

Module 3: Life Skill Development

1. Intro

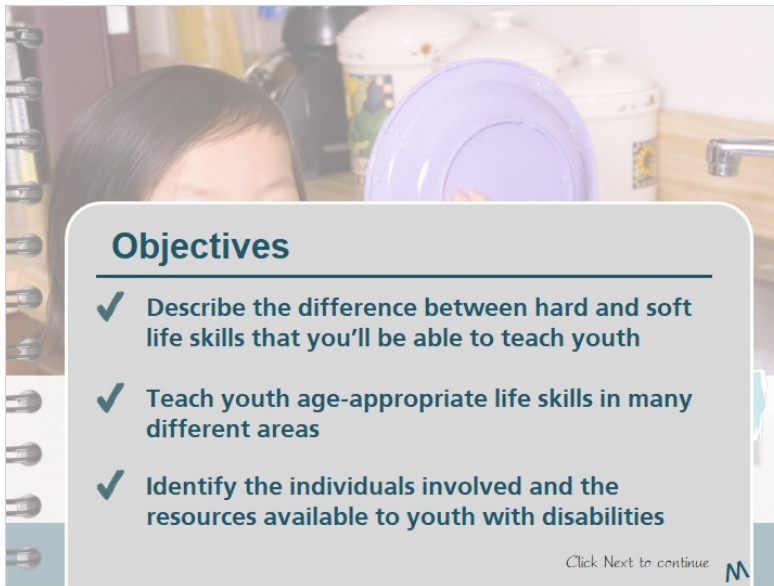
1.1 Introduction



Notes:

This module will review the expectations of foster parents and caseworkers in helping youth transition from out-of-home care and gain skills necessary for independent living. You will learn about the importance of significant adults in a youth's life, the expectations and responsibility of foster parents in teaching and providing life skills, the role of the youth's caseworker, and specific examples that can be used to teach life skills. You will also be introduced to special considerations for specific populations, such as youth with IEPs and youth with disabilities.

1.2 Objectives



Objectives

- ✓ Describe the difference between hard and soft life skills that you'll be able to teach youth
- ✓ Teach youth age-appropriate life skills in many different areas
- ✓ Identify the individuals involved and the resources available to youth with disabilities

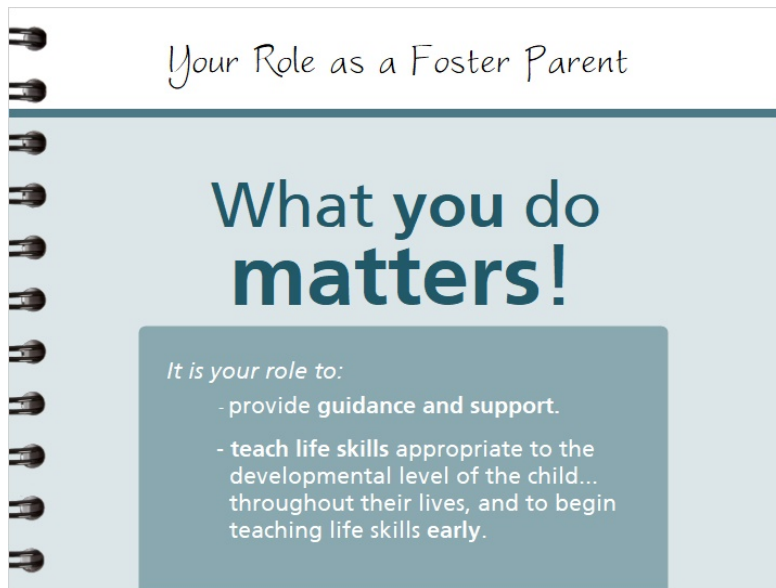
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Notes:

Upon completion of this module, you should have the knowledge and skills to:

- Describe the difference between hard and soft life skills that you'll be able to teach youth
- Teach youth age-appropriate life skills in many different areas, and
- Identify the individuals involved and the resources available to youth with disabilities

1.3 Your Role as a Foster Parent



Notes:

As a foster parent, you are a vital part of a youth's successful transition into adulthood. With constant guidance and support, children are better prepared to live independently when they move out on their own. You can teach and provide many life skills to the youth living in your home. It is part of your role to teach life skills appropriate to the developmental level of children throughout their lives and to begin teaching life skills early on in order to give youth increased independence and responsibility as they get older.

1.4 Hard vs. Soft Skills



Hard Skills		Soft Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• cooking• shopping• doing laundry• cleaning• hygiene• being on time• searching for employment• managing money	<div>Managing Money (hard skill)</div> <div>Setting Goals (soft skill)</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• exploring one's values• making good decisions• problem solving• setting goals• communicating with others• managing time• dealing with anger• managing relationships• sexual development

They "just know" how to do it...

This may not be true.

You'll need to work with the children in your home to determine areas of need.

Notes:

There are many life skills you can teach to youth in your home. These life skills can be divided into “hard skills” and “soft skills.” Some examples of soft skills are: personal skills, such as exploring one’s values, making good decisions, problem solving, setting goals, communicating, managing time, anger management, managing relationships and sexual development. Some examples of hard skills include: cooking, shopping, doing laundry, cleaning, hygiene, being on time, searching for employment, and managing money. Behind every hard skill there is a soft skill that aids in its development. You will learn specific ways you can help youth gain these skills later in this module.

Many daily tasks that you or your children seem to “just know” may be tasks or skills that a child in foster care needs to learn. You’ll need to work with the children in your home to help figure out what skills they already know and what skills you can work on together. We will discuss some specific examples of how you can work with the youth in your home to build these skills later during this module.

1.5 Importance of Significant Adults

in a Young Adult's Life

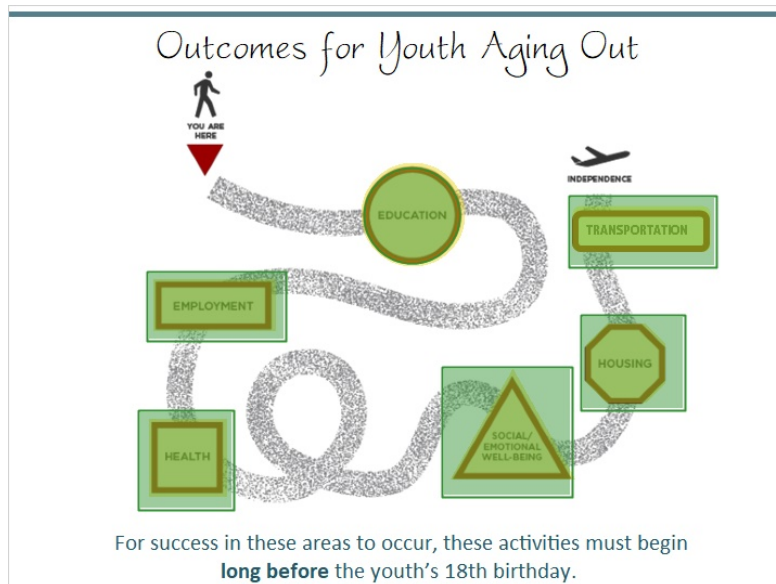


Notes:

Think back to when you were 18. How much did you rely on your family? What type of assistance did your parents provide you to help you get ready to live independently?

After thinking about this question, you probably came up with a few different ways that your parents have helped you, such as giving you a place to do your laundry, giving you a warm meal, giving you advice, lending an ear when you needed someone to listen, helping you problem solve, sending you care packages while you were away at school, helping you get a job, giving you somewhere to store your things, loaning you money or emergency cash, and co-signing for an apartment lease or loan. Independent living preparation does not begin or end at a specific age. It is a process that begins when children are very young and advances over time. When children are not taught the skills they need for a successful transition to adulthood, they are more likely to experience unemployment, homelessness, imprisonment, and victimization. Some children in foster care may need extra help to learn what it means to be independent and what skills they need to be successful on their own.

1.6 Outcomes for Youth Aging Out

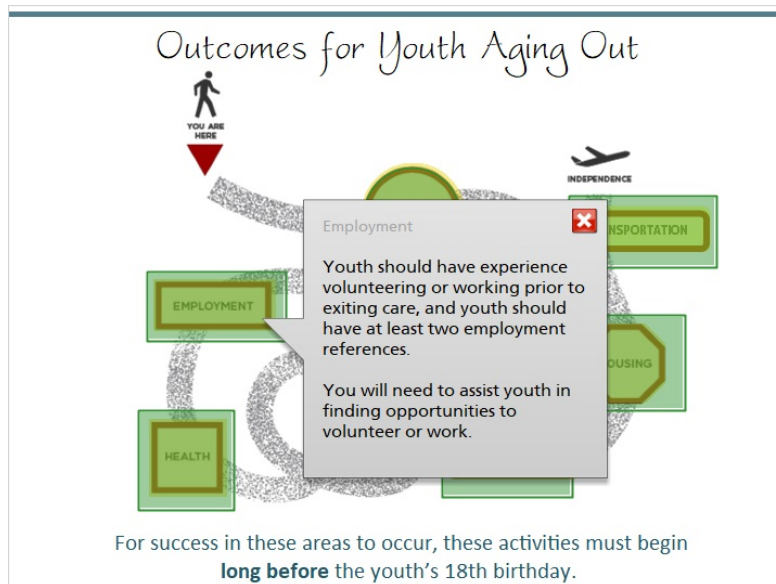


Notes:

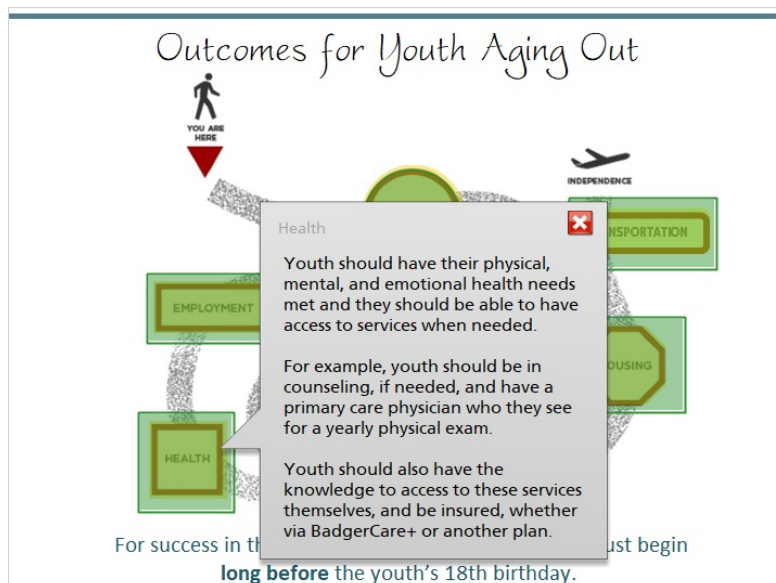
In Wisconsin, we have divided outcomes for youth aging out of foster care into six areas: education, employment and income, health, social-emotional well-being, housing and transportation. Each of the areas has a set of goals important for a youth to achieve before they move out on their own, with the help of their foster parent(s), caseworker, and other team members.

For success in these areas to occur, these activities must begin long before the youth's 18th birthday. Click on each success area shown on the path to independence to learn about them.

