

 VERMONT DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES Family Services Policy Manual		<h1>160</h1>
Chapter:	Working with Adolescents and Justice Involved Youth	
Subject:	Supporting Adolescents in DCF Custody	Page 1 of 14
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Purpose

To describe the principles and policy that guide adolescent practice and case planning.

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Related Policies

- Family Services Policy 74: Pregnant and Parenting Teens in Custody
- Family Services Policy 75: Normalcy and the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard
- Family Services Policy 76: Supporting and Affirming LGBTQ Children and Youth
- Family Services Policy 125: Permanency Planning for Children and Youth in DCF Custody
- Family Services Policy 138: Credit Checks for Youth 14 and Older in DCF Custody

Introduction

The child welfare and juvenile justice system for adolescents in the custody of DCF Family Services must focus intentionally on a youth’s well-being. This takes into consideration not just the youth’s safety and permanency, but also their social, emotional, behavioral, physical, and spiritual health needs. It is important that our staff who interact with youth understand the youth’s hopes and aspirations. This way, Family Services Workers can assist youth in taking advantage of opportunities to pursue their interests and find support when challenges arise.

Adolescence is a unique developmental period. There is a tremendous amount of brain growth that takes place during adolescence and into adulthood. This is a pivotal time to provide positive opportunities and experiences that help the brain create new neural pathways. Understanding adolescent development and using this knowledge to build opportunities designed to help youth acquire the knowledge, competencies, and attitudes will contribute to healthy outcomes in adulthood.

Supportive and nurturing adults, as well as positive peer relationships, play key roles in promoting the development of resilience, self-confidence, and self-regulation - all essential components of well-being. These relationships also serve to guide youth when coping with stressful situations.

Although youth might at times be reluctant to seek help, self-advocacy is instrumental in building resilience.

All youth should have both the tools and the opportunity to access:

- Basic necessities such as healthy food and a safe environment, and
- Individualized services, such as educational, legal, and mental and physical health when needed.

Excessive exposure to risk can negatively impact well-being. Actively building a framework for thinking about adolescent development that includes the Youth Thrive protective and promotive factors can help to reduce risk, build well-being, and increase the likelihood of positive and improved outcomes.

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The Youth Thrive protective and promotive factors are:

- **Youth Resilience:** Managing stress and functioning well when faced with stressors, challenges, or adversity. The outcome is personal growth and positive change.
- **Social Connections:** Having healthy, sustained relationships with people, institutions, the community, and a force greater than oneself that promote a sense of trust, belonging and feeling that they matter.
- **Knowledge of Adolescent Development:** Understanding one's behavior and stage of maturation in the context of the unique aspects of adolescent development (e.g., brain development, the impact of trauma); services that are developmentally and contextually appropriate (e.g., positive youth development strategies).
- **Concrete Support in Times of Need:** Understanding the importance of asking for help and advocating for oneself; receiving quality services designed to preserve youth's dignity, providing opportunities for skill development, and promoting healthy development (e.g., strengths-based, trauma informed practice).
- **Cognitive and Social-Emotional Competence:** Acquiring skills and attitudes that are essential for forming an independent identity and having a productive, responsible, and satisfying adulthood (e.g., self-regulation, executive functioning, and character strengths).

Policy

There are a series of requirements designed to support healthy adolescent development for youth involved with the child welfare and juvenile justice system in Vermont.

Case Planning & Documentation

All youth served by the division will be at the forefront of decision-making and case planning activities. No single approach, accommodation, or plan will apply in all circumstances. Family Services Workers, with the support of Supervisors, must bring recommendations for appropriate resources and supports for youth on a case-by-case basis, informed by an individual youth's needs. Family Services Workers shall document all activities related to federal and state requirements outlined in this policy in a combination of the youth's case notes and case plans.

It is required by law that youth age 14 and older are consulted in the development of their case plan. Youth are permitted to identify and invite at least two people of their choosing to be a part of their case planning team (other than a foster parent or a case manager). FSD is permitted to reject an individual selected by the youth if they have good reason to believe that they would not act in the best interest of the youth.

The case plan must include a description of:

- Where the youth will be living;
- What services the youth, their parents, and foster parents will receive;

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- The health and education records of the youth;
- A plan for education stability;
- Information relating to sexual health services;
- Resources to ensure youth are prepared to make healthy decisions about their lives;
- Steps the agency is taking in finding the youth an adoptive family; and
- Explanations as to why a youth cannot be reunified with their family if kinship care is determined to be the permanent placement.

List of Rights and Contact Information

Family Services Workers are required to provide a written list of rights and updated team contact information to youth ages 14 and older annually outlining their rights in care as they pertain to education, health care, visitations, court hearings/participation, the right to stay safe, a free annual credit report, and help resolving any inaccuracies. Youth must sign the document indicating that they received a list of rights and that they were explained in an age-appropriate way. This document must be provided to the youth and a copy must be retained for the file. See Appendix 2 for the List of Rights and Contact Information template.

NYTD

DCF Family Services Division is required to comply with federal National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) reporting expectations. Division staff are required to collect demographic and outcome information for certain youth in foster care within 45 days after their 17th birthday. Central office staff will provide a list of youth, the outcomes survey, and timelines to Family Services Workers and Supervisors as surveys are required. Youth are surveyed regarding six outcomes: financial self-sufficiency, experience with homelessness, educational attainment, positive connections with adults, high-risk behavior, and access to health insurance. Family Services Workers must collect locator information and consents from youth upon completion of the survey. This contact information is used to assist the Youth Development Program (YDP) with collecting additional required outcomes information for these same youth at ages 19 and 21.

