

2017-2022 Foster Youth Strategy

Our vision is for all transition age foster youth in Los Angeles County and New York City to become self-sufficient and thriving adults.

WHAT: OUR FOCUS

HOW: OUR APPROACH

WHY: OUR INTENT

**STRENGTHEN
SYSTEMS
AND POLICY**



Driving systems
REFORM

- Align service delivery and funding
- Leverage public and private funding
- Increase advocacy capacity

To enable
**COORDINATION,
SCALE-UP** and
SUSTAINABILITY

**EXPAND
AND SHARE
KNOWLEDGE**



Establishing a pipeline of
RESEARCH

- Expand data collection
- Facilitate comprehensive administrative data-sharing and analytics
- Broadly disseminate new information

To guide strong
POLICY and
PRACTICE

**ADVANCE
PROGRAMS**



Supporting new and existing
RESOURCES

- Improve education and career resources
- Enhance prevention-focused interventions for crossover, pregnant and parenting youth
- Build capacity of caregivers

To improve
EDUCATION
and **CAREER
OUTCOMES**

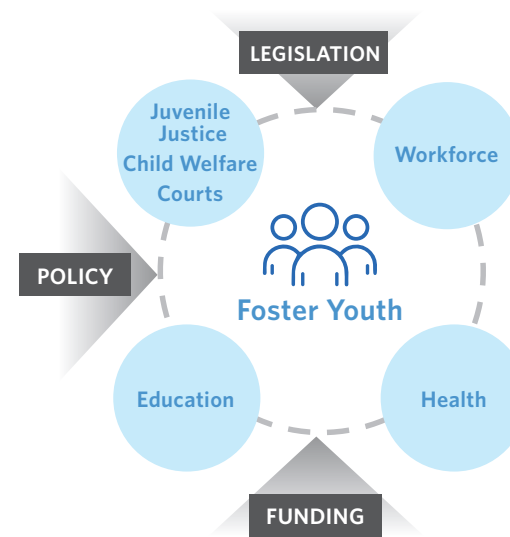
**YOUTH LEAD
HEALTHY AND
PRODUCTIVE
LIVES**

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Older youth in foster care—ages 16–24, referred to as “transition age youth” (TAY)—are often an overlooked population with greatly underutilized potential. Without a strong foundation, these youth can face multiple obstacles and poor outcomes when they “age out” of the foster care and child welfare system, including lower educational outcomes, limited employment opportunities and higher risk of criminal involvement. With attention on Los Angeles County and New York City as the two metropolitan areas with the nation’s largest population of foster TAY, Phase I (2012–2016) investments of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation’s Foster Youth initiative focused on ensuring that these youth are on the path to success, are able to live self-sufficiently and have the interpersonal connections they need to thrive.

In Phase II (2017–2022), the Foundation is building on this momentum to expand opportunities, leverage strong relationships and create new pathways for foster youth. We collaborate with grantees, community partners and other funders to move public child welfare systems and policies away from a one-size-fits-all approach narrowly concentrated on safety and basic needs. The approach recognizes and reflects the unique potential of older youth to succeed in education, career and life. To this end, Phase II also involves three targeted enhancements to increase our impact: a more intentional inclusion of young fathers in foster care, using technology to connect foster TAY to key services and people as well as for systems use, and increasing advocacy capacity for effective systems and policy reform.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SYSTEMS REFORM?



Foster TAY interact with and are affected by a wide range of service systems. There is potential for significantly greater outcomes when there are coordinated systems that are aligned and guided by strong youth-focused laws, policies and robust funding.

The Foundation makes investments in three inter-related focus areas:



1. Strengthen systems and policy for Foster TAY.

The Foundation will continue to partner with grantees and public systems to enable coordination, scale-up and sustainability to address foster TAY needs. This includes strategies to drive additional systems reform, effectively implement current policies and ensure service delivery and funding alignment. Strategies also include improving collaboration across the many systems serving foster TAY, growing existing stakeholder networks and increasing advocacy capacity.



2. Expand and share knowledge with the field.

Building on Phase I efforts, Foundation investments will help advance data-linking and analytics across sectors to provide a more complete picture of foster TAY demographics. We will also develop and share new knowledge and research to help inform effective policy and practice changes, evaluate and replicate new program interventions for special populations and strengthen the field’s evidence base.



3. Advance innovative foster youth programs.

Educational and career resources are a fundamental gateway to self-sufficiency for foster TAY. The Foundation will continue its momentum built in Phase I to support programs that improve foster TAY education and career outcomes; prevention-focused interventions for crossover, pregnant and parenting youth; and programs that build the capacity of caregivers.