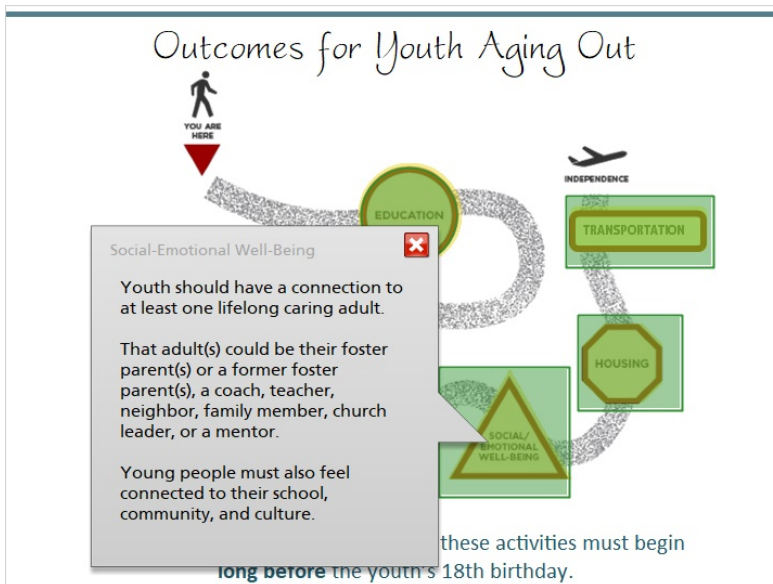
Employment details (Slide Layer)



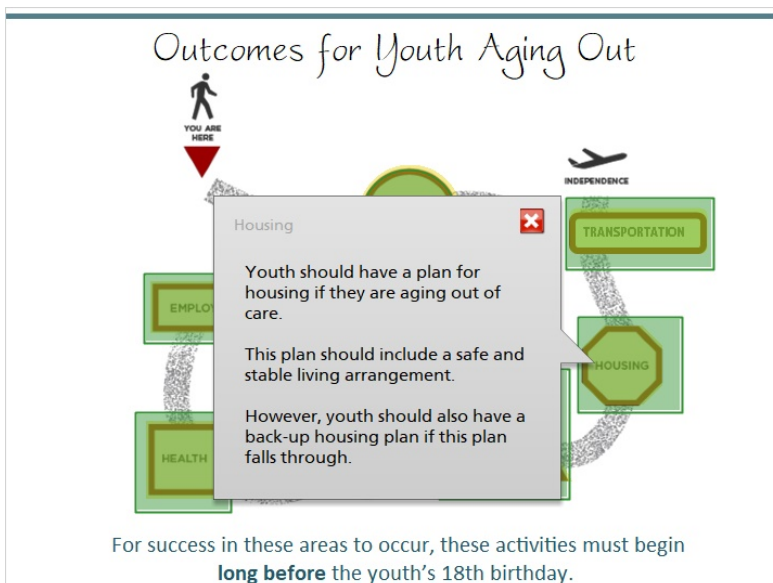
Health details (Slide Layer)



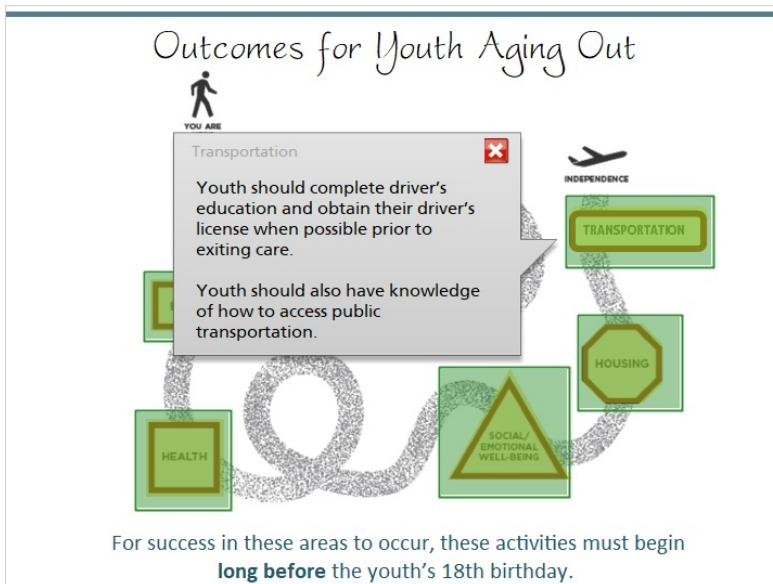
Social-Emotional details (Slide Layer)



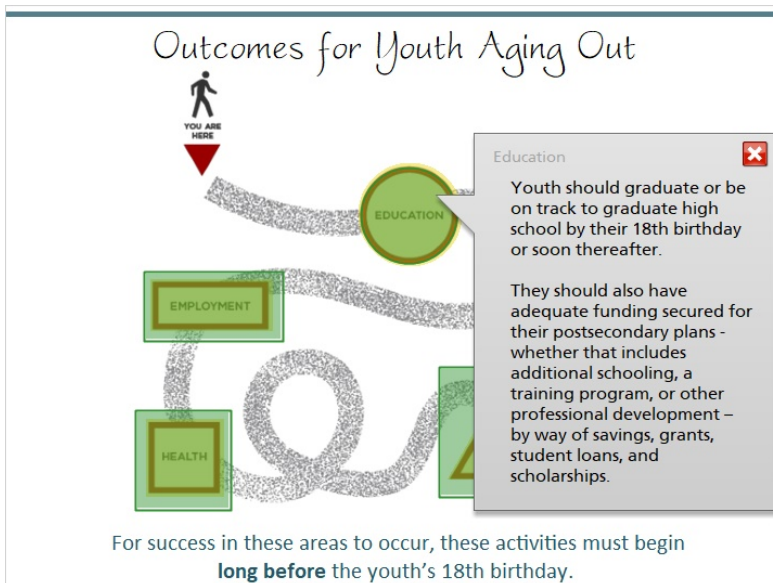
Housing details (Slide Layer)



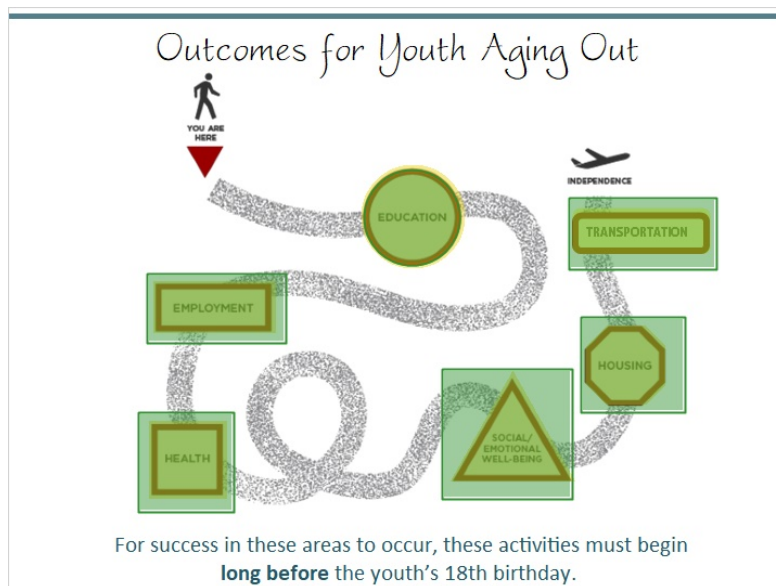
Transportation details (Slide Layer)



Education2 (Slide Layer)



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1.7 Life Skill-Building in Children and Youth

Life Skill-Building in Children and Youth

Soft Skills Hard Skills

Hard Skills

Daily Living Skills

Click the age range you wish to learn about:

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

Age 15-18:

- Show youth how to use tools and have older youth help you with home repairs.
- Teach youth how to hang a picture, replace a light bulb, and complete basic home maintenance.
- Teach youth how to read the bus schedule, how to purchase bus tickets, and where to board a bus. In addition, talk with youth about other forms of public

Download Ideas for Teaching Life Skills handout

Notes:

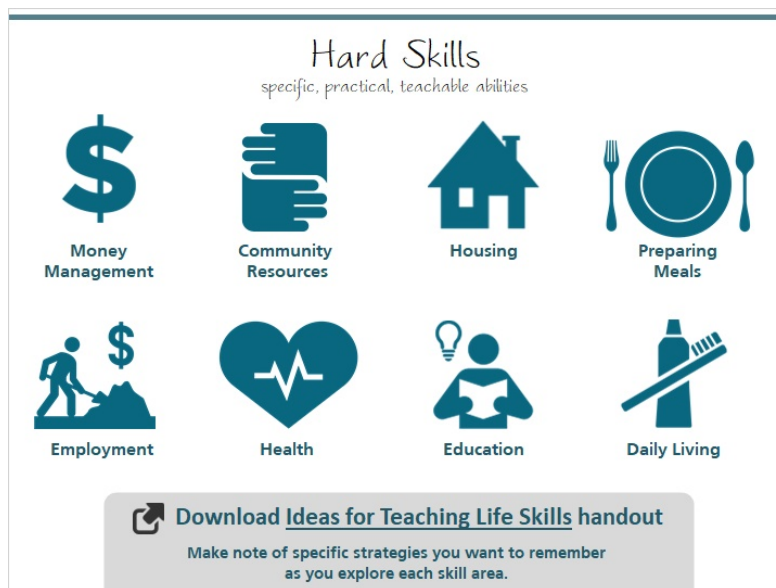
As a foster parent, you have the crucial role of identifying and providing activities that will help teens meet their goals and gain life skills. Because foster parents are a consistent presence in a youth's life, you are available

daily to model behavior, coaching, and feedback for youth as they become more independent.

There are a variety of life skills you can teach to the youth in your home. In the following slides we have divided these skills into hard and soft skills and grouped them by category. We've also given you resources for each set of hard skills to help you teach those skills to the children and youth in your home. This list is just a starting place - feel free to find other ideas to use in your home!

For the hard skills, which you'll see on the next slide, we have broken up each category into four age groups to give you some ideas of activities to do with youth to help them build their skills in each area. In addition to what is on these slides, we have a resource for you, called "Ideas for Teaching Life Skills," which you can download and print. Feel free to download it now and take notes on it as you go through the next few slides.

1.8 Hard Skills



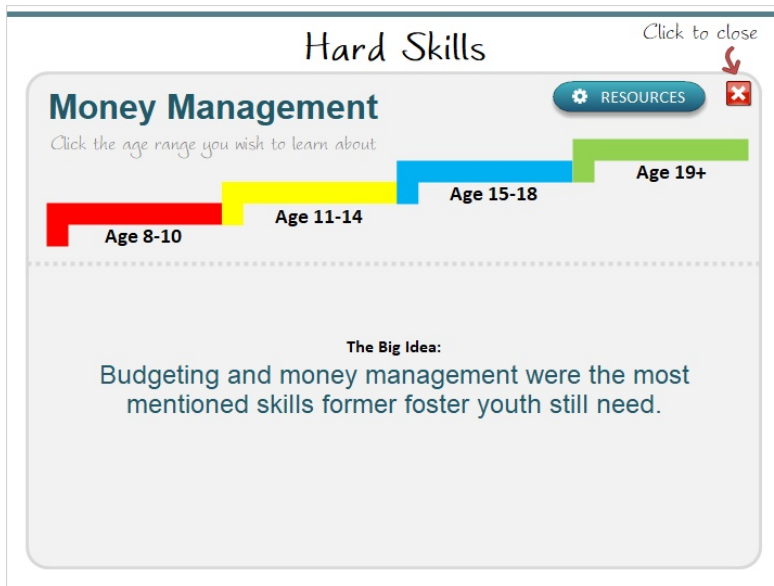
Notes:

Click on each of the hard skill areas shown and make note of specific ideas

you want to try.

