIONS IS THE BEST WAY TO GET IMPORTANT INFORMATION. IF YOU EVER HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT IS GOING ON, YOU CAN ALWAYS ASK YOUR DYFS CASE MANAGER, YOUR LAW GUARDIAN, OR CAREGIVER.

SARAH, NICOLE'S LAW GUARDIAN, IS CALLING NICOLE TO CHECK IN BEFORE THE NEXT COURT HEARING.

HI NICOLE, I AM SARAH, YOUR LAW GUARDIAN. IN A FEW DAYS, I NEED TO GO TO COURT. I WANTED TO CHECK IN WITH YOU AND YOUR BROTHER TO SEE HOW EVERYTHING IS GOING. IS THERE ANYTHING YOU NEED OR IS ANYTHING GIVING YOU PROBLEMS? FOR STARTERS, HAS THE DYFS CASE MANAGER BEEN ARRANGING FOR YOU AND NATHAN TO SEE EACH OTHER?



YES.



IMPORTANT

NOTE ON LAW GUARDIANS: LAW GUARDIANS ARE LAWYERS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH AND ACT AS THEIR VOICE IN COURT. LAW GUARDIANS WORK IN TEAMS WITH INVESTIGATORS. ANY CHILD OR YOUTH INVOLVED IN A CASE IN COURT BECAUSE OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT (A "DYFS CASE") SHOULD HAVE A LAW GUARDIAN. NOT ALL YOUTH HAVE A CASE IN COURT. CHECK WITH YOUR CAREGIVER OR DYFS CASE MANAGER TO FIND OUT IF YOU HAVE A LAW GUARDIAN, AND HOW TO CONTACT YOUR LAW GUARDIAN IF YOU HAVE ONE.

ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT THE LAW SAYS THAT YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SEE YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS OR YOUR PARENTS ON A REGULAR BASIS. THE ONE EXCEPTION IS THAT YOU MAY NOT BE ABLE TO SEE YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IF THEY HAVE BEEN ADOPTED.



ALSO REMEMBER THAT IN NEW JERSEY THERE IS A LAW CALLED THE CHILD PLACEMENT BILL OF RIGHTS. THIS LAW GIVES YOU MANY RIGHTS WHILE YOU ARE IN FOSTER CARE.

IMPORTANT

CHILD PLACEMENT BILL OF RIGHTS

Under this law, every child in foster care has some independent rights, including the right:

- *To live with a relative;
- *To live in the same foster home with brothers and sisters if possible;
- *To visit parents;
- *To have enough food to eat, clothes to wear and a safe house to live in;
- *To stay in one place as much as possible;
- *To see the *DYFS* case manager on a regular basis;
- *To see a doctor and dentist and get medical and dental care;
- *To get a good education;
- *To be free from being physically restrained;
- *To have a plan to either return home or to find another permanent home.

CHILD PLACEMENT REVIEW BOARDS

IMPORTANT

If you are 14 and older, you are able to come to a Child Placement Review Board meeting. The Review Board is a group of trained volunteers from your community. Their job is to make sure that kids who are not living with their parents are in safe homes and getting the right kind of services from DYFS.

Review Board meetings are not formal like court. You and the Board talk together. The

Review Board volunteers can help you understand your rights, listen to any issues you may have, help you locate resources such as schools and job training programs, and help you achieve your goals. They follow your case until you turn 21. You can come to a Review Board meeting with your DYFS case manager, the people with whom you are living, a friend, or just by yourself. After each meeting, the Review Board sends recommendations to a judge. You also can get a copy of these recommendations.

Your case manager can arrange for you to come to a Board meeting and arrange transportation if you need it. If you are interested in attending, you should talk with your case manager. You also can go on the Review Board's website - www.njcpac.org - to ask questions about Review Boards or other things that are not clear to you. If you leave an e-mail or other address you will get an answer.




WHAT HAPPENS IN COURT?