Transition to Adulthood (90-Day) Plan

Federal law requires that 90 days prior to youth turning 18 in DCF custody, youth have a written transition plan outlining the youth's plans for education and training, employment, health care and insurance, transportation, including assistance in obtaining a driver's license, money management, housing, social and recreation, establishing and maintaining connections with family and community, and opportunities to engage in normal developmentally appropriate activities.

In creating this plan, Family Services Workers shall:

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- Work collaboratively with the youth, Youth Development Coordinator (YDC), other professionals, and individuals the youth has identified as supports.
- Complete the plan within 90 days prior to the youth’s 18th birthday.
- Have the youth sign the document indicating it is their plan and they were involved in creating it.
- Retain the plan in the youth’s file and provide a copy to YDP.

The plan shall describe the services, supports, and rights available to youth upon age of majority, a description of how this information has been explained, and the signature of the youth acknowledging receipt of this information. See Appendix 3 for the Transition to Adulthood (90-Day) Plan.

Providing Important Documents

Family Services Workers are responsible for ensuring that prior to exiting foster care at 18, youth receive the following documents: official documentation to prove the child was in foster care, a certified birth certificate, Social Security card, health insurance information, a driver’s license or state identification card, and education and medical records held by DCF. These documents are essential to ensuring that youth aging out of foster care have the documentation needed to secure housing, apply to school or work, get appropriate health and mental health care, or access other forms of assistance. Family Services Workers should discuss with youth ways in which they can keep these documents safe, such as using of a safe deposit box, a lock box, or asking a trusted person to hold them. Family Services Workers must note in the file that these documents have been provided to youth prior to leaving care. See Appendix 4 for a letter template for providing official proof of foster care.

Registering to Vote and for the Selective Service

Family Services Workers are encouraged to share information with all youth turning 18 about their opportunity to register to vote.

Staff are also encouraged to inform male youth of their legal responsibility to register for the Selective Service at age 18. From the [United States Government’s Selective Service System website](#): “individuals who are born female and changed their gender to male are not required to register. U.S. citizens or immigrants who are born male and changed their gender to female are still required to register.” If youth fail to register, they may not be eligible for federal student loans and grants, federal jobs, or job training and assistance programs.

Appointing a Health Care Agent

Federal law requires that youth in custody receive information on the importance of formally designating another individual to make health care treatment decisions on their behalf if they should be unable to make these decisions as an adult. Family Services Workers shall provide the

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youth with a written explanation of how to Appoint a Health Care Agent. This discussion shall be noted in case notes, case plans, and in the youth’s Transition to Adulthood Plan. See Appendix 5 for additional guidance for sharing this information with youth.

Permanency Planning for Youth

Every child in custody deserves permanence. All efforts must be made to ensure youth have an identified permanency plan. When reunification, adoption, or permanent guardianship cannot be achieved, all of the youth's significant relationships should be evaluated to ensure continuity of connections and support of the youth into adulthood. Reinstatement of parental rights that were previously terminated should be considered. Adoption after the youth turns 18 should also be explored. Such adoptions do not require termination of parental rights. For additional information, see related policies section.

Normalcy

Division staff shall support the emotional and developmental growth of youth in foster care by permitting them to participate in normal developmentally appropriate activities or events. Youth in foster care require the same opportunities as other youth to explore healthy risk-taking, establish peer relationships, participate in extracurricular activities, engage in the community, and to explore culture and identity. Federal regulations require that we make efforts to provide these opportunities for youth in care. Participation in extracurricular and social activities has been found to be effective in changing the course for many youth in preparing them for a successful transition to adulthood and independence. The more youth are exposed to activities and individuals in the community, the more opportunities youth will have to form healthy relationships with peers and adults who can support permanency. These opportunities and efforts should be summarized in the youth’s case plan and documented in case notes. For additional information, see related policies section.

Health Care

Youth participation in regular preventative health, dental, and mental health care services are correlated with increased well-being in adulthood including positive impacts on education, employment, and safe and stable housing. Helping youth in foster care to establish these habits is an important task for division staff. Family Services Workers are responsible for encouraging access to preventative health care with a primary care physician at least once per year, preventative dental health care every six-months, access to mental health care as appropriate, and to document these efforts in case plans and case notes. Family Services Workers shall ensure that youth have information about reapplying for Medicaid before turning 18. The Affordable Care Act guarantees Medicaid eligibility for youth who leave foster care at age 18 until they turn 26, regardless of income.

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Sexual Health Education

Research shows that youth with a history of foster care are more likely than their peers to experience early pregnancy and parenting. It is the role of Family Services Workers to ensure pro-active access to age-appropriate, medically accurate information about reproductive health care, the prevention of unplanned pregnancy, and the prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections. It is also the role of Family Services Workers to support reproductive health treatment and intervention that is determined to be medically appropriate. These efforts should be summarized in the youth’s case plan and documented in case notes. Per Vermont law, youth of any age are permitted to seek reproductive health services without parent/guardian or partner permission. For additional information, see related policies section.

Financial Literacy and Credit Checks

Youth need opportunities to prepare for managing their finances in young adulthood. YDP supports these activities, but Family Services Workers should also encourage youth to participate in part-time employment, open a bank account, and identify community financial education resources. These opportunities and efforts should be summarized in the youth’s case plan and documented in case notes.