2. Hard Skills

2.1 Money Management



The screenshot shows a web interface titled "Hard Skills" with a "Click to close" link and a red arrow. Below the title is a "Money Management" section with a "Click the age range you wish to learn about" instruction. There are four colored bars representing age ranges: "Age 8-10" (red), "Age 11-14" (yellow), "Age 15-18" (blue), and "Age 19+" (green). A "RESOURCES" button with a gear icon is visible. Below the age range bars, a text box titled "The Big Idea:" contains the text: "Budgeting and money management were the most mentioned skills former foster youth still need."

Notes:

Money Management:

When we asked former foster youth about life skills they wish they had been taught while in care and about skills they still need, the most popular answer by far was budgeting and money management.

Youth told us:

"I do not feel prepared - I'm scared to be on my own due to financial issues. I know I'll never be able to make it on my own as of right now and if I were to try to leave, I know I'd set myself up for failure because I'm not good at budgeting."

What could foster parents do?

"I came up with a master plan that I thought would be a master plan, and I

didn't include certain things that I didn't even think about including...helping them come up with a plan and how much money you can expect that you have to have every month for rent, car insurance, a car payment, rental insurance..."

"It's extremely important for youth to physically have money in their hands to learn how to budget it. And I feel that if there was money in a bank account and youth have those accounts opened, they understand the importance of money, first of all, and learn to budget. Giving them an allowance or a stipend and they have to go out and buy a meal for the family so that they learn what it actually costs to buy a meal."

Youth need to understand the importance of money and the ways in which to manage their money in order to feel secure and be successful on their own. Click through each of the age ranges above to learn more about ways in which to help youth feel prepared to manage their money.

•

8-10 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Money Management

Click the age range you wish to learn about

RESOURCES

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

Age 8-10

- Start a piggy bank, and then open a savings account once the piggy bank is full. Look over the account statements together so that they can see the interest they are earning on their money.
- When you buy something, have youth look at the receipt to see how much was added to the cost due to sales tax. When youth want to buy something, have them calculate the sales tax.
- Talk with youth about your views on money and about their views on money, understanding that culture plays a role in these perspectives.
- Start a family savings jar to save up for special events, treats, or to give to charity. Plan together what the goal will be and discuss what each member can contribute.
- Teach youth that doing it yourself saves money - if you make your lunch at home instead of buying it at school, you "earn" the money that you would've spent on lunch at school!

11-14 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Money Management

Click the age range you wish to learn about

RESOURCES

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

Age 11-14:

- Work with youth to plan a sample budget. Youth should be given opportunities to budget for their "wants" in addition to their needs.
- Ask youth to identify income sources and expenses that might be overlooked, such as taxes, car insurance, rent deposits, and car repairs. In addition, discuss potential financial problems they could face, such as unexpected car repairs or unemployment.
- Encourage youth to have a savings plan, and to split their money into short-term and long-term savings, pocket money, and charitable giving.
- Have youth keep receipts for a month and enter their purchases into a computer program to track their spending habits.

15-18 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Money Management

Click the age range you wish to learn about

RESOURCES

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

- If you've already opened a savings account, put some money into the account if possible, as well as teaching youth about the benefits and risks of credit cards. Talk with youth about how credit can be helpful - such as in emergency situations or for buying things online or reserving hotel rooms.
- Talk with youth about paying taxes and where that money goes. Have youth look at your tax forms as you fill them out to see what information they will need to fill out on the form themselves.
- When youth want to make a large purchase, help them create a savings plan to determine how much they'll need to save each week or month to get to their goal.
- When youth are working, have them look at their pay stub to see how much was taken out of their wages for payroll taxes. Describe gross and net wages, FICA, etc.

19+ (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Money Management

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

Age 19 and older:

- Try using the envelope system to learn budgeting: give the youth envelopes with cash for each category of spending and when the money is gone, it's gone. (More information about this in the Resources section).
- Have youth identify places that sell money orders, determine their fees, and choose the place they'll buy the money order from should they need one.
- Teach youth about credit by loaning them money to buy a larger item. Set an interest rate, a payment plan and consequences for late payments. At the end, show them the original cost and the total cost due to the interest.
- Ask youth to describe what seems important to different people based on how they spend their money, and then ask what their priorities are for their own money.

Resources (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Money Management

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

Resources

Quick-Start Budget Template This provides a template for creating "your first budget" and helps youth start to build their financial skills:	Monthly Cash Flow Plan Template This provides a template for figuring out where your money goes every month
Dave Ramsey Envelope System This page explains the "envelope system," one simple way to manage your money	Mint.com This site is a budgeting resource that allows youth to categorize expenses and notifies youth when they are over-budget.

2.2 Community Resources



Notes:

Community Resources:

Youth need to feel connected to their communities and understand how to navigate the areas in which they live. They need to know who they can reach out to for assistance and how to get what they need, including different resources available to them in their community. This includes things that we might take for granted, including knowing how to get around. One former foster youth told us that it would have been important for his foster parents to teach him how to get where he needed to go:

"I wish I knew more about the bus line to get around Milwaukee, 'cause I didn't know how to get around Milwaukee."

Click through each of the age ranges above to learn more about ways in which to help youth understand what is available to them in their home communities.

8-10 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Community Resources

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Age 8-10

Age 11-14

Age 15-18

Age 19+

- Encourage youth to volunteer, and take them along when you volunteer. Have them identify activities that they would like to volunteer in.
- When you are traveling with youth, help them to learn to notice landmarks and street signs.
- Take a family field trip using public transportation to help youth become comfortable with it. Have youth choose the destination, and help them map the route and determine the fare.

11-14 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Community Resources

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Age 8-10

Age 11-14

Age 15-18

Age 19+

Age 11-14:

- Help older youth to read maps and to estimate travel times between destinations.
- Encourage youth to research information that they need and use often, such as movie times or where to get their hair cut, and keep a list handy.
- Ask youth where they would call for help in different scenarios, such as when would they call 911 and how would they know who to call? Which neighbors could they turn to for help in an emergency or if they needed to borrow sugar?

15-18 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Community Resources

Click the age range you wish to learn about.

Age 8-10

Age 11-14

Age 15-18

Age 19+

RESOURCES

Age 15-18:

- Introduce youth to agencies that work with housing needs, such as tenant's rights' groups or loans for first time home buyers.
- Help youth register to vote and discuss candidates and how to learn more about the issues they stand for.
- Set aside a drawer or file for each youth for them to store important documents, such as their birth certificate and Social Security card.
- Have youth research what is involved in getting their driver's license, and make a list of the steps involved.
- Take youth to job training centers to fill out career assessments

19+ (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Community Resources

Click the age range you wish to learn about.

Age 8-10

Age 11-14

Age 15-18

Age 19+

RESOURCES

Age 19 and older:

- Take youth to health clinics and tenant resource centers to acquaint them with community resources.
- Help youth prepare to manage their file of important documents: start with the file you've created together and help them learn to manage it on their own.

Resources (Slide Layer)

The screenshot shows a slide layer titled "Hard Skills" with a "Click to close" link and a red arrow. Below the title is a "Community Resources" section with a "Click the age range you wish to learn about" instruction. There are four age range buttons: "Age 8-10" (red), "Age 11-14" (yellow), "Age 15-18" (blue), and "Age 19+" (green). The "Age 15-18" button is selected. Below the buttons is a "Resources" section with the text "The following links provides information to help teach youth about accessing community resources:" and a list of five links: "Volunteer opportunities for youth", "Habitat for Humanity youth opportunities", "Information about laws protecting tenants", "Information regarding Wisconsin voter registration", and "Information about how to obtain a drivers' license in Wisconsin".

Hard Skills

Click to close

Community Resources

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

Resources

The following links provides information to help teach youth about accessing community resources:

- [Volunteer opportunities for youth](#)
- [Habitat for Humanity youth opportunities](#)
- [Information about laws protecting tenants](#)
- [Information regarding Wisconsin voter registration](#)
- [Information about how to obtain a drivers' license in Wisconsin](#)

2.3 Housing

The screenshot shows a slide layer titled "Hard Skills" with a "Click to close" link and a red arrow. Below the title is a "Housing" section with a "Click the age range you wish to learn about" instruction. There are four age range buttons: "Age 8-10" (red), "Age 11-14" (yellow), "Age 15-18" (blue), and "Age 19+" (green). The "Age 15-18" button is selected. Below the buttons is a "The Big Idea:" section with the text "Housing is one of the biggest tasks that youth face as they leave foster care."

Hard Skills

Click to close

Housing

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

The Big Idea:

Housing is one of the biggest tasks that youth face as they leave foster care.

Notes:

Housing:

One of the biggest tasks that youth face as they leave foster care is finding

and maintaining stable housing. This, along with budgeting, is one of the most important areas in which we must prepare youth, from helping them to understand costs for housing to assisting them with filling out rental applications and identifying additional costs associated with housing.

Click through each of the age ranges above to learn more about ways in which to help youth prepare to find and maintain stable housing.

8-10 (Slide Layer)

The slide layer is titled "Hard Skills" and has a "Click to close" link with a red arrow icon in the top right corner. Below the title is a green bar labeled "Housing" with a "Click the age range you wish to learn about" instruction. To the right of the "Housing" bar is a "RESOURCES" button with a gear icon and a red "X" icon. Below these are four colored bars representing age ranges: "Age 8-10" (red), "Age 11-14" (yellow), "Age 15-18" (blue), and "Age 19+" (green). The "Age 8-10" bar is selected, and its content is displayed below a dashed line. The content for "Age 8-10:" includes a bullet point: "Talk with younger children as you pay housing bills, and have older youth create lists of housing expenses and what those might cost."

Hard Skills Click to close

Housing Click the age range you wish to learn about RESOURCES X

Age 8-10 **Age 11-14** **Age 15-18** **Age 19+**

Age 8-10:

- Talk with younger children as you pay housing bills, and have older youth create lists of housing expenses and what those might cost.

11-14 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Housing

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Age 8-10

Age 11-14

Age 15-18

Age 19+

RESOURCES

Age 11-14:

- Discuss with youth the process of finding housing. Talk with them about how you found your first apartment or home. Show them how to use the internet or other resources to find housing.
- Have youth practice completing a lease application to see what information they will need.

15-18 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Housing

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Age 8-10

Age 11-14

Age 15-18

Age 19+

RESOURCES

Age 15-18

- Help youth make appointments to view apartments, giving them guidance on what to say when calling to make the appointment.
- Take youth to look at an apartment or home for rent. Talk with them about apartment conditions, security, communicating with the landlord, reading a lease and completing a lease application.
- Look at rental ads with older youth and discuss the terms and costs in the ad (such as security deposit and utilities), as well as those not in the ad (such as application fee or pet deposit). Talk with youth about utilities, and show them how to set up utilities and pay utility bills.
- With your youth, practice how to interview with a landlord.
- Introduce youth to the local tenant resource center, so they understand their rights as a tenant.
- Talk with youth about cleaning and maintenance in their own home as it relates to safety and health, security deposits, etc.