COURT HEARINGS HAPPEN EVERY FEW MONTHS. AT THE HEARING, EVERYONE INVOLVED WITH YOUR FAMILY GETS TOGETHER IN FRONT OF THE JUDGE. AFTER THE JUDGE HEARS FROM EVERYONE, THE JUDGE DECIDES WHAT IS BEST FOR YOU AND YOUR BROTHER. IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE JUDGE TO HAVE ALL THE INFORMATION ABOUT YOU. THEN THE JUDGE CAN MAKE THE BEST DECISION ABOUT WHAT YOU NEED, WHERE YOU SHOULD LIVE, AND WHAT SHOULD BE THE PLAN FOR YOUR FUTURE.

WHAT PEOPLE ARE IN COURT?

USUALLY YOUR DYFS CASE MANAGER, A LAWYER FOR DYFS CALLED A DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL, A LAW GUARDIAN LIKE ME REPRESENTING CHILDREN OR YOUTH LIKE YOU, AND OF COURSE THE JUDGE. WHEN PARENTS ARE STILL INVOLVED WITH THEIR CHILDREN, THE PARENTS WILL ALSO BE IN COURT ALONG WITH THE PARENTS' LAWYERS.

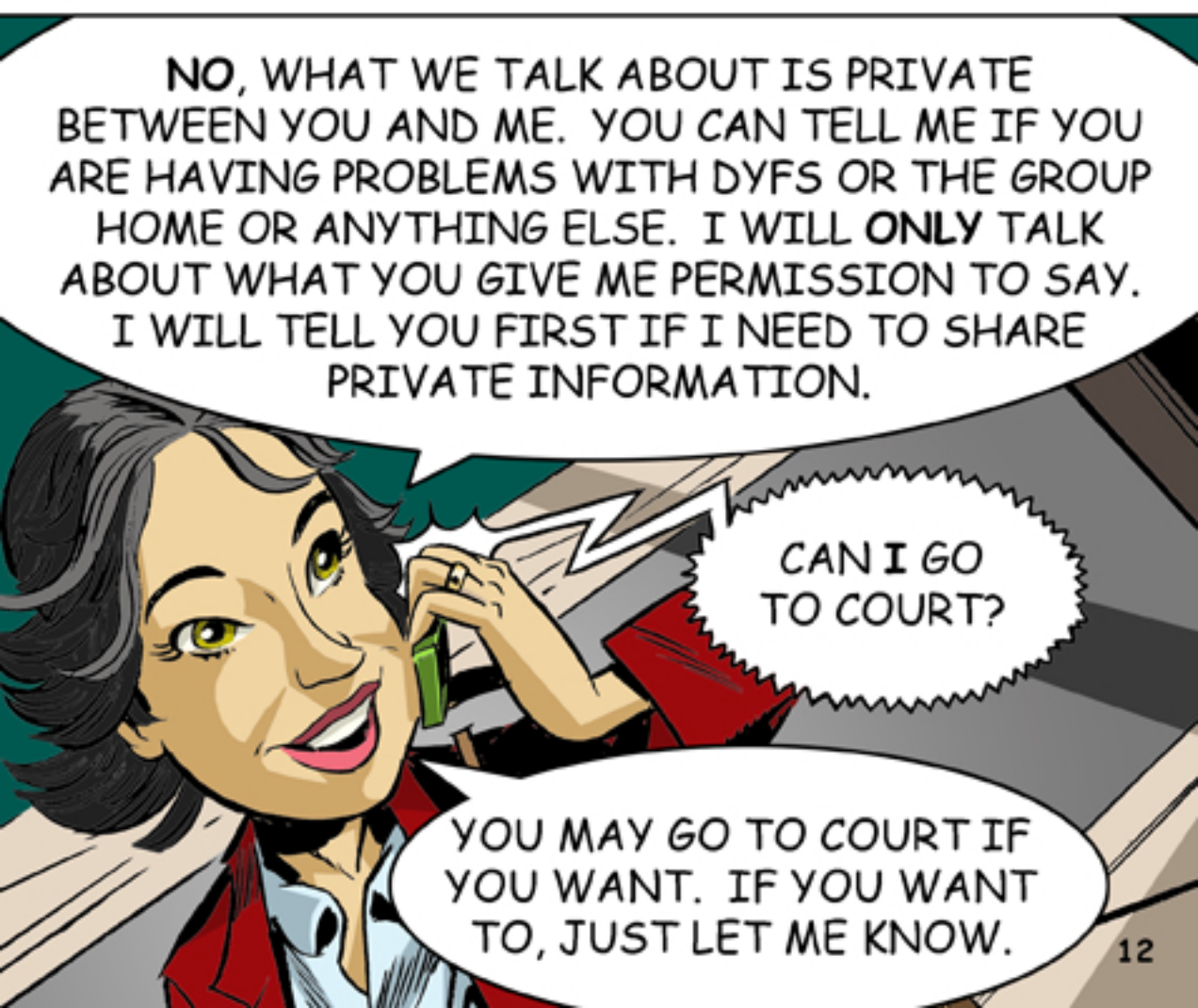


WHAT DO YOU DO
AT THE HEARING?

I TELL THE
JUDGE HOW YOU
ARE DOING AND
WHAT YOU WANT
AND NEED.


DO YOU TELL THE
JUDGE **EVERYTHING**
I TELL YOU?

NO, WHAT WE TALK ABOUT IS PRIVATE
BETWEEN YOU AND ME. YOU CAN TELL ME IF YOU
ARE HAVING PROBLEMS WITH DYFS OR THE GROUP
HOME OR ANYTHING ELSE. I WILL **ONLY** TALK
ABOUT WHAT YOU GIVE ME PERMISSION TO SAY.
I WILL TELL YOU FIRST IF I NEED TO SHARE
PRIVATE INFORMATION.



CAN I GO
TO COURT?

YOU MAY GO TO COURT IF