The division has a centralized process for obtaining credit reports annually for youth ages 14 and older, initiating the remediation process when there are identified issues, and providing credit check information to Family Services Workers. Family Services Workers will help youth to understand the report and to resolve any inaccuracies. For additional information, see related policies section.

Driving and Independent Transportation

Transportation is a significant barrier that youth with foster care experience face in their transition to adulthood. It impacts every aspect of well-being and is often an impediment to meeting education and employment goals. Public transportation options are not available for all youth. For youth who do not have access to safe and reliable public transportation options, obtaining a driver's license is critical to their future success.

DCF shall support youth in care, when appropriate to age and other circumstances, to receive assistance, knowledge, and skills related to preparing to drive. Obtaining a driver's license is a normal and healthy experience for youth in foster care. Active efforts to support this goal include ensuring that youth are able to engage in the required number of driving practice hours, having access to a vehicle for the required driving test, and identification of appropriate car insurance plans.

Youth in the custody of the Department should be encouraged to obtain their drivers’ permit when they have reached 15 years of age. Youth who are in the custody of the Department will

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need guardian permission to take the driver’s permit and driver’s license exams. The Family Services Worker, or another DCF representative, must sign the applications before youth take the required tests. Youth should be encouraged to complete a driver education course upon obtaining a drivers’ permit. Most high schools offer driver education classes but oftentimes, these opportunities may not be available. For youth engaged in services, YDP may contribute to the costs of driver’s permits, licenses, private driver education courses, and car insurance premiums.

Youth Development Program (YDP)

In Vermont, federally required Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood services are administered through the Youth Development Program (YDP). In coordination with each DCF Family Services district office, Youth Development Coordinators (YDCs) assist youth to achieve safety, well-being, permanency, and self-sufficiency skills as they transition from custody to young adulthood and independent community settings.

YDP supports current and former foster youth with:

- Transitioning to self-sufficiency by providing services;
- Receiving the education, training, and services necessary to obtain employment;
- Preparing for and entering post-secondary training and educational institutions;
- Providing personal and emotional support through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults;
- Providing financial, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other appropriate support and services;
- Ensuring that youth have regular, on-going opportunities to engage in developmentally appropriate activities.

Family Services Workers are required to refer all youth in custody to YDP at age 14. In districts where there are YDP capacity challenges, DCF District Directors will work with YDP contract providers to prioritize which youth are served. Referral forms should be complete and provide sufficient information for delivery of services. Family Services Workers should promote active participation of all youth who have reached their 17th birthday. These youth are at a critical stage of preparing for their future and will be prioritized for services by the program.

Youth are eligible for services from YDP from ages 14 to 23. Family Services Workers should encourage youth to access this resource as needed. More information about the roles and responsibilities of YDCs can be found in Appendix 6.

At times, DCF may be required to place a youth in custody out-of-state and it may be challenging for YDP to effectively serve these youth. In these cases, it is the responsibility of the Family Services Worker to ensure that these same transitional services are provided to the youth. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood services are provided in all states. Contact information for Independent Living Coordinators by state can be found [here](#).

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Youth have the opportunity to access **youth investment grants** through YDP. Youth investment grants are intended to provide opportunities for youth ages 14-23 to explore identity and interests and to build strengths, resources, skills, and positive connections to peers, adults, and communities. These concrete supports are also available for youth in times of need, with a goal of helping youth to maintain stability, build assets, eliminate barriers to achieving goals, crisis prevention, and recovery. In coordination with youth, Family Services Workers, placement providers, and other team members, YDCs develop funding requests that tie directly to advancement of the youth’s goals.

Extended Care

The Vermont Youth in Transition Law ensures the provision of extended care services for youth in or formerly in foster care. Extended Care Agreements (ECAs) outline supportive housing plans for youth ages 18-23 who have exited DCF custody. There are two types of Extended Care Agreements: DCF and YDP (see table below). Both types of agreements are voluntary and do not involve the youth being in custody. Youth who do not initially access extended care, withdraw, or are closed may apply for re-entry up to the age of 23. For more information about Extended Care, contact AHS.DCFFSDExtendedCare@vermont.gov or YDP@wcysb.org. The rules that direct this program can be found here: <http://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/FSD/Rules/7000.pdf>.

	DCF EXTENDED CARE	YDP EXTENDED CARE
Eligibility	Youth must turn 18 in DCF custody, be 18-23 years old, and be enrolled in high school full-time. Services can be extended for up to six months following high school graduation to ensure a smooth transition to adulthood.	Youth must have been in custody after age 16, be 18-23 years old, meet productive time criteria, and have a supportive adult they would like to live with, OR an approved independent living situation.
DCF Involvement	The DCF case stays open, youth are no longer in custody but are voluntarily in care. The FSW maintains monthly face-to-face visits, and continues to work with the youth, YDP, the placement provider, and other team members to ensure high school completion and a supportive transition from DCF care.	The DCF case is closed.
ECA	FSWs, in collaboration with youth, licensed placement providers, and YDP, must complete and submit the ECA to:	YDCs, in collaboration with youth and their Adult Living Partner (ALP), when applicable, must complete and submit the ECA to:

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	AHS.DCFFSDEExtendedCare@vermont.gov for approval. Agreements must be revised and resubmitted when the youth's placement or education status changes.	YDP@wcysb.org for approval. Agreements must be revised and resubmitted when the youth's living situation or productive activities change.
Stipend	DCF provides substitute care payments for approved living arrangements in the same manner and at the same rate paid prior to the youth's 18 th birthday.	ALPs or youth in approved independent living situations receive a monthly stipend.
Closure and Re-Entry	If youth choose to stop participating in the ECA, the lead case manager shall convene a meeting with the youth and other team members to determine if the agreement can continue as written, needs modification, or should be closed. FSWs and YDCs must notify the DCF Policy & Practice Specialist or the YDP Director (respectively) and all other involved parties when a decision has been made to terminate an agreement. Re-entry is possible for both DCF and YDP Extended Care.	