19+ (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Housing

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 **Age 19+**

Age 19 and older:

- As youth prepare to move out, help them create a list of things they will need, as well as a budget that includes these items, including costs such as security deposits, utility hook-ups, and installation fees.
- Talk with youth about having a backup plan about paying for housing if they were laid off, fired, or quit their job. Discuss the importance of saving money for emergencies.
- Discuss the idea of having a roommate, and ask youth to list pros and cons. Help youth to make a list of questions to ask a potential roommate and safe ways by which to locate and meet potential roommates.

Resources (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Housing

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 **Age 19+**

Resources

The following links will give you information to help teach youth about accessing and maintaining their housing:

- [Leasing application](#) to help youth prepare for what information they will need when they apply for housing
- [The Apartment Application Process: What You Need to Know](#)
- [Child Welfare Information Gateway - Leaving Your Child Home Alone](#): a resource kit for you and the youth in your home to help you all feel more comfortable about youth being home alone

2.4 Employment

The screenshot shows a digital interface for a 'Hard Skills' module. At the top, the title 'Hard Skills' is displayed next to a 'Click to close' link and a red arrow icon. Below this, the module title 'Employment' is shown, followed by a 'Click the age range you wish to learn about' instruction. There are four colored bars representing age ranges: 'Age 8-10' (red), 'Age 11-14' (yellow), 'Age 15-18' (blue), and 'Age 19+' (green). A 'RESOURCES' button with a gear icon is located to the right of the age range bars. Below the age range bars, a dashed line separates the header from the main content area. The main content area features the text 'The Big Idea:' followed by the statement: 'One of the most powerful gifts we can give to youth in care is the ability to become and stay employed.'

Notes:

Employment:

One of the most important tasks for youth to learn as they become adults is how to find and keep a job, including why it is necessary for people to work. Remember what you learned in Module 1, that at age 21, 52% of former foster youth surveyed were unemployed (as compared to 24% of their same age peers), and that 29% of youth who were surveyed at 17 and then again at 19 had been homeless at some point during that period. One of the most powerful gifts we can give to youth in care is the ability to become and stay employed.

Click through each of the age ranges above to learn more about ways in which to help youth find and maintain employment.

8-10 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Employment

RESOURCES

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

Age 8-10:

- Ask youth to list reasons why people need and want to work. Add to their list your reasons for working.
- When youth need to make a decision, have them list pros and cons and discuss outcomes. Evaluate the decisions with them and ask about the choices that led to the decision.
- Talk to youth about possible jobs they may like doing. Ask them "what do you want to be when you grow up?"

11-14 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Employment

RESOURCES

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

Age 11-14:

- Take youth to work with you if possible so that they can see what is involved in your workday and that of your coworkers. Encourage them to talk with your coworkers to learn about aspects of their job as well as your own.
- Pick up job applications with youth and help them fill them out. Ask them what information they will need to fill out the application and review it once they are finished.
- Help youth create a resume and identify references for a job application.
- Ask youth to list different ways they could find out about job opportunities, such as the newspaper or online. Suggest asking friends with jobs about openings, or ask friends of yours if they might be hiring.

15-18 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Employment

Click the age range you wish to learn about

RESOURCES

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 **Age 15-18** Age 19+

Age 15-18:

- When youth look for jobs, suggest focusing on their interests - if they love pizza, they could work at a pizza place!
- Discuss career exploration with youth by asking them what their career goals and dreams are, and what steps they would have to take in order to reach their career goals. Share your own career dreams and goals.
- Attend a career fair with youth to help them learn about different jobs and careers. Have youth make a list of questions to ask employers while at the career fair.
- Have youth keep an employment file of jobs and volunteering positions they have had. Help them create a resume and include individuals who are willing to act as references, and any clubs they belong to or have in the past.

19+ (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Employment

Click the age range you wish to learn about

RESOURCES

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 **Age 19+**

Age 19 and older:

- Talk with youth about what it means to be a good employee. When it comes time for youth to leave their jobs, discuss what it means to give notice and why it is important to leave a job on good terms.

Resources (Slide Layer)

The screenshot shows a slide layer titled "Hard Skills" with a "Click to close" link and a red arrow. Below the title is a "RESOURCES" button with a gear icon and a red "X" icon. The main content area is titled "Employment" and includes a sub-header "Click the age range you wish to learn about." Below this is a horizontal bar with four colored segments: red for "Age 8-10", yellow for "Age 11-14", blue for "Age 15-18", and green for "Age 19+". The "Age 15-18" segment is currently selected. Below the bar, the text "Resources" is followed by a paragraph: "The following links will give you information to help teach youth about obtaining and maintaining employment:". Below this are two columns of links. The left column is titled "Sample Job Applications:" and includes links to "Wal-Mart | Pizza Hut" and "Most Requested". The right column is titled "Resumes and Interviews:" and includes links to "How to Answer the 31 Most Common Interview Questions - tips for youth before an interview", "Resume Builder - to help youth create their resume", "Resume Templates in Microsoft Word", and "Personal Goal Setting - to help youth create short-term and long-term goals".

Hard Skills Click to close

Employment

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

Resources The following links will give you information to help teach youth about obtaining and maintaining employment:

Sample Job Applications:

- [Wal-Mart | Pizza Hut](#)
- [Most Requested](#)

Resumes and Interviews:

- [How to Answer the 31 Most Common Interview Questions](#) - tips for youth before an interview
- [Resume Builder](#) - to help youth create their resume
- [Resume Templates in Microsoft Word](#)
- [Personal Goal Setting](#) - to help youth create short-term and long-term goals.

2.5 Education

The screenshot shows a slide layer titled "Hard Skills" with a "Click to close" link and a red arrow. Below the title is a "RESOURCES" button with a gear icon and a red "X" icon. The main content area is titled "Education" and includes a sub-header "Click the age range you wish to learn about." Below this is a horizontal bar with four colored segments: red for "Age 8-10", yellow for "Age 11-14", blue for "Age 15-18", and green for "Age 19+". The "Age 15-18" segment is currently selected. Below the bar, the text "The Big Idea:" is followed by a paragraph: "Youth in care and their peers have the same educational and career goals and abilities."

Hard Skills Click to close

Education

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

The Big Idea:

Youth in care and their peers have the same educational and career goals and abilities.

Notes:

Education:

As foster parents, one of our most significant responsibilities is to help

youth further their education, up to and beyond high school. Remember what you learned in Module 1 that at age 19, 54% of former foster youth had changed schools at least three times and that fewer than 12% of former foster youth were enrolled in a 2 or 4-year college, and that at age 21, 24% of former foster youth surveyed have not yet graduated from high school or obtained their GED. Our data in Wisconsin tells us that at age 19, 62% of former foster youth surveyed had graduated from high school. We know all of this about the differences between youth in care and their same age peers, but what is the same is that youth in care and their peers have the same educational and career goals and abilities. Youth should not suffer educationally just because they are in foster care!

Click through each of the age ranges above to learn more about ways in which to help youth to be successful in school and reach their educational goals.

8-10 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Education

Click the age range you wish to learn about

RESOURCES

Age 8-10

Age 11-14

Age 15-18

Age 19+

Age 8-10

- Help youth figure out what type of learner they are: **visual**, **auditory**, or **kinesthetic** (hands-on), by how they study - do they look at pictures, read the directions, or just do it? Help them use their style to study most effectively and create an environment that supports education and studying (such as regular homework time in a specific place, reading to children, and visiting the library).
- If youth struggle with staying on task for studying and completing homework, set incentives. Discuss them with youth and have them choose ideas with you so that they are things they'll work toward.
- Continually ask youth what they want to be when they grow up and look for opportunities to discuss different jobs/careers, such as when you're watching TV

11-14 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Education

RESOURCES

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 **Age 15-18** Age 19+

- Attend all education meetings with youth to make sure the youth is getting all of the information they need to make a decision about their future.
- Encourage youth to take advantage of programs and resources designed to inform and promote education beyond high school. School counselors in middle and high schools are a great resource! Encourage young people to have some fun and find sites with helpful information that is new to them, such as <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator> and <http://knowhow2go.acenet.edu/>
- Have youth develop their interests by participating in school, community and volunteer activities.
- Initiate a meeting with school counselor and your youth to discuss the youth's strengths and opportunities to learn about careers and discuss options for high school courses.

15-18 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Education

RESOURCES

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 **Age 15-18** Age 19+

- Assist youth in initiating a meeting with the school counselor to discuss career and college planning. Identify any needed support or services, such as tutoring, evaluation, advanced courses, and your youth's needs and discuss these with the school counselor to access services.
- Add report cards and transcripts to the youth's educational file.
- Discuss Pre-college programs, which are available in many recreational and academic areas throughout Wisconsin. For information, call the UW HELP at (800) 442-6459 or use the searchable database of pre-college programs at www.uwhelp.wisconsin.edu/precollege.
- Identify opportunities for job shadowing through school or friends and relatives and help your youth arrange to spend a half day shadowing a particular job or career. Sometimes schools set up these types of opportunities as part of the school day.

19+ (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Education

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

- Address and help to resolve any barriers to education, such as parental signatures, fees, medical needs, or transportation.
- For youth attending college:
 - Help youth determine where they can go for holidays and breaks when dorms may be closed.
 - Help youth to access postsecondary funds provided via the Department of Children and Families. Eligibility information and a list of possible expenses to be covered by this funding source are available at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youthservices/college>. The TRA points of contact are located at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/map/il-r>.
 - Look together for scholarship opportunities at sites such as [Fastweb](#) and [College Board Scholarship Search](#). Also visit

Resources (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Education

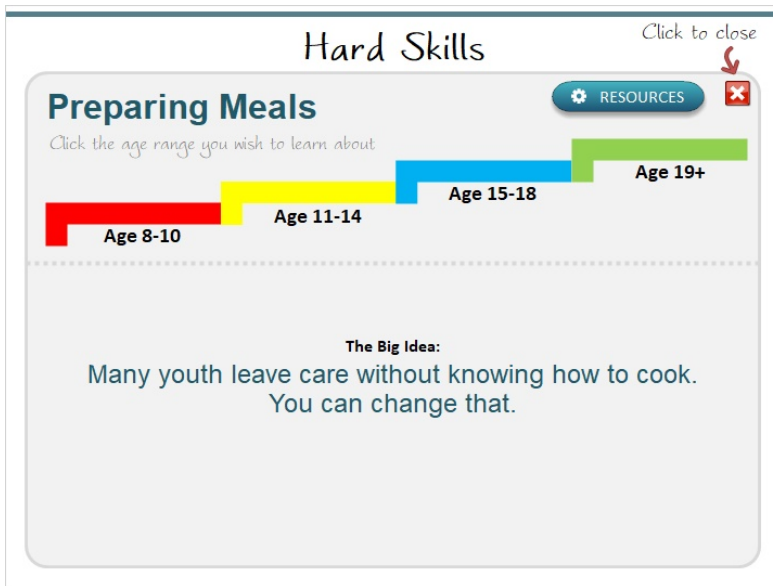
Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

Resources Youth should be exposed to the following opportunities as well as WEOP:

[KnowHow2Go](#) - Use this interactive Web site to learn the steps to prepare you and your middle and high school child for college. Use this interactive Web site to learn the steps to prepare you and your child for college.