YOU WANT. IF YOU WANT
TO, JUST LET ME KNOW.



WHAT WOULD I DO
IF I WENT TO COURT?

YOU'D LISTEN AND WATCH
WHAT HAPPENS. GOING TO
COURT WILL HELP YOU SEE WHAT
IS HAPPENING WITH YOUR COURT
CASE. YOU CAN SIT IN THE
COURT ROOM FOR SOME PART OF
THE HEARING. THE JUDGE MAY
ASK YOU TO SIT OUTSIDE THE
COURTROOM FOR PART OF THE
TIME. THERE ARE CERTAIN RULES
IN COURT, WHICH WE WILL
NEED TO TALK ABOUT.

SO WHAT IS GOING ON
WITH MY CASE? WHAT HAS THE
JUDGE DECIDED ABOUT ME?

IN YOUR
CASE, THE JUDGE
HAS DECIDED THAT
DYFS SHOULD BE HELPING
YOU MOVE TOWARD A GOAL
CALLED "INDEPENDENT
LIVING", WHICH MEANS
THAT SOMEWHERE
BETWEEN YOUR 18TH AND
21ST BIRTHDAYS YOU
WILL LIVE ON YOUR OWN
AND DYFS IS SUPPOSED
TO HELP YOU PREPARE
FOR THIS.



IMPORTANT

EVERY KID IN FOSTER CARE HAS A LONG TERM GOAL. DIFFERENT GOALS INCLUDE: RETURNING TO LIVE WITH A PARENT, GOING TO LIVE WITH A RELATIVE, ADOPTION OR FINDING A NEW FOREVER FAMILY, AND INDEPENDENT LIVING. YOU MUST BE 16 FOR A GOAL OF INDEPENDENT LIVING.

MEETING TO WRITE UP NICOLE'S
TRANSITIONAL PLAN FOR ADOLESCENTS.

THANK YOU ALL FOR COMING TODAY. THIS IS A **VERY** IMPORTANT MEETING. WE ARE ALL HERE TO HELP NICOLE PUT TOGETHER A PLAN FOR HER FUTURE. NICOLE, DO YOU HAVE ANY THOUGHTS ABOUT WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO DO?