DCF Extended Care

High school graduation is an important outcome for youth exiting foster care. For many reasons, including placement changes while in foster care, many youth are not able to graduate high school prior to age 18. A DCF Extended Care Agreement (ECA) supports youth to remain in care while completing high school and achieving the goals of the case plan. Family Services Workers, in collaboration with youth, licensed placement providers, and YDP, must complete and submit an Extended Care Agreement (ECA) for approval. See Appendix 7 for the DCF ECA form. The Family Services Worker maintains an open case, monthly face-to-face visits, and continues to work with the youth, YDP, the placement provider, and other team members to ensure high school completion and a smooth transition to young adulthood. DCF shall provide substitute care payments for the youth in approved living arrangements at the same rate paid before the youth turned 18. Youth who are over 18 are legal adults and no longer in DCF custody, may voluntarily choose to remain in care while pursuing their high school diploma. Participating youth do not require DCF permission for medical treatment. At the age of 18, releases of information should be revisited and youth should provide consent for provider communication. If youth choose to stop attending school or following through with other parts of the case plan, Family Services Workers shall convene a meeting with the youth and team members to determine if the agreement can continue as written, needs modification, or should be terminated. Per regulations, youth who withdraw or are terminated from this program may apply for re-entry up to the age of 23. No residential programming established after the individual turns 18 is eligible for reimbursement.

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YDP Extended Care

YDP Extended Care provides financial support to caring adults to provide room and board to youth ages 18-23 that are no longer in DCF custody. These caring adults are often the same foster parents that youth live with prior to 18. An “Adult Living Partner” (ALP) can also be kin or other individuals identified by the youth as supportive to them. These agreements are developed by YDCs, with youth and the identified caring adults. Although participating youth no longer have an open case with DCF, Family Services Workers should assist youth with identifying natural supports and housing resources prior to leaving care and ensure that youth and families have information about YDP Extended Care.

YDP Extended Care also includes the opportunity for youth in approved independent living situations, who meet productive time requirements, to receive monthly independent living stipends.

Special Case Circumstances

Another Planned Permanent Placement (APPLA)

Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) describes exceptional case circumstances where DCF maintains care and custody of a youth and arranges a living situation in which a youth is expected to remain until adulthood. By federal law, the APPLA case plan goal should **only** be used (1) for youth over the age of 16 and (2) when other options have been evaluated and are found not be in the youth's best interest. For youth with an APPLA goal, the division is still focused on achieving permanence.

For each youth who has an APPLA case plan goal, it is required that, for each permanency hearing, the division provide written documentation of intensive and continuing efforts to place a youth permanently with a parent, relative (including adult siblings), or in a guardianship or adoptive placement. This includes attempts to locate and engage relatives not previously involved in the youth’s case plan, including the use of search technologies. Operations should be consulted on cases with an APPLA case plan goal.

Preparation for Independent Living

The Independent Living case plan goal is rarely appropriate as it does not achieve permanency or life-long connections for youth. This goal may only be used at the request of the youth and after the Family Services Workers has explored all other options. This goal must be approved by the District Director and Operations should also be consulted. The team members or District Director may consult at a District Permanency Meeting to discuss how a higher level of permanence may be achieved for a youth with an independent living case plan goal. Youth living independently, or preparing to, should be assisted in developing relationships with a network of caring adults to provide assistance into early adulthood.

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Pregnant and Parenting Youth

Pregnant or parenting youth transitioning from DCF custody need the same things that all youth need – safe and stable housing, health care, transportation, and educational and employment resources. However, this type of transition planning should complement and not replace permanency goals. It is critical that when pregnant and parenting youth exit care, they have achieved the highest level of permanency available for themselves and their child. Permanency planning efforts and timelines for permanency must be designed to address the needs of the young parent and child without one being at the expense of the other. If legal permanency cannot be achieved, older youth who are pregnant or parenting should be helped to identify a network of caring and reliable adults who are committed to providing long-term emotional support. For additional information, see related policies section.

Ensuring Continued Support for Youth with Disabilities

Some youth who exit DCF custody will need continued support as adults. Because this population of youth is especially vulnerable, adult services are limited, and the application process can be complicated, it is vital to plan ahead and to understand who the key partners are in this work. See Appendix 8 for the DCF Transition to Adult Services Checklist.

Social Security Insurance

If youth are currently receiving Social Security (SSA) or Social Security Income (SSI), or they may be eligible as adults, Family Services Workers may contact the Child Benefits Specialist and ask for assistance: Ahs.dcfssdchildbenefitsunit@vermont.gov. There are two different types of benefits for youth: SSA is a benefit from a family member and SSI is for a person with a disability.