[Pre-college and Summer Camps](#) - These programs cover a wide array of subjects from computer to basketball camps, from music and art to cheerleading and study skills. They are offered for varying age groups from pre-kindergarten through high school. Many of the academic programs offer scholarship assistance for foster youth through the [DPI WEOP Program](#). It's NEVER TOO EARLY to start thinking about college.

2.6 Preparing Meals



Hard Skills

Click to close

Preparing Meals

Click the age range you wish to learn about.

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

RESOURCES

The Big Idea:
Many youth leave care without knowing how to cook.
You can change that.

Notes:

Preparing Meals:

One area that is easy to assume that youth just know how to do something is in cooking and meal preparation. This, however, is not always the case, and we hear a lot of former foster youth sharing that they had no idea how to cook when they left foster care. We asked former foster youth about things that are important for foster parents to teach youth:

“Cooking - I remember when I was with a foster family and she let me into the kitchen to help her cook. When I moved into my first apartment I knew how to cook and make food.” (Daniel)

Click through each of the age ranges above to learn more about ways in which to help youth prepare to be able to prepare meals on their own.

8-10 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Preparing Meals

Click the age range you wish to learn about

RESOURCES

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

Age 8-10

- Follow a recipe and measure ingredients while you cook the meal.
- Have youth prepare one item for a meal, such as making a salad or grating cheese.
- Ask youth for suggestions for side or main dishes for the family menu.
- Have youth take turns setting the table for meals.
- Have family members help clean up after meals: younger children can clear the table; older youth can wash and dry dishes and fill the dishwasher, and clean the counters and the kitchen.

11-14 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Preparing Meals

Click the age range you wish to learn about

RESOURCES

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

Age 11-14:

- When grocery shopping, have youth choose healthy snacks, and ask them what makes the snack healthy.
- Have youth make the grocery shopping list for the week, and have them shop with you and keep track of the cost of all of the groceries as you shop. As you shop, have youth compare brands to determine which item is the most economical, explaining that quality matters also.
- Talk with youth about the nutritional value of food and its importance in our growth and development. When eating fast food, ask youth to guess the nutritional value of the foods. Look up the different parts of the meal and discuss the fat, calories, and other aspects of the meal.

15-18 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Preparing Meals

RESOURCES

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 **Age 15-18** Age 19+

Age 15-18:

- When eating out, encourage youth to help you calculate the tip.
- Experiment with food storage: place a small amount of cooked and raw food in the fridge (stored appropriately) and leave them for about a week.
 - Have the youth guess which will spoil first.
- Talk with youth about how soon food should be eaten, and if anything can be frozen to make it last longer.

19+ (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Preparing Meals

RESOURCES

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 **Age 19+**

Age 19 and older:

- Have the youth choose a recipe, plan the meal and determine what groceries are needed, go grocery shopping with you, and prepare the meal once per week.
- Have youth plan the menu for a week and prepare meals together.

Resources (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Preparing Meals

Click the age range you wish to learn about.

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

Resources
The following links will give you information to help teach youth about food preparation and cooking:

Grocery list templates:

- [Template for younger children](#)
- [Template for adolescents](#)

Cookbook for teens:

- [Easy Meals & Snacks](#)

Meal planning templates:

- [Super Healthy Kids](#)

2.7 Health

Hard Skills

Click to close

Health

Click the age range you wish to learn about.

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

The Big Idea:

It is up to us as foster parents to provide the information needed to make healthy choices.

Notes:

Health:

Many youth in care have spent most of their lives simply trying to survive

and have not had the luxury of learning about how to make healthy choices. It is up to us as foster parents to give them this information and help them to stay healthy as they get older, including teaching personal hygiene routines, encouraging them to exercise, understanding their use of prescription medication, and having discussions about using alcohol or drugs. These conversations also include providing youth with an understanding of the importance of and ways to access health insurance and medical forms.

We asked former foster youth about what things are important for foster parents to teach youth in care:

“I think there are obvious things... but then the less obvious things about how to schedule appointments, how to refill medications, how to pay bills and how to care for personal hygiene. Things that lots of people do intuitively but that are not so simple for foster youth to figure out if no one shows them how.”

Click through each of the age ranges above to learn more about ways in which to help youth make healthy choices and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

8-10 (Slide Layer)

The screenshot shows a digital interface titled "Hard Skills" with a "Click to close" link and a red arrow pointing to a close button. Below the title is a "Health" category header. A horizontal bar contains four age range buttons: "Age 8-10" (red), "Age 11-14" (yellow), "Age 15-18" (blue), and "Age 19+" (green). The "Age 8-10" button is selected. Below the buttons, a list of tips is displayed for the 8-10 age group.

Health

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

Age 8-10

- Make hand-washing a part of youth's routine after using the bathroom and before meals, and tooth-brushing a part of their morning and evening routines. Let youth pick out their toothbrush, toothpaste, and dental floss.
- Encourage youth to find ways to deal with stressful situations, whether that be exercising, deep breathing, talking, or taking time alone. Show youth the constructive ways you deal with stress.
- Invite youth to exercise with you and participate in any rewards that you give yourself for consistent exercise. Give youth an opportunity to participate in sports or activities that they enjoy.
- When you take youth to a medical appointment and you are filling out forms, ask the

11-14 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Health

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Age 8-10

Age 11-14

Age 15-18

Age 19+

RESOURCES

Age 11-14:

- Help youth recognize how they feel when they are sick and to know their symptoms. Have older youth research their symptoms to see what they might do to feel better and to read medication labels to know the correct dosage.
- Role play with youth different situations that they might be confronted with - ask what they might do if they are at a party and are offered alcohol or drugs. Tell them how you've handled peer pressure in the past.
- Discuss basic anatomy with youth, teach them anatomical terms for their body parts, and give them honest, age-appropriate answers to their questions about sex and sexuality.
- Talk with youth about pregnancy, how women become pregnant, and how...

15-18 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Health

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Age 8-10

Age 11-14

Age 15-18

Age 19+

RESOURCES

Age 15-18:

- Talk with youth about health insurance - who pays for it, how long they'll have it, and what it covers. Talk about your own insurance coverage as well.
- Help youth make appointments with their physician and practice speaking to their physician.
- Talk with youth about the consequences of drinking and driving, as well as the dangers of using drugs and driving. Also discuss the risks of texting and driving.
- If youth are taking prescription medicine, talk about why they are taking it, what it is for, and if and how it helps. Discuss possible side effects and how to recognize them as well as the importance of taking the prescribed dosage at the designated time(s).

19+ (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Health

Click the age range you wish to learn about

RESOURCES

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

Age 19 and older:

- Talk with youth about their **health care proxy** and about who youth would want to designate as a person to make health care decisions for them should they be unable to do so for themselves. Discuss with them how they go about filling out this form once they turn 18.
- Talk with youth about which medical facility (doctor's office, urgent care, emergency room) is appropriate for which medical need.

Resources (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Health

Click the age range you wish to learn about

RESOURCES

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

Resources The following links will give you information to help teach youth about their medical needs and health insurance information:

Health Care Forms:

- [Power of Attorney for Health Care Form](#) (Health Care Proxy)
- [Declaration to Physicians Form](#) (Living Will)

Health Care Coverage After Leaving Care:

- [BadgerCare Plus](#)
- [Affordable Care Act](#)

2.8 Daily Living Skills



Hard Skills

Click to close

Daily Living Skills

Click the age range you wish to learn about.

Age 8-10

Age 11-14

Age 15-18

Age 19+

RESOURCES

The Big Idea:
Give youth opportunities
to learn and try new skills.

Notes:

Daily Living:

As we think about daily living skills for youth in care, it is easy to assume that youth have many of these skills already, but this is not always the case. Youth have to be given opportunities to learn and try new skills in order for them to be able to use the skill when they are living on their own. We asked former foster youth if they felt prepared to live on their own:

“As I got older I continued to encounter situations that made me realize just how unprepared I really was or living on my own because I wasn’t given the chance to learn the skills I needed.”

We also asked them why it is important for youth to be prepared to live on their own:

“No one can do it for you. If you have people doing things for you for your whole life and then suddenly you are thrown into the world with no skills and no idea how to make it on your own, there’s no way you’ll ever be successful. You’re just being set up to fail.”

Click through each of the age ranges above to learn more about ways in

which to help model daily living skills for youth to help them master these skills for themselves.

8-10 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Daily Living Skills

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Age 8-10

Age 11-14

Age 15-18

Age 19+

RESOURCES

M

X

Age 8-10

- Discuss appropriate manners with youth and model them for youth.
- Develop a chore chart, and have youth help you think of all the chores that need to get done around the house. Once the chores are done, they get checked off the chart.
- Give each child their own laundry basket. Younger children can help with laundry by measuring soap and folding clothes. Teach older youth the settings of the washer and dryer so that they can do laundry on their own. Take older youth to a laundromat to show them how to use the machines there.
- Have youth help you replace batteries in smoke detectors.
- Discuss proper hygiene with the youth. Talk with youth regarding how often to bathe, the kind of soap to use, how often to get a haircut, the use of deodorant, dental care, and shaving.

11-14 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Daily Living Skills

Click the age range you wish to learn about

Age 8-10

Age 11-14

Age 15-18

Age 19+

RESOURCES

M

X

Age 11-14:

- Explain the importance of fire safety by showing youth the fire safety plan and route to leave the house in an emergency.
- Take youth to use a Laundromat in the neighborhood, as well as how to remove stains from clothing, how to wash light versus dark clothing, how much detergent to use, and what kind of detergent to use.
- Put together a personal hygiene kit which includes products they will need, such as soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothbrush and toothpaste, shaving cream, safety razors and sanitary pads. Tailor the contents of the kit to the youth's unique special needs. Label each product and piece of equipment.
- Teach youth what different cleaning supplies are intended for and how to use each of

15-18 (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Daily Living Skills

Click the age range you wish to learn about.

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 **Age 15-18** Age 19+

Age 15-18:

- Show youth how to use tools and have older youth help you with home repairs.
- Teach youth how to hang a picture, replace a light bulb, and complete basic home maintenance.
- Teach youth how to read the bus schedule, how to purchase bus tickets, and where to board a bus. In addition, talk with youth about other forms of public transportation, such as taxi cabs, trains, subway systems, airplanes, and charter buses. Have youth practice the skill of using public transportation by finding their way to a specific destination.
- Help youth keep track of important documents by helping them set up a drawer or file for these documents like their birth certificate, social security card.

19+ (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Daily Living Skills

Click the age range you wish to learn about.

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 **Age 19+**

Age 19 and older:

- Have youth help you complete a home inventory, and discuss the importance of homeowners and renter's insurance.
- Have youth help you with minor home repairs.

Resources (Slide Layer)

Hard Skills

Click to close

Daily Living Skills

Click the age range you wish to learn about.