I AM NOT SURE. MAYBE I COULD BE A PRESCHOOL TEACHER. I REALLY LOVE LITTLE KIDS.

WELL LET'S TALK ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL SITUATION FIRST. I KNOW THAT YOU ARE A JUNIOR AND THAT YOU ARE WORRIED YOU WILL NOT HAVE ENOUGH CREDITS TO GRADUATE NEXT YEAR.

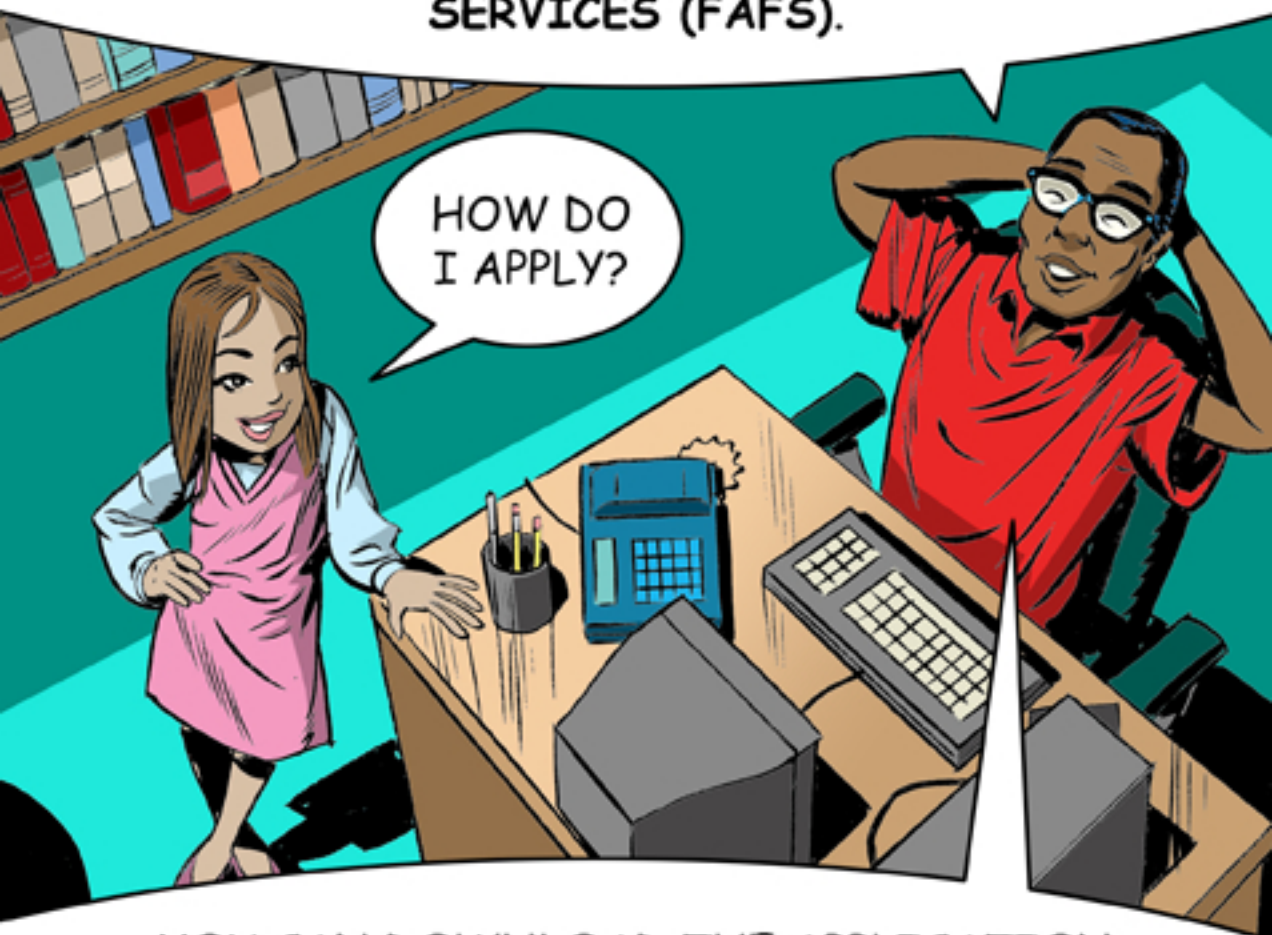
THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO TALK TO YOUR **GUIDANCE COUNSELOR** TO FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU NEED TO GET YOUR HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA. REMEMBER YOU CAN STAY IN SCHOOL UNTIL YOU ARE 20 OR GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL. YOU CAN ALWAYS WORK TOWARDS GETTING A **GED**. BUT SINCE YOU ARE ONLY 17, I THINK YOU CAN GRADUATE HIGH SCHOOL. ALSO, IF YOU NEED A LITTLE EXTRA HELP AND TUTORING, BILL CAN FIND YOU A PROGRAM OR TUTOR.