SSA: For youth who are receiving an SSA benefit and approaching their 18th birthday, the Child Benefits Specialist will receive a student statement from Social Security. This form verifies whether a youth will continue to be in high school and if youth are disabled and receiving SSI. This form needs to be returned one month prior to youth turning 18. This will continue the SSA benefit through the month prior to the 19th birthday. The Child Benefits Specialist will contact Family Services Workers to complete this process.

SSI: For youth who are disabled, currently receiving an SSI benefit, and approaching their 18th birthday, they will need to do the Continued Disability Review (CDR). The Child Benefits Specialist will receive these documents from SSI and will contact the Family Services Workers with required next steps. The Family Services Workers will need to provide the appropriate medical evaluations and assist the youth with completing the remaining questionnaires. All documentation should be returned to the Child Benefits Specialist at

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Ahs.dcffsdchildbenefitsunit@vermont.gov. Youth will continue to receive their SSI until the review has been processed.

For youth who are receiving **both SSA and SSI**: They will need to submit a Disabled Adult Child Application (DACA). The Child Benefits Specialist will notify the Family Services Workers when a DACA needs to be completed. The Family Services Worker will need to provide the appropriate documentation and assist the youth with completing the application. All documentation should be returned to the Child Benefits Specialist at: ahs.dcffsdchildbenefitsunit@vermont.gov.

For youth who are **not receiving SSI or SSA** in custody, but could be eligible (for example, previously eligible for SSI benefits but were suspended due to receiving Title IV-E funds), they will need to submit a new application for benefits 180 days prior to the youth's 18th birthday. Family Services Workers need to assist youth with completing the application and gathering the Disability Report, Function Report, and the authorization to communicate with Social Security (Medical Release Form 827). This does not need to be submitted through the Child Benefits Specialist, but the staff can assist Family Services Workers with this process.

Developmental Services

Youth with developmental disabilities (diagnosis of an intellectual disability, or an Autism Spectrum Disorder, and significant deficits in adaptive functioning) may be eligible for Developmental Services as adults. If a youth may be eligible, at 17 years old, the Family Services Worker must contact the local Designated Agency (DA) for evaluation and coordination. If a youth qualifies for developmental services as a child, Family Services Workers may still need to contact the DA to determine eligibility for adult developmental services. Contact the Division's Specialized Services Unit Manager for assistance with this process. These efforts should be summarized in the youth's case plan and documented in case notes.

Adult Mental Health

Youth who have been diagnosed with the most serious mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major depression may be eligible for Community Rehabilitation Services (CRT) which can provide case management, psychiatry, employment, and counseling. If a youth may be eligible for adult mental health services, Family Services Workers must contact the local DA for evaluation and coordination when the youth is 17 years old. Contact the Division's Specialized Services Unit Manager for assistance with this process. Youth who are not eligible for CRT services may still benefit from mental health services and should be made aware of local resources. These efforts should be summarized in the youth's case plan and documented in case notes.

Adult/Public Guardianship

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With the youth’s team, determine if there is a need for adult guardian. The Family Services Worker may contact the Division’s Specialized Services Unit Manager for assistance with this process.

If the team determines the youth may need an adult guardian and there is no identified person that can act as guardian, the Family Services Worker must complete the petition for public guardianship and submit to the State’s Attorney when the youth is 17.5 years old. The form can be found here: <http://ddsd.vermont.gov/content/petition-guardianship-services-adult-dd>. The **family** court will order a psychological evaluation to determine eligibility.

When there is an identified person that can act as an adult youth’s guardian, a petition must be submitted to **probate** court when a youth is 17.5 years old.

If a youth is eligible for an adult guardian and is still in high school, the Family Services Worker should notify the Educational Surrogate Coordinator with the Agency of Education to maintain the current Educational Surrogate Parent or to transfer the role to the adult guardian. These efforts should be summarized in the youth’s case plan and documented in case notes.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Adolescent Policy Requirements (grid)
- Appendix 2: List of Rights (form)
- Appendix 3: Transition to Adulthood (90-Day) Plan (form)
- Appendix 4: Letter Template for Official Proof of Foster Care (form)
- Appendix 5: Appointing a Health Care Agent (guidance and form)
- Appendix 6: YDP/DCF Roles & Responsibilities (guidance)
- Appendix 7: DCF Extended Care Agreement (form)
- Appendix 8: DCF Transition to Adult Services (checklist)