Age 8-10 Age 11-14 Age 15-18 Age 19+

Resources

The following links will give you information to help teach youth daily living skills:

Cleaning & Laundry:
Stain Removal Tips: [Resource 1](#) | [Resource 2](#)

Chores & Home Maintenance:
• [Chore Chart Printables](#)
• [10 Awesome Ways to Make Cleaning Fun for Kids](#)
• [Home Organization for Teens](#)
• [Five Tips for Successful Cleaning Routines for Kids](#)

Hygiene:
[Watch a video like this with teen girls for health and hygiene tips](#)

Map Reading & Transportation:
• [Basic Map Skills](#)
• [Google Maps Help Center](#)
• [Map Reading: Learning Map Skills](#)
• [How to Teach Map Reading in Cities](#)

Help youth learn to read a bus route map:
• [Example Bus Route](#)
• [Example Bus Trip Planner](#)

1.9 Soft Skills

Soft Skills

personal attributes enabling someone to interact effectively

Exploring Youth's Values

Teaching Youth to Make Good Decisions

Setting Goals

Communicating with Others

Managing Time

Dealing with Anger

Relationships and Sexual Development

Teachable Moments

Click on the soft skills above to read about each.
Complete explanations are available as a handout in the Resources tab.

Notes:

SOFT SKILLS:

As you learned earlier, soft skills build on and aid in the development of hard skills. Soft skills help us to interact with others and develop our own personal values. Working with youth to develop soft skills will help them to build upon the hard skills you've taught them and to build their interpersonal skills. Soft skills can be built at all ages, with respect to the child's age and developmental stage. Take a moment now to review these soft skill areas.

3. Soft Skills

3.1 Exploring Youth's Values

Click to close

Exploring Youth's Values

- ✓ Talk with youth about what is important to them and **their goals** for the future.
- ✓ Talk about **right vs. wrong** and the importance of values.
- ✓ Talk about **priorities** and **being good to others**.
- ✓ **Model** "good" values for youth.
- ✓ **Praise youth** when they do something that shows good values.




A lot of youth love to be complimented.
Reinforce the positive behavior by telling them you are proud of them.

Notes:

Exploring youth's values:


In order to help youth build soft skills, we first need to help them to explore their personal values. This includes discussions of how their values will help guide them through their decision-making, goal setting, and interacting with other people throughout their lives. Share your values with the youth in your home and model those to help them develop their own.

3.2 Making Good Decisions

Click to close

Teaching Youth to Make Good Decisions

- ✓ Allow youth to make their own decisions; **encourage them** when they are making good decisions, and process when they've made a poor choice.
Ask: What do you think you could do?
Discuss: Pros and cons of each option.
- ✓ Give youth **positive feedback** when they make decisions.
- ✓ Help youth understand the difference between wants and needs.



Help them experience natural consequences of poor decisions **while still being supported.**

Notes:

Teaching youth to make good decisions:

As you help youth learn to make positive decisions, you can build on the discussion of personal values and demonstrate how our personal values help lead us to certain decisions. In addition to learning this information from you, children and youth need to be allowed to make their own decisions and discuss the outcomes. Help youth process the results of the decisions they've made and ask how they might do things differently in the future, and be sure to give them positive feedback when they make wise decisions.

3.3 Setting Goals

Click to close

Setting Goals

- ✓ Talk with youth about setting goals.
Encourage youth to be as honest as possible.
Do not discourage or respond negatively.
- ✓ Talk about steps needed to help achieve their goals; begin to lay out those steps.
- ✓ Ask some of the following questions:
 - What do I want out of life?
 - What do I most enjoy doing?
 - What do I value?
 - Who is someone I admire and what characteristics do they have?
 - What am I good at?
 - What makes me motivated?



"A goal without a plan is just a wish." - Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Notes:

Setting goals:

One of the most important soft skills to help youth develop is the ability to set realistic goals for themselves. Some youth need assistance creating goals for themselves, and other youth have goals for their lives and need direction and feedback on making those goals attainable. To help youth create or clarify their goals, ask questions about their future and their interests.

3.4 Communicating

Click to close

Communicating with Others

- ✓ Talk about communication skills: discuss non-verbal and the importance of **listening**.

"The way we communicate with others and with ourselves ultimately determines the quality of our lives" ~ Anthony Robbins
- ✓ Practice basic communication skills:
 - Play a game at the dinner table where everyone says the same phrase, such as "I had a nice day," using different facial expressions. Talk with youth about how the same words can come across differently depending on the facial expression used. Also talk about how communication is made up of words, tone of voice, and body language




Notes:

Communicating with others:

Assisting youth to develop communication skills will help them to successfully interact with the other people in their lives. Explain that communication is not only verbal, and that nonverbal communication and listening are key pieces of interacting with others. Help youth to practice their communication skills, and model positive communication for them.

3.5 Managing Time

Click to close

Managing Time

- ✓ Talk about the importance of managing time at home, work, and school.
- ✓ Help youth create a daily schedule.
- ✓ Help youth make a "to-do" list and help prioritize and set deadlines.
- ✓ Talk about importance of writing appointments, due dates, and plans on a calendar.
- ✓ Discuss limiting phone and TV time; rewarding themselves for completing tasks.




Notes:

Managing time:


Talk with youth about the importance of time management, and how effectively managing their time will help them in various areas of their lives. Explain that good time management will help them to reach their goals and be successful in their home lives, at work, and in school. Help youth to understand that being organized will help them to manage their time well, and will reduce stress and anxiety.

3.6 Dealing with Anger

Click to close

Dealing with Anger

- ✓ How youth choose to express their anger is a choice.
- ✓ Help youth **manage anger** by:
 - Asking what helps them when they get angry – does it help to talk about it?
 - *Offer ideas about what helps you.*
 - Teach youth how to be self-aware.
Is the cause sadness, embarrassment, guilt, or annoyance?
 - After a conflict in the home, be sure everyone apologizes to each other.
 - Hold regular **family meetings**. Ask family members what is upsetting them and how each can do things differently.



Notes:

Dealing with Anger:

We all have to find ways to deal with our anger, and youth sometimes have difficulty finding ways to express their anger appropriately. Talk with youth about the ways that you cope when you get angry, and assist them finding ways that help them to deal with their own anger and frustrations. Many of the youth in foster care have not been taught how to deal with anger in productive ways, and will need your help to do this.

3.7 Relationships & Sexual Development

Click to close

Relationships and Sexual Development

- ✓ Talk with youth about what makes a relationship healthy and positive.
- ✓ Talk about their support system.
Identify: Who in their lives are supportive?
Who can they depend on to tell them what they need to hear?
- ✓ Discuss qualities of good friendship or a dating relationship.
- ✓ Talk about importance of abstinence and tools to abstain from unwanted sexual advances.
- ✓ Seek guidance from youth's therapist or physician.



For more information about talking with youth about safer sex, read through [this pamphlet](#) from the Healthy Teen Network.

Notes:

NEW TRANSCRIPT:

Relationships and Sexual Development:

Helping youth to navigate healthy relationships and sexual development is a very important piece of helping them develop life skills. Discuss what makes a relationship healthy and who is included in the youth's support system. Ask youth about how they would handle an unhealthy relationship, such as using counseling with the person involved, ending the relationship, and letting someone know if they feel unsafe.

Discussing sex and sexuality with a youth can be challenging for any parent. This can be even more challenging for youth in care, as they may have experienced trauma that compounds the issues of sex and sexuality. Talk with youth about the importance of abstinence and the benefits of delaying intercourse, and tools to abstain from unwanted sexual advances. If a youth expresses a desire to have sex, you can discuss ways they can protect

themselves through contraceptives, but that the only way to remain 100% free from disease and pregnancy is abstinence. It's also important to discuss what sex is and the various risky sexual behaviors that could have potential consequences. Encourage youth to talk to their doctor about any questions or concerns they may have. Youth are discussing these issues at younger ages than you may have, so you'll need to be prepared to have these conversations. If you have concerns about a youth's sexual activity, you are encouraged to seek information and guidance from the youth's therapist or physician. For more information about talking with youth about safer sex, read through this pamphlet from the Healthy Teen Network:

https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/protective/pdf/talking_teens.pdf

In addition to discussing sex, you may have children in their care who have sexual orientations different from you, and these youth may have many questions about their feelings. A youth's need to feel normal can lead to internal struggles about their own sexual and gender identity, and they may want to talk to you about that. You will need to be prepared to have these conversations and be comfortable discussing issues of sexual orientation and gender identity. If you have concerns about discussing these issues based on your values or beliefs, you should talk to your licensing worker.

3.8 Teachable Moments

Click to close

Teachable Moments

- ✓ Look for teachable moments to reinforce lessons.
Example: While cooking dinner, teen asks what smells good; ask them to help taste test, stir, mix, or prepare the meal in some way.
- ✓ You can create teachable moments while planning a meal, filling out a job application, or doing laundry.



 Download [Ideas for Teaching Life Skills](#)

Notes:

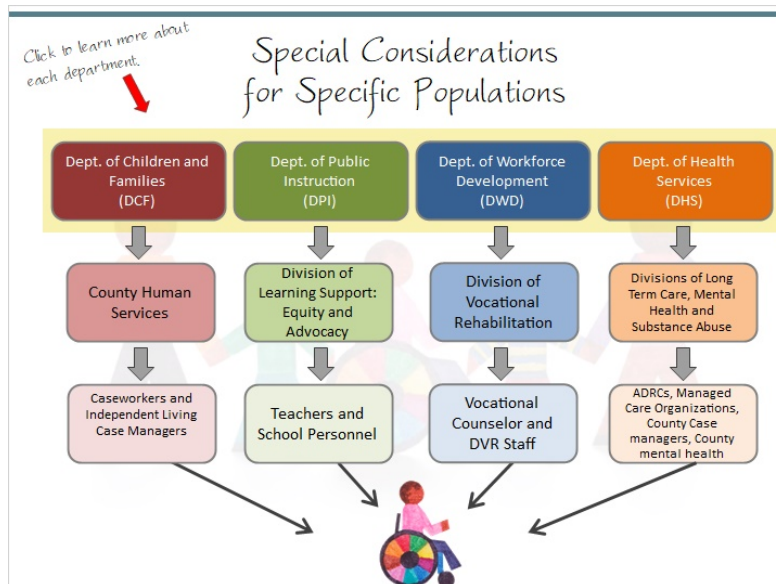
Teachable Moments:

Be on the lookout for teachable moments, and be sure to use them when you find them! Teachable moments can happen each day, and can help you to guide youth to develop their interests or talents. You can also create your own teachable moments using the hard skills and soft skills you've learned about in this module.

Now that you've learned these skills and been given some ideas, click on this link for another resource, called "Ideas for Teaching Life Skills," which will give you some additional ideas to help build independent living skills for the children and youth in your home.

1.10 Special Considerations

for Specific Populations



Notes:

It is important to remember that youth with disabilities will also be independent; however, their level of independence will be appropriate to their developmental level. Youth with disabilities have many different agencies and individuals involved with their daily lives who are all working to help the youth achieve an appropriate level of independence.

Youth with disabilities are involved with workers and case managers from the Department of Children and Families, such as county human services, county social workers and independent living case managers. They are also involved with individuals from the Department of Public Instruction, such as special education teachers and other school personnel. In addition, these youth are involved with workers from the Department of Workforce Development (specifically the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, also called DVR), such as a vocational counselor and DVR staff. Lastly, youth with disabilities work with individuals from the Department of Health Services, such as case workers from Aging and Disability Resource Centers,

managed care organizations, county case managers, and county mental health workers.