YOUTH IN SPECIAL EDUCATION:

- YOU CAN STAY IN SCHOOL UNTIL YOU ARE 22 OR GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL.
- YOU MAY BE ABLE TO GET JOB TRAINING AND OTHER SERVICES TO HELP YOU AFTER YOU GRADUATE. THESE ARE CALLED "**TRANSITION SERVICES**". THEY BEGIN AT THE AGE OF 16.
- AT THE AGE OF 18, YOU CAN BEGIN TO MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT YOUR EDUCATION FOR YOURSELF. THIS MEANS YOU CAN SIGN YOUR OWN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN (CALLED AN **IEP**), HAVE A SAY IN WHERE YOU GO TO SCHOOL, WHAT CLASSES YOU TAKE, AND WHAT TRANSITION SERVICES YOU GET.

AFTER HIGH SCHOOL, THERE IS A PROGRAM CALLED **THE NJ FOSTER CARE SCHOLARS PROGRAM** THAT HELPS YOUTH IN DYFS PLACEMENTS PAY FOR COLLEGE OR JOB TRAINING SCHOOLS. IT CAN PAY FOR THINGS LIKE TUITION, HOUSING, FOOD, BOOKS, TRANSPORTATION, COMPUTERS, AND EVEN THINGS LIKE CHILD CARE COSTS. IT IS RUN BY **FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE FAMILY SERVICES (FAFS)**.



YOU CAN DOWNLOAD THE APPLICATION AT **www.fafsonline.org** UNDER **NJFC SCHOLARS**, OR CALL THEM AT **1-800-222-0047**. WHEN YOU CALL, YOU SHOULD ASK THEM ABOUT SCHOLARSHIPS. DYFS FIGURES OUT WHO IS ELIGIBLE. SINCE YOU HAVE BEEN IN DYFS CARE FOR A LONG TIME, YOU WILL PROBABLY QUALIFY.

HERE'S THE DEAL ON WHETHER YOU CAN GET HELP FROM DYFS TO PAY FOR COLLEGE:



YOUTH QUALIFY WHO ARE OR WERE IN A DYFS PLACEMENT:

- FOR 9 MONTHS OR MORE AFTER THEIR 16TH BIRTHDAY; OR
- AFTER THE AGE OF 14 FOR A TOTAL OF 18 MONTHS; OR
- HAVE LIVED IN AN INDEPENDENT LIVING ARRANGEMENT, OR TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM FOR 3 MONTHS OR MORE;

YOUTH WHO WERE ADOPTED FROM THE DYFS SYSTEM:

- AFTER THE AGE OF 16; OR
- AFTER THE AGE OF 12 IF THE YOUTH IS STILL RECEIVING ADOPTION SUBSIDIES AT THE TIME OF APPLICATION

YOUTH WHO WERE PLACED IN KINSHIP LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP(KLG) FROM THE DYFS SYSTEM:


- AFTER THEIR 16TH BIRTHDAY
- LIVED IN A DYFS PLACEMENT FOR 18 MONTHS AFTER THE AGE OF 14 BEFORE BEING PLACED IN KLG

YOU MUST ALSO:


- BE BETWEEN 16 AND 22 YEARS OLD WHEN YOU FIRST APPLY;
- HAVE A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR GED;
- BE ACCEPTED AT A SCHOOL THAT ACCEPTS FEDERAL FUNDING; AND
- FILL OUT A FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID, OR FAFSA;
- HAVE A VALID E-MAIL ADDRESS;
- APPLY FOR EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY EDUCATION FUND(EOF) IF GOING TO A NJ SCHOOL THAT HAS THE EOF PROGRAM

YOU CAN DOWNLOAD THE FAFSA APPLICATION AT www.fafsa.ed.gov, OR YOU CAN CALL 1-800-4-FED-AID.







I AM THINKING OF GOING TO A VOCATIONAL SCHOOL OR COMMUNITY COLLEGE. COULD I STILL GET THE GRANT?



YES. YOU CAN STILL GET THE GRANT FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE OR VOCATIONAL SCHOOL. DEPENDING UPON YOUR ELIGIBILITY, IF YOU GO TO PUBLIC NJ COLLEGE, OR UNIVERSITY FULL TIME, THE PROGRAM MAY PAY FOR ALL TUITION AND FEES. IF YOU GO TO A PRIVATE SCHOOL, AN OUT OF STATE SCHOOL, OR GO TO SCHOOL PART TIME, YOU MAY GET UP TO \$5000 PER YEAR. BUT YOU WOULD STILL GET FEDERAL AID AS WELL. THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO CALL FAFS AT 1-800-222-0047.



I'M GLAD I CAN GET HELP PAYING FOR SCHOOL. WHEN I'M DONE, ARE THERE PLACES THAT CAN HELP ME FIND A JOB?



SCHOOLS USUALLY HAVE A CAREER SERVICES DEPARTMENT THAT HELPS STUDENTS FIND JOBS, AND EVERY COUNTY IN NEW JERSEY HAS AT LEAST ONE "ONE STOP CAREER CENTER". THEY ARE CENTERS THAT HELP PEOPLE FIND JOBS. MANY OF THEM ALSO HAVE COUNSELORS AND JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH.

NOTE ON JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS:

IMPORTANT

EVERY COUNTY IN NJ HAS JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH IN DYFS CARE. SOMETIMES THE COUNTIES PAY A LOCAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE OR OTHER AGENCY TO RUN THE PROGRAM. ASK ABOUT THESE JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS AT YOUR LOCAL ONE STOP CAREER CENTER.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS, GO TO

http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/wnjpin/wnjpin_index.html

and follow these steps:

- Click on "**Career Development**"
- Click on "**Education and Training**"
- Under the Find the Right School section, click "**more**"
- Under the Vocational/Technical Education section, click "**more**"
- Click "**Get Started and Search for Training**"
- Then you can search by the type of **job training** you want or
- Click on the tab that says "**Search by Map or Zip**" to search for all training programs close to where you live.

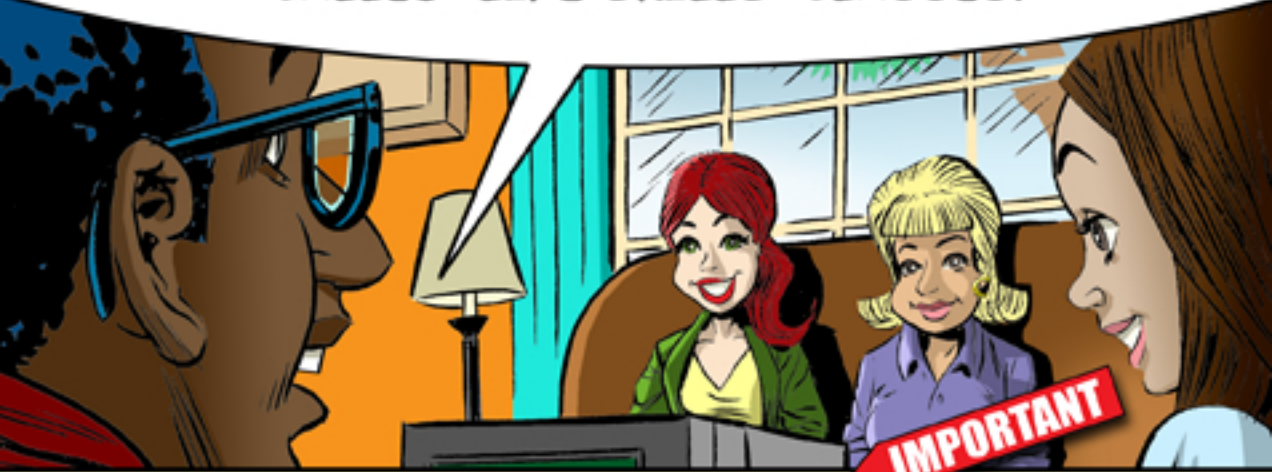
FOR THE ONE STOP CAREER CENTER NEAREST YOU CHECK **<http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/wnjpin/findjob/onestop/services.html>**