DCF-FSD Policy 160: Supporting Adolescents in DCF Custody

Requirement	Form	Age	Additional Information
Promote “normalcy” and healthy development opportunities		All children and youth	Ensure that youth have access to normal developmentally appropriate opportunities. See DCF Family Services Policy 75: Normalcy and the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard (RPPS) for more information.
Important Contact Information Sheet	Contact Information Sheet	All children upon entering care	Provide this form to the child/youth as soon as the important members of their team and their contact information are known. The annual review is to ensure that youth still have a copy of the form with current contact information.
List of Rights	List of Rights, Case Plan, and 90-Day Plan	14 and older	Beginning at age 14, provide the list of rights. The annual review is to ensure that youth still have a copy of their rights and understand how to obtain important documents or items for their transition to adulthood.
Credit Report		14 and older	FSD has a centralized process for obtaining annual credit reports for youth ages 14 and older. FSWs will help youth to understand the report and to resolve any inaccuracies.
Referral to the Youth Development Program (YDP)	YDP Referral	14	Services are voluntary and youth may decline services. Youth are eligible for services from age 14 to 23. YDP provides access to youth investment grants to support youth goals and needs and also provides access to YDP Extended Care.
Adult Guardianship (Public and Private)	http://ddsd.vermont.gov/content/petition-guardianship-services-adult-dd	17	With the youth’s team, determine if there is a need for an adult guardian. If a private guardian is identified, file a petition with Probate Court. If there is no potential private guardian, complete the petition for public guardianship and submit to the State’s Attorney (Family Court). Contact the Residential Services Manager for assistance with this process.
SSI		17.5	If youth are currently receiving SSI, or they may be eligible as adults, contact the Child Benefits Specialist and ask for assistance.
Developmental Services/ Adult Mental Health		17	If youth may be eligible for Developmental Services or adult mental health services, contact the local Designated Agency for evaluation and coordination.
Transition to Adulthood Plan	90-Day Plan	17.75	This plan must be completed 90 days prior to a youth turning 18 in DCF custody. YDP will assist with this requirement if youth is engaged in services.
DCF Extended Care	Extended Care Agreement (ECA)	17.75	If youth turn 18 in custody, they may remain in current placement for up to six months beyond high school graduation. Youth must attend full-time and be under the age of 23. Youth have the opportunity to access YDP Extended Care after their DCF case has closed.
Health Care Agent	Appointment of a Health Care Agent	17.75	FSWs shall provide youth with the brochure and form describing the purpose and process for designating a health care agent.
Medicaid Re-Application	http://dvha.vermont.gov/apply	17.75	Assist youth with re-applying for Medicaid insurance prior to exiting DCF custody. Youth who leave DCF custody at age 18 or older are eligible for Medicaid coverage until their 26 th birthday. Youth must reapply annually.
Registering to Vote and for the Selective Service	https://www.sss.gov	18	Inform all youth of their opportunity to register to vote at age 18. Inform male youth of their legal responsibility to register for the Selective Service at age 18.
Important Documents	Official Proof of Foster Care Letter, and 90-Day Plan	Upon discharge	Ensure youth have all essential documents prior to exiting care: official documentation to prove the child was in foster care, certified birth certificate, Social Security card, health insurance information, and a driver’s license or state identification card. Also provide copies of education and medical records that are held by DCF.

Rights of Children and Youth in DCF Custody in Vermont

The Department for Children and Families (DCF), Family Services Division (FSD) recognizes the following rights of children and youth in their custody. This list is intended to help youth to understand their rights and to guide the division and its providers in the delivery of care and services to youth with the commitment to safety, permanency, and well-being. This list of rights must be reviewed with youth in custody annually, beginning at age 14. Family Services Workers must provide the list to youth and retain a signed copy for the DCF record.

You have the right:

- To be treated with respect by FSD staff, foster parents, and providers without regard to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion and/or disability.
- To be informed in an understandable manner of the reasons FSD became involved with your family and why you are in care.
- To have family and relatives explored first as potential placement providers.
- To be provided with information about a foster family or program and, whenever possible, have an opportunity to meet the foster parent or program staff before placement occurs.
- To live in family and placement settings that provide a safe, affirming, and nurturing environment while supporting your physical and emotional safety, permanency and well-being, including encouraging your goals, interests, social and school activities. You will have access to personal possessions and privacy, with allowance for safety.
- To have reasonable access to a Family Services Worker or Supervisor who makes case plan decisions. Reasonable access includes being informed of the Family Services Worker and Supervisor's office telephone numbers and email addresses as well as a monthly visit by the Family Services Worker. You will have the opportunity to have private conversations with your Family Services Worker on a regular basis. You will also be made aware of the process for contacting the Supervisor and attorney regarding any questions or concerns. You will be informed of the names and phone numbers of your assigned attorney and Guardian ad Litem.
- To participate in the development and review of your case plan and have input into changes made to the plan. If you are age 14 or older, you will be presented with your case plan for review and signature. You will be included in case plan reviews and permanency hearings unless you chose not to or it has been determined that participation would not be safe for you. If you are unable to attend in person, you have the right to submit a written statement to be considered at the meeting.
- To be involved as appropriate with family members and siblings and to participate in the development of family time plans. You will receive support from your Family Services Worker and foster family/placement provider in maintaining positive and meaningful contact with significant people (relatives, teachers, friends, and community supports).
- To be supported to access medical, dental, vision, mental, and behavioral health services regularly and as needed.
- To have access to information contained in medical and educational records held by FSD as well as personal documents (your social security card, original birth certificate, green card, etc.). When you leave care, you will be given these personal documents and copies of medical and educational records held by FSD.
- To receive assistance in acquiring life skills, education, training, and career guidance to accomplish personal goals and prepare for the future. You will be informed of resources and case management supports available to youth ages 14-22 through the Youth Development Program.

This list has been provided to me and explained in an understandable manner.