Click on the departments to read more about the role of each:

Department of Children and Families: Youth in foster care are assigned a county social worker who works with the youth, their family, and the foster family. County social workers should work with the youth to develop a Life Skills Assessment and Independent Living Plan. The youth may also work with an independent living case manager, who may help the youth develop their assessment and plan, as well as help the youth plan for their future and build independent living skills and goals. As youth get closer to the age at which they will exit from care, they may also engage with staff from the Transition Resource Agency in their area. These TRAs are responsible for providing independent living services for eligible youth when they leave care and should be part of the youth's transition planning process. They can also be a resource for providing information about and connections in the areas of employment and education, and others, while the youth is in your care.

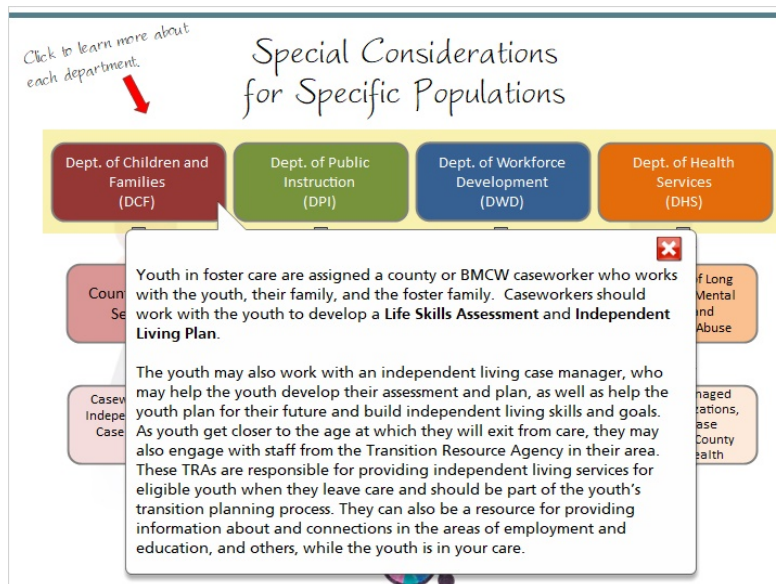
Department of Workforce Development: Youth with disabilities may also be working with counselors and staff from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. These individuals will work with the youth to provide information on the DVR program, develop an Individualized Plan for Employment or an IPE, identify a work goal on the youth's IPE, and provide services to assist the youth in achieving their IPE goal(s).

Department of Public Instruction: Youth with disabilities will be involved with their teachers and other school personnel to continue to develop and meet the goals of their Individual Education Plan or IEP. Youth work with school staff to identify goals for work and living after high school, identify resources to assist in achieving their IEP goal(s), coordinate services, and to make referrals to outside resources. At age 14, or earlier if needed, youth

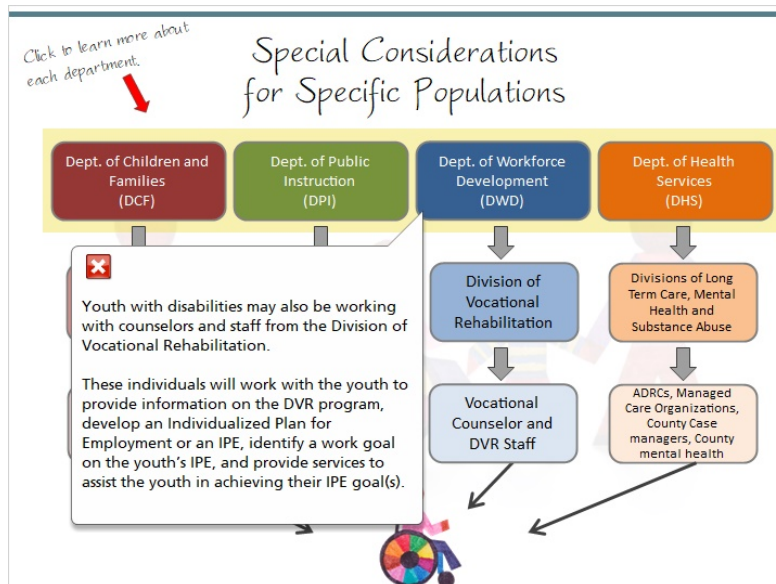
can expect school personnel to help them identify their goals for work and living post-graduation, as well as help in identifying activities that will assist the youth in meeting their goals.

Department of Health Services: Youth with disabilities may be working with a variety of individuals through the Department of Health Services. These individuals will work with the youth to develop the youth's Individual Service Plan or ISP. In addition, these case workers will provide the youth with information about available options, eligibility, and services while they are in school and after they graduate, as well as participating in post-high school planning discussions.

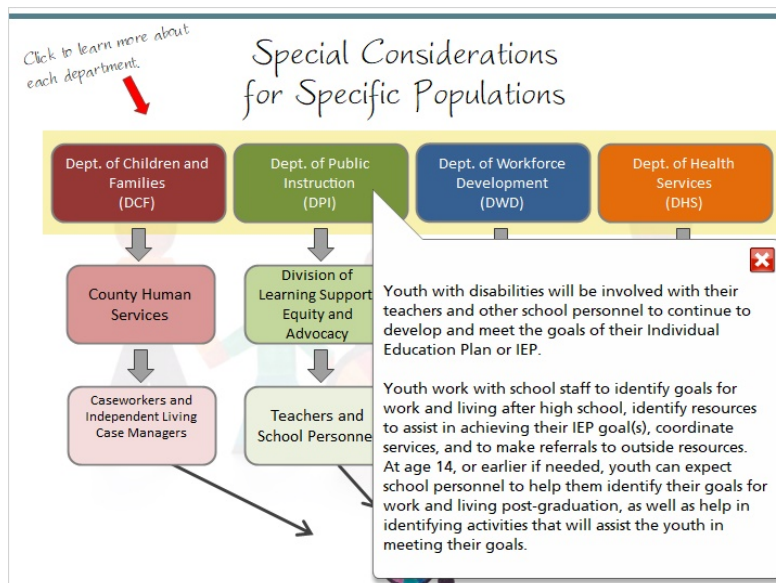
DCF (Slide Layer)



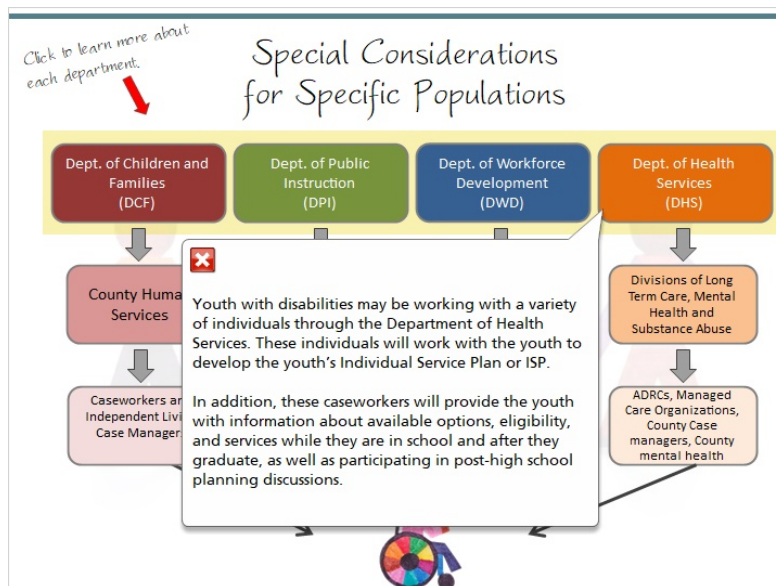
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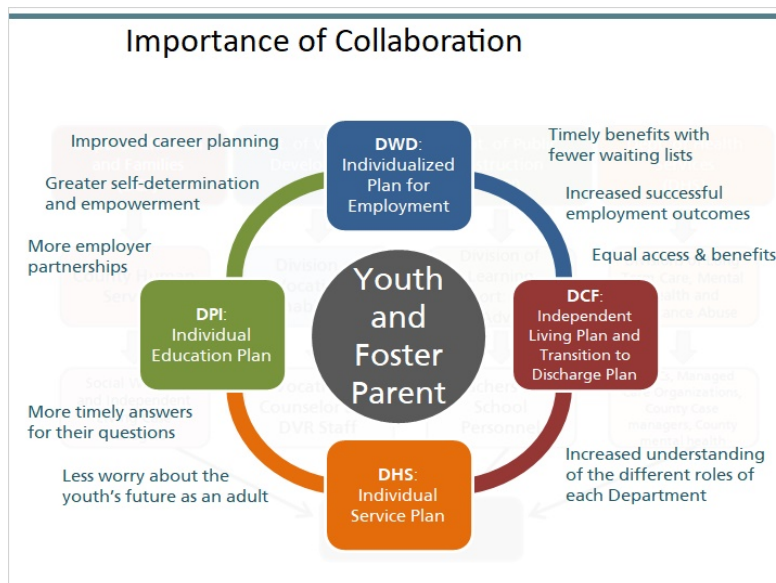
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DHS (Slide Layer)



1.11 Importance of Collaboration



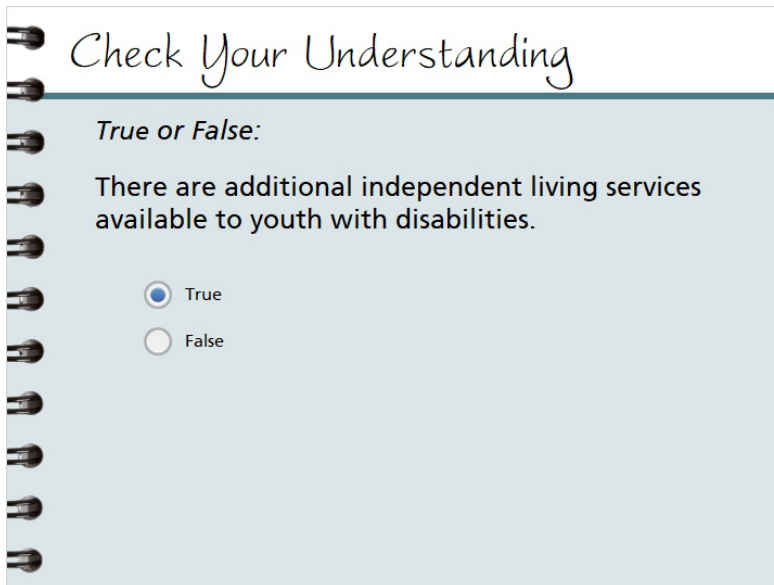
Notes:

As you can see, youth with disabilities are involved with many different individuals who assist the youth in developing a variety of different case plans and transition plans. Child welfare agencies work to ensure there is

collaboration between the plans and that they remain consistent. It will be important for you to be involved in the planning and discussions of all of these plans, as well as assisting the youth in understanding each of these plans and meeting the goals laid out in their plans. You can act as an advocate for the youth during meetings to develop these plans.

When you collaborate with case workers in each of these areas, youth can expect benefits in the following areas: improved career planning, timely benefits with fewer waiting lists, greater self-determination and empowerment, increased successful employment outcomes, more employer partnerships, and equal access and benefits. In addition, you will find they have more timely answers for their questions, an increased understanding of the different roles of each Department, and less worry about the youth's future as an adult.

1.12 Check Understanding: ILP vs. ILTDP

A screenshot of a spiral-bound notebook page titled "Check Your Understanding" in a cursive font. Below the title, the text "True or False:" is followed by a statement: "There are additional independent living services available to youth with disabilities." Below this statement are two radio button options: "True" (which is selected with a blue dot) and "False" (which is unselected).