ANOTHER HELPFUL WEBSITE FOR CAREER INFORMATION IS **www.njnextstop.org**

I HAVE A LOT OF QUESTIONS ABOUT SOMEDAY LIVING ON MY OWN. I'VE NEVER HAD TO DO THINGS LIKE GO GROCERY SHOPPING OR COOK FOR MYSELF. I DON'T EVEN HAVE MY OWN BANK ACCOUNT.



DON'T WORRY. THERE ARE PROGRAMS THAT TEACH YOU THINGS LIKE BALANCING A BUDGET, OPENING A CHECKING ACCOUNT, FINDING A PLACE TO LIVE, COOKING, AND SHOPPING. I'LL MAKE SURE YOU ARE SIGNED UP FOR ONE OF THESE PROGRAMS. THE PROGRAMS ARE USUALLY CALLED "LIFE SKILLS" CLASSES.



ANYONE WHO IS 14 OR OLDER AND LIVING IN A DYFS PLACEMENT, OR WHO IS 16 OR OLDER AND HAS BEEN IN A DYFS PLACEMENT FOR AT LEAST 6 MONTHS, CAN TAKE **LIFE SKILLS CLASSES**. YOU MAY NEED TO REMIND YOUR CASE MANAGER TO MAKE A REFERRAL FOR THESE CLASSES.

BUT WHAT IF I DON'T FEEL READY TO LIVE ON MY OWN YET?



THERE ARE PLACES WHERE YOU COULD LIVE WITH OTHER FOSTER YOUTH CALLED TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAMS.



IMPORTANT

THERE IS MONEY TO HELP YOU IF:

- YOU ARE 16 OR OLDER AND ARE WORKING WITH AN INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS OR TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM; OR
 - YOU ARE 18 OR OLDER AND ARE WORKING WITH AN AFTERCARE AGENCY; OR
- YOU ARE UNDER 21 YEARS OLD AND WERE IN A DYFS PLACEMENT ON YOUR 18TH BIRTHDAY, LEFT, AND THEN RE-APPLIED FOR SERVICES.

THE MONEY CAN BE USED TO PAY FOR:

- SCHOOL APPLICATION FEES;
 - JOB PLACEMENT FEES;
- SECURITY DEPOSITS, RENT, AND FURNITURE;
 - DRIVING LESSONS;
 - MENTORING SERVICES;
 - TUTORING.

NOTE: TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAMS, LIFE SKILLS CLASSES, AND SOME MONEY ALSO ARE AVAILABLE FOR YOUTH, AGE 16 TO 21, WHO ARE HOMELESS, BUT WHO HAVE NOT BEEN INVOLVED WITH DYFS.

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUTH WHO CLOSE THEIR CASES WHEN THEY ARE 18?

DYFS REFERS THEIR CASES TO AN "AFTERCARE PROGRAM". IT HELPS YOUTH APPLY TO COLLEGE OR VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS, APPLY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS, FIND HOUSING, AND LOOK FOR A JOB. THESE PROGRAMS ALSO CAN GIVE YOUTH MONEY TO PAY FOR APARTMENT SECURITY DEPOSITS, A COUPLE OF MONTHS RENT, FURNITURE, DRIVING LESSONS, AND OTHER THINGS.