Youth signature:	Date:
------------------	-------

My Contact List

Team Members:	Phone number:	Email:
Your Family Services Worker:		
Your Family Services Worker's Supervisor:		
Your Caregiver(s):		
Your Youth Development Coordinator:		
Your Lawyer:		
Your Counselor:		
Important Person:		
Important Person:		
Important Person:		

**DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES/FAMILY SERVICES DIVISION
TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD (90-DAY) PLAN**

Date plan completed:		Youth date of birth:		Youth Age:	
Youth name:			Family/Child #:		
Physical and mailing address:					
Phone numbers:					
E-mail address:					

Family Services Worker:	
Youth Development Coordinator:	

My Family Information: (family is defined as people youth considers to be family)			
Name	Relationship	Support Provided	I Plan to Stay Connected By

Other Important People, Mentors, Caring Adults, Friends, and Peers:

My Strengths, Interests, Hobbies, and Recreational/Enrichment Activities:

My Spiritual and Cultural Connections or Affiliations:

Housing:	
Current living situation:	
Short-term and long-term housing goals:	
Steps to achieving my housing goals:	
People that will help me achieve my housing goals:	

Education:					
Currently enrolled?		Expected graduation/ current grade:		IEP/504 Plan:	
School name and address:					
Academic supports (tutor, school counselor, VSAC, advisor, etc.):					

**DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES/FAMILY SERVICES DIVISION
TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD (90-DAY) PLAN**

Short-term and long-term education goals:	
Steps to achieving my education goals:	
People that will help me achieve my education goals:	

Employment:					
Currently employed?		Location:		Do you have a resumé?	
Career preparation services (JOBS, VR, DOL, etc.):					
Post-secondary education or vocational training:					
Short-term and long-term employment goals:					
Steps to achieving my employment goals:					
People that will help me achieve my employment goals:					

Financial	
Do you have a bank account?	
Do you have a budget?	
Do you currently receive any financial assistance?	
Do you receive Social Security payments?	
Do you have any debt?	
Do you have your credit report? Are there issues that need to be resolved?	

Medical Information:	
Health insurance:	
Doctor and last routine visit:	
Dentist and last routine visit:	
Special health needs:	
Currently in mental health/substance abuse treatment? Or in the past? If so, counselor/therapist:	
Past mental health diagnosis:	
Current mental health symptoms:	
Current medication:	

**DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES/FAMILY SERVICES DIVISION
TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD (90-DAY) PLAN**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

I have participated in the development of this plan.

_____ Youth's initials

I have been told that I can access the Youth Development Program for case management and financial services from age 14 to 23. I am aware of the Extended Care resources for which I may be eligible.

_____ Youth's initials

I have received the list of rights for children and youth in DCF custody and they were explained to me in an understandable way.

_____ Youth's initials

I have received a certified birth certificate, Social Security card, state-issued identification card, and education and medical records held by DCF.

_____ Youth's initials

I know that I must re-apply to continue Medicaid health insurance benefits when I exit DCF custody, and again each year. I am aware that when I move I must submit a verification form with my new address.

_____ Youth's initials

I have been told that when I am 18, I can choose a "health care agent" that can make medical choices for me if I am not able. I have received information and a form that I can fill out if I want to choose a health care agent.

_____ Youth's initials

I know that 30 days prior to leaving foster care, I am eligible to apply for 3Squares (food stamps).

_____ Youth's initials

By signing below, this means we will all work to complete the steps necessary to help the youth complete their transition plan.

	Signature	Date
Youth:		
DCF Family Services Worker:		
Youth Development Coordinator:		
Other Caregiver/Advocate:		
Other Caregiver/Advocate:		

LEGISLATIVE & REGULATORY REFERENCES:

- Public Law (P.L.) 110-351, which states that a Transition Plan must be developed at the direction of the youth during the 90-day period prior to the youth aging out. The plan must contain specific options on housing, health insurance, education, local opportunities for mentors/continuing support services and workforce support/employment services. P.L. 111-148 requires providing foster youth with the information about a Power of Attorney for Health Care.

Copies to: Youth - DCF Case File - YDP – Others identified by the youth

**DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES/FAMILY SERVICES DIVISION
TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD (90-DAY) PLAN**

PARTICIPANT LOCATOR FORM

How do we keep in touch with you?

Youth Name:		
Address:		
Email:		
Social Networks:		
Phone Numbers:	Home:	
	Cell:	
	Work:	

Significant people who always know how to reach you (parents, relatives, friends, mentors):

1. Name:		2. Name:	
Relationship:		Relationship:	
Address:		Address:	
Email:		Email:	
Phone Numbers:		Phone Numbers:	
Home:		Home:	
Cell:		Cell:	
Work:		Work:	
3. Name:		4. Name:	
Relationship:		Relationship:	
Address:		Address:	
Email:		Email:	
Phone Numbers:		Phone Numbers:	
Home:		Home:	
Cell:		Cell:	
Work:		Work:	

Signatures:

By signing this, I give YDP permission to contact the people I have listed here for the purpose of getting in touch with me for activities related to the Youth Development Program. I understand that they will ask for me and that I gave them permission to call. They will leave messages for me if needed. They will not release any personal information about me other than I agreed to work with YDP. This information may be used to contact me as part of a study for foster care outcomes over time, also known as the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD).	
Youth Signature:	Date:
Signature of Guardian (as needed):	Date:

State of Vermont
Department for Children and Families
Family Services Division

Agency of Human Services

District Office Address
City, State, Zip Code

Date

To Whomever it May Concern:

Please accept this letter as official documentation verifying that Youth First Name Last Name, D.O.B.: MM/DD/YYYY was in DCF custody for the following dates: MM/DD/YYYY - MM/DD/YYYY.

Respectfully,

Name
Job Title



Appointing a Health Care Agent Practice Guidance

DCF Family Services Policy:

Federal law requires that youth in custody receive information on the importance of formally designating another individual to make health care treatment decisions on their behalf if they are unable to make these decisions as an adult. Family Services Workers shall provide the youth with a written explanation of how to appoint a health care agent. This discussion shall be noted in case notes, case plans, and in the youth's Transition to Adulthood Plan.