Check Your Understanding

True or False:

There are additional independent living services available to youth with disabilities.

☒ True

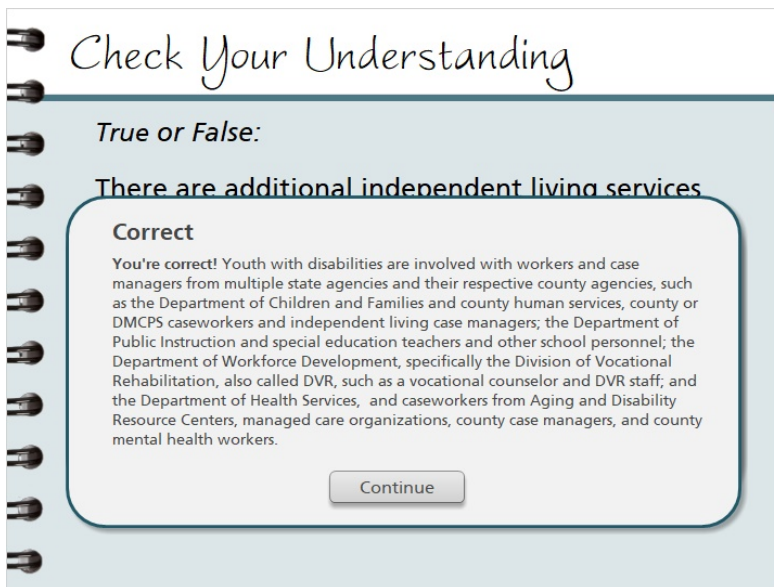
☐ False

Notes:

Check Your Understanding:

True or false: there are additional independent living services available to youth with disabilities.

Correct (Slide Layer)



Check Your Understanding

True or False:

There are additional independent living services

Correct

You're correct! Youth with disabilities are involved with workers and case managers from multiple state agencies and their respective county agencies, such as the Department of Children and Families and county human services, county or DMCPs caseworkers and independent living case managers; the Department of Public Instruction and special education teachers and other school personnel; the Department of Workforce Development, specifically the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, also called DVR, such as a vocational counselor and DVR staff; and the Department of Health Services, and caseworkers from Aging and Disability Resource Centers, managed care organizations, county case managers, and county mental health workers.

Continue

Incorrect (Slide Layer)

Check Your Understanding

True or False:

There are additional independent living services

Incorrect

No, the answer is True. Youth with disabilities are involved with workers and case managers from multiple state agencies and their respective county agencies, such as the Department of Children and Families and county human services, county or DMCPs caseworkers and independent living case managers; the Department of Public Instruction and special education teachers and other school personnel; the Department of Workforce Development, specifically the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, also called DVR, such as a vocational counselor and DVR staff; and the Department of Health Services, and caseworkers from Aging and Disability Resource Centers, managed care organizations, county case managers, and county mental health workers.

Continue

1.13 Poem: *I am From*



"I am from"

Poem by a former foster youth

Notes:

"I am from"

I am from chunky mashed potatoes,

A long line of strong women named Margaret,
Days of using care bears as a moral compass,
Playing titanic on my water bed,
And standing in line for the newest beanie babies at 5 am

I am from “someday you’ll understand”,
Running away from home to a snow fort in the front yard with a bag of fruit
roll ups and a cup of apple juice -
Wishing she would divorce him already. And when she finally did,
understanding why she didn’t.

I am from placements spent trying to protect my little sister, breaking down
with the realization that I couldn’t,
Guardian ad litem, specialists, and successful scapegoats for abuse like
parental alienation, Munchausen’s, and father’s rights.

I am from a mom trying so hard to get someone to listen, and her
desperate pleas only playing like putty in their hands
I came from so many people with so much power who knew so little
Reading three books a day, adopting other’s stories when my own was too
painful.

I am from the closet that housed too many skeletons,
Therapists, I statements, renewal centers and pie communication
I am from a daddy who was hospitalized for wanting to kill me as an infant,
later being hospitalized for wanting to kill myself at thirteen. (What a
beautiful family tradition).
Crying, panic attacks, pills, self-injury, apologies and the realization my
family defined broken home.

I am from being snatched without warning wearing Christmas socks and
flip-flops,
Put in a group home, then becoming a foster kid and second-class citizen.
Only real family gets real dishes, as they set down the paper plate in front
of me.
Regular late night talks with my foster sister, and we became each other’s

family,

I am a ward of the state, returned home at seventeen,

Night classes three days a week on top of high school and a job to graduate with my peers.

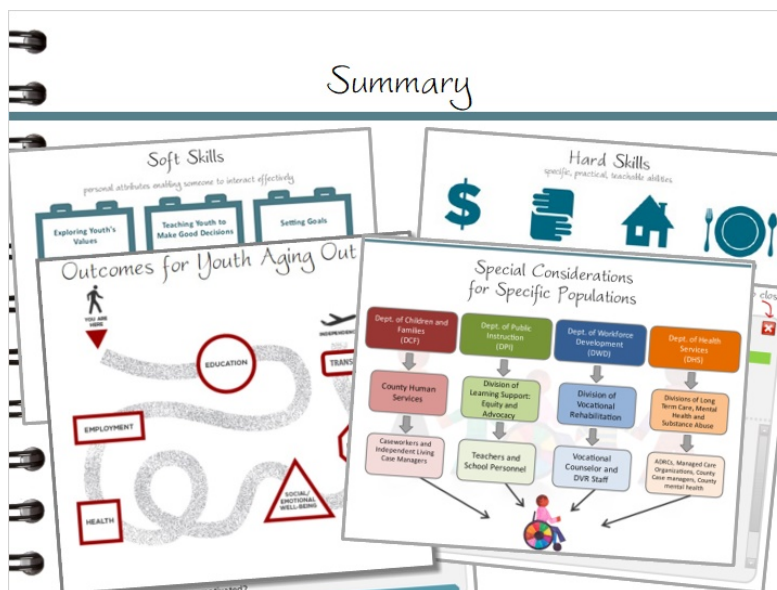
I am from a scholarship and a whim leading me to college, figuring out what it feels like to be able to focus on school for the first time ever, and liking it.

I am from the Wisconsin Youth Advisory Council, motivated to change the foster care system, shocked that my experiences and opinions are valid and critical to influential grown-ups.

It's not perfect, my room is never clean, I skip classes sometimes, I'm always poor, I don't pay as much attention to my pug as I should, I make bad choices with men. They are my choices, though, and I have never been given that before.

I am from another scholarship, an internship, and being so happy I can't believe I came so close to missing all of it.

1.14 Summary



Notes:

NEW TRANSCRIPT:

In this final module, you have learned about the difference between hard and soft skills and examples of how you can guide the youth in your care through the skill-building process, which you now know can start at a very early age. You also learned about the five different areas in which that skill-building happens: education, employment, health, social-emotional well-being, housing, and transportation and what skills youth should have as they exit foster care. And finally you learned about considerations given to foster youth in special populations, and how services are offered to those youth and their caregivers.

Once you complete the following reflection exercise, you will have finished the Building the Path to Independence training. Please remember that this training will be here as a resource for you as you continue to care for youth.

1.15 Reflect

Notes:

Knowing what you know now about building life skills with youth in your home, what are some skills that you have that you can pass on to the youth in your home?

What are some things that you wish you had known when you moved out of your parents' home?

As you remember from the Introduction Module, these reflection questions are meant to help you think about using this information in your home, and completion of those questions does not verify that you have completed the training modules. Verification of completion will be done with the Licensor Guide, a tool that your licensing worker will go through with you.

1.16 Conclusion

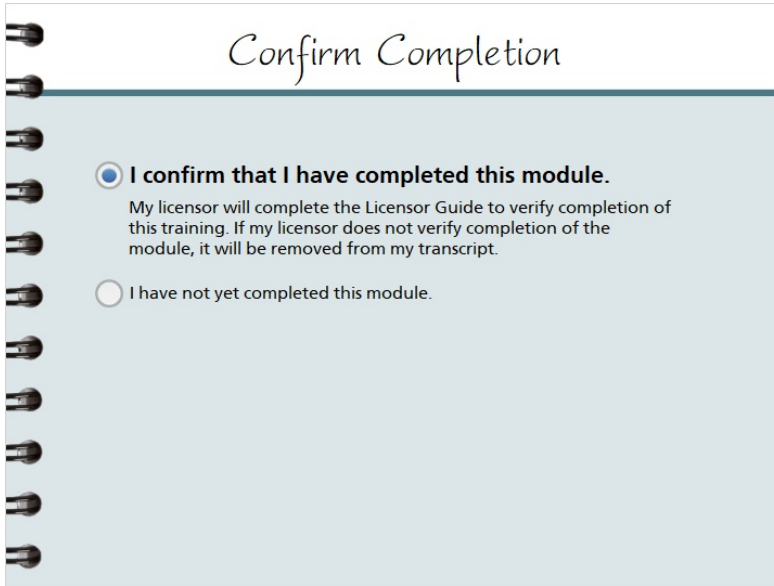


Notes:

Thank you for completing Module 3.

4. LMS Completion

4.1 Confirm Completion



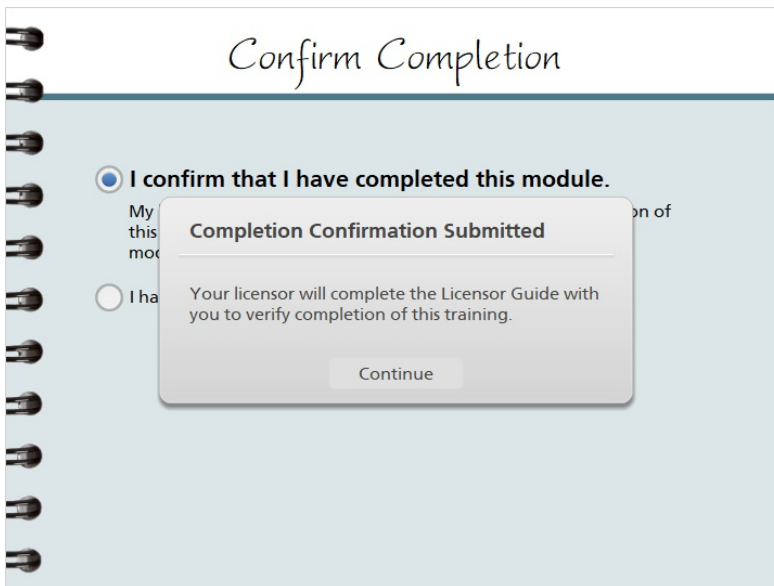
Confirm Completion

☒ I confirm that I have completed this module.

My licensor will complete the Licensor Guide to verify completion of this training. If my licensor does not verify completion of the module, it will be removed from my transcript.

☐ I have not yet completed this module.

Completion Confirmation Submitted (Slide Layer)



Confirm Completion

☒ I confirm that I have completed this module.

My licensor will complete the Licensor Guide to verify completion of this training. If my licensor does not verify completion of the module, it will be removed from my transcript.

☐ I have not yet completed this module.

Completion Confirmation Submitted

Your licensor will complete the Licensor Guide with you to verify completion of this training.

Continue

4.2 Results Slide

