

I have a disability, what college resources are available to me?

If you had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) in school, your coordinator should be able to help you plan for college.

Colleges and universities can help students with additional needs find resources and support to get through college. You may also want to check out:

- Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities
www.finaid.org/otheraid/disabled.phtml
- Resource Guide for Persons with Disabilities
www.dcu.org/streetwise/ability/ed-financial.html
- College Funding Strategies for Students with Disabilities
www.washington.edu/doit/Brochures/Academics
select *Postsecondary for Students*

What will it be like to go to college?

Everyone's college experience is different. It's often a good idea to visit the schools you're interested in to see how it feels. You may decide you want to live on campus, get your own apartment or live at home. Connecting with other youth who have been in foster care or a mentor can help make your transition to college easier. Colleges do offer tours if you want to check it out.

Your social worker should be able to help you connect with youth or a mentor, or call the Children's Administration Foster Care to College Program Manager at 360-902-8474. Also check out Foster Club at www.fosterclub.com or Foster Care Alumni of America at www.fostercarealumni.org.

My friend told me that if you have a criminal record or a drug conviction, you can't get financial aid. Is that true?

No, that may not be true. If a student has a criminal record, he or she would probably be able to get financial aid. In some instances, drug-related convictions matter for financial aid if someone was convicted as an adult. Any convictions before the age of 18 do not affect a student's financial aid eligibility. Check with the Financial Aid Office at the college if you have any concerns.

Information and Financial Support for College

Gear Up

www.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html

TRIO

www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/index.html

Casey Family Programs

www.Casey.org
www.Caseylifeskills.org

College Success Foundation

www.collegesuccessfoundation.org

Higher Education Coordinating Board

www.hecb.wa.gov

Orphan Foundation of America

www.orphan.org

Washington Financial Aid Association

www.wfaa.org

Support for Current and Former Foster Youth

Foster Care Alumni of America

www.fostercarealumni.org

Foster Club

www.fosterclub.com

Foster Care to College Partner Agencies

DSHS Children's Administration

1115 Washington Street, SE, Box 45710
Olympia, WA 98504
360-902-7916

College Success Foundation

1605 NW Sammamish Road, Suite 100
Issaquah, WA 98207
425-416-2022

Higher Education Coordinating Board

Box 43430
Olympia, WA 98504
360-753-7800

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504
360-725-6049

Casey Family Programs

1300 Dexter Avenue, North, Suite 300
Seattle, WA 98109
206-282-7300

Treehouse

2100 24th Avenue S. #200
Seattle, WA 98144
206-767-7000

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Bill & Melinda
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Casey Family
Programs

DSHS Children's
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Lumina Foundation
for Education

The Norcliffe Foundation
Northwest Children's Fund

The Stuart Foundation

**For information about programs
in your local area, contact:**

You Can Go To College!



Information and resources for youth who currently are or have been in foster care in Washington State



Why do I even need to go to college?

Each year of college you complete increases your potential to make more money and will give you more job choices. Graduates with a two- or four-year degree earn much more than graduates with a High School Diploma or GED.

Annual Average Earnings Based on Education

Didn't finish high school	\$22,200
GED or High School Diploma	\$30,084
Some college no degree	\$35,160
Associate's Degree	\$37,482
Bachelor's Degree	\$53,356
Master's Degree	\$62,820
Doctoral Degree	\$88,589
Professional Degree	\$115,649

Source: US Census Bureau Current Population Survey, June 2004

I'm tired of school and need time off. I can always go to college later.

Taking a break might seem like a good idea now, but some students who take time off between high school and college never go back. Many of the scholarships and grants for foster youth stop at age 21. You may lose out if you wait. College and career training programs will be available to you throughout your life and many people do return to school as adults.

I don't think my grades are good enough to go to college.

- Grades and test scores matter, but colleges look at other things too, like activities, family situation and potential. Community colleges accept students no matter what your grades are.
- Talk to your school guidance counselor to find out what you can do to improve your grades and how the school can help you.

- Education advocates are available in each region to help you up to the 10th grade, and sometimes later. They can help you stay in your same school, work out any issues at school, and help you get support for your education. Your social worker should be able to help you get connected with an education advocate or call the Children's Administration Education Program Manager at 360-902-7563.

- You may also qualify for a Foster Care to College mentor who can help you learn about college programs, put together your application, and even find your way around campus. Check with your social worker to see if there is a mentoring program in your area, or call the Children's Administration Foster Care to College Program Manager at 360-902-8474.
- If you need to stay in high school past age 18, you can stay in foster care until you turn 21 as long as you are working on your high school diploma or GED.
- You can also apply to stay in foster care until age 21 if you are working on a college degree or certificate.

I'm working on my GED. Can I still go to college?

Yes! Many high schools and colleges have programs to help you complete your GED and get into two- and four-year colleges once you're done.

Even if you aren't enrolled in high school but are working on your GED, you should be able to get help from the guidance counselor at your local high school.

I don't know where to start to get into college.

If you want to learn more about how to choose a program, fill out an application or pay for college, you can attend a four-day summer program called Make it Happen! To learn more call 1-877-655-4097 or go to www.collegesuccessfoundation.org.

The Foster Care to College mentor program can also help you learn about college programs, put together your application, and even find your way around campus. Check with your social worker to see if there is a mentoring program in your area, or call the Children's Administration Foster Care to College Program Manager at 360-902-8474.

I've got a lot going on. How can I make time to go to college right now?

There are flexible programs at most two- and four-year colleges and many vocational and technical schools. You don't have to start out full-time. You might want to enroll in an evening and weekend program, or consider an online program.

The first step is to visit the colleges or universities you're interested in attending and request a catalog, or visit the school's website to get more information about classes and schedules. Your high school guidance counselors or local college career and education counselors can help you explore these options.

How can I pay for college?

There are many financial resources available to help you pay for college. Below is a list of some of the programs that provide money to help with tuition, books, housing, food and other living expenses. Make sure you also check with the Financial Aid Office of the college or program you're considering.

- Federal and state financial aid, go to www.fafsa.org
- The Governors Scholarship for Foster Youth, go to www.collegesuccessfoundation.org to apply for up to \$5,000 per year
- Casey Family Scholars, go to www.orphanfoundation.org to apply for up to \$10,000 per year
- Educational and Training Voucher (ETV) Program, call 1-877-433-8388 or email ETVWASH@dshs.wa.gov to apply for up to \$5,000 per year

You may also be eligible for Independent Living Services (IL) and Transitional Living (TL) Services which can help you with many of your day-to-day living needs. If you plan to go to college right away, you may be able to stay in foster care until your 21st birthday. For information about IL or TL, e-mail ILSKIDS@dshs.wa.gov.

Your IL provider, Foster Care to College mentor or the Financial Aid Office at the colleges you are considering can help you apply for these programs, and can explain possibilities for money available to youth who have been in foster care.

If I am a parent or about to become a parent, how can I go to college?

Some high schools have programs for pregnant and parenting teens. Many colleges have programs as well, including on-site childcare. Check with your local school or college district for resources available to you.

If you are working, you may also be eligible for childcare assistance from the Working Connections Child Care Program. To find out more information call 1-800-446-1114 or go to www.childcarenet.org.