Background:

- All adults are presumed to have capacity to make medical decisions for themselves.
- Only adults (18 years of age and over) with decisional capacity can complete advance directives. An advance directive is a legal document that allows a capacitated person to appoint a decision maker (*health care agent*) to speak on their behalf if they become unable to speak for themselves. Advance directives also provide a way for a person to communicate their goals and priorities regarding health care decision and end-of-life treatments in advance of a serious illness should they become incapacitated.
- In Vermont, there is no default person legally authorized to make medical decisions for someone who is unable to do so for themselves. It is not automatically an individual's spouse or next of kin who will make these decisions if an individual becomes incapacitated.
- Adults who have guardians (with authority to make medical decisions) are not able to complete advance directives.
- Health care agents can make any medical decision that a patient with capacity would make for themselves. In doing so the agent must consider any instructions written in an advance directive (if applicable) and/or the wishes of the person (if known). If the agent does not know what the person would want, then decisions shall be made based on what is in the person's best interest.

Guidance:

- Review and provide these tools:
 - Brochure: *Appointing a Health Care Agent: Take the First Step*
 - Form: *Appointment of a Health Care Agent, Vermont Advance Directive for Health Care Decisions*
- Everyone 18 years of age or older should be supported in appointing a health care agent. Sudden accident or illness can happen to anyone at any time. A person doesn't need to be dying to need a health care agent.
- Advance care planning conversations should be framed as an empowering process that helps a person plan for the unexpected, take control of future decisions, and identify the person(s) most trusted to make health care decisions.

- Advance Directive forms should be reviewed from time to time and updated or modified as needed. Goals and values change as people age, so too do an individual's circle of friends and/or family. If a relationship changes or an individual becomes married, divorced, etc., a new health care agent can be identified. Similarly, if health care status changes, new priorities can be described.
- When making changes to an advance directive, a new advance directive must be completed and properly signed and witnessed.
- If an individual feels that they have no one to appoint as their health care agent, they can describe quality of life values, situations or circumstances to be considered when making medical treatment decisions in the future.
- Professionals that provide youth with assistance in this area are encouraged to complete advance directives for themselves.
- Division staff are prohibited from acting as a health care agent for individuals currently or formerly involved with the Department.
- Copies of completed forms should be given to the identified health care agent(s), the individual's primary care provider, the hospital where they are most likely to receive their care, and the Vermont Advance Directive Registry (with the required completed Registry Agreement). The original should be retained by the individual.

Resources:

- [Vermont Statutes Title 18, Chapter 231: Advance Directives for Health Care](#)
- Vermont Ethics Network
- Office of the Public Guardian
- Adult Services Division
- Vermont Legal Aid
- Disability Rights Vermont
- DAIL Ethics Committee

DCF and YDP Roles and Responsibilities

DCF-FSD Family Services Workers (FSW) collaborate with the Youth Development Program (YDP) to provide voluntary coordinated and complimentary case management services that best meet the needs of youth and families. For youth that choose to access YDP, services will include goal setting, exploring interests, making connections, and successfully transitioning to adulthood. The focus of YDP services will shift over time, based on the youth’s age, interests, and needs.

- Engaging youth ages 14-16 in normalcy, career exploration, education, and community connection activities,
- Engaging with all youth 17-18 in making and implementing plans for their future as young adults, and
- Supporting youth ages 18-23 in achieving their plans for education, employment, safe and stable housing, connections to caring adults and community, and access to health care.

The purpose of this document is to clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of DCF and YDP on cases where they are jointly serving youth in DCF custody.

Referral and Intake

- DCF must complete and submit a referral to YDP for youth in custody when they turn 14.
- Youth who are 17 are prioritized by DCF and YDP for engagement in the program. In districts where there are capacity challenges, DCF District Directors will work with YDP to prioritize the caseload.
- The specific roles of DCF and YDP are discussed with youth and families at the start of YDP services. DCF and YDP review the responsibilities of the agencies with youth and families regularly. Any necessary changes based on staffing availability or status of the case are discussed with the family.
- If there is disagreement about the services to be provided by DCF and/or YDP, supervisors at DCF and YDP will discuss further and make necessary decisions.
- To maximize participation with YDP, DCF District Directors (and other staff they consider appropriate) and YDP meet quarterly to conduct a program and utilization review, determine priority cases, and review of cases eligible for referral.

Contact and Engagement with Youth and Family

- DCF meets monthly face-to-face contact requirements.
- YDP meets with youth in-person at least once per month (family is included if appropriate/preferred). If the needs of youth require additional services, or if the youth chooses not to participate with YDP, DCF and YDP will discuss the circumstances and make a plan to address the youth’s needs.
- DCF ensures that there is a monthly team meeting with the youth, family, YDP and other service providers to review progress made toward meeting case plan goals and additional services/supports that may be needed to achieve success. YDP attends and participates in team meetings.

NYTD Surveys

- When requested by DCF Central Office, DCF facilitates NYTD surveys with 17-year-old youth in custody. YDP assists DCF with collecting these surveys as needed.
- YDP facilitates NYTD surveys and locator forms with 19 and 21-year-old youth as needed.

Communication and Documentation

- DCF meets documentation requirements of the case (disposition report, case plans, case notes, etc.). DCF obtains necessary information from YDP to inform development of reports.

- For youth in DCF custody, YDP provides monthly progress notes to FSWs for each youth served by the program. DCF will file monthly progress notes in the youth's DCF file.
- YDP notifies DCF immediately of