WHAT HAPPENS TO MY HEALTH INSURANCE? WILL I HAVE TO START PAYING FOR DOCTOR'S VISITS AND PRESCRIPTIONS AFTER I TURN 18?



NO. YOU WILL GET HEALTH INSURANCE THROUGH THE STATE UNTIL YOU TURN 21. IT IS CALLED THE MEDICAID EXTENSION FOR YOUNG ADULTS (MEYA).

HERE IS THE DEAL ON HEALTH INSURANCE:

THE MEDICAID EXTENSION FOR YOUNG ADULTS (MEYA) PROVIDES HEALTH INSURANCE TO YOUTH WHO ARE IN A DYFS PLACEMENT WHEN THEY TURN 18. IT LASTS FROM AGE 18 - THROUGH THE MONTH OF YOUR 21ST BIRTHDAY.

TO APPLY, CALL 1-888-235-4766.

CALL 1-888-235-4766 IF:

- YOU DON'T GET YOUR MEDICAID CARD;
- YOU LOSE YOUR CARD; OR
- YOU MOVE TO A NEW ADDRESS.

YOU WILL LOSE COVERAGE IF:

- YOU BECOME ELIGIBLE FOR TANF OR SSI, OR
 - YOU ARE PUT IN JAIL, OR
- YOU MOVE OUT OF STATE. IF YOU RETURN TO NJ BEFORE YOU TURN 21, YOU CAN RESTART COVERAGE.

NICOLE, I HAVE FILLED OUT A FORM THAT EXPLAINS YOUR PLAN. I AM GOING TO GIVE YOU, ANN, AND BETTY A COPY. I WILL BE TALKING WITH YOU EVERY MONTH TO SEE HOW YOU ARE DOING, AND REMEMBER THAT ANN, BETTY, AND I ARE HERE TO HELP YOU. SO ANYTIME YOU HAVE A QUESTION OR A PROBLEM, JUST LET ONE OF US KNOW.



NOTE: YOU DO NOT NEED A "TRANSITIONAL PLAN FOR ADOLESCENTS" TO BE IN PROGRAMS LIKE LIFE SKILLS CLASSES, TRANSITIONAL LIVING, AFTERCARE, THE NJ FOSTER CARE SCHOLARS PROGRAM, SCHOLARSHIPS/GRANTS, AND MEDICAID COVERAGE. THESE PROGRAMS ARE AVAILABLE TO ALL YOUTH IN DYFS CUSTODY.

HEY NATHAN,
HOW HAVE THINGS
BEEN GOING?

ALL RIGHT. I
STARTED A LIFE
SKILLS CLASS. I
THINK I AM GOING
TO LEARN A LOT
OF USEFUL STUFF
FROM IT.

HEY,
DID YOU HAVE
YOUR PLANNING
MEETING?

YEAH. IT WAS
PRETTY GOOD. I FEEL SO
MUCH BETTER ABOUT THE
FUTURE NOW.

I FEEL LIKE
I HAVE A PLAN
THAT WILL REALLY
HELP ME!

The End?

Child Placement Advisory Council: www.njcpac.org

College Financial Aid Form: www.fafsa.ed.gov; 1-800-4-FED-AID

**College Grants and Scholarships: www.fafsonline.org;
1-800-222-0047**

**Job Training Programs:
http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/wnpjpin/wnpjpin_index.html**

Medicaid: 1-888-235-4766

**Office of the Child Advocate: www.childadvocate.nj.gov
1-877-543-7864**

**One Stop Career Centers:
<http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/wnpjpin/findjob/onestop/services.html>**

New Jersey Next Stop: www.njnextstop.org

Rutgers Child Advocacy Center: 973-353-3196



**NJ
Child
Placement
Advisory Council**

P.O. Box 983
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609-633-2581
www.njcpac.org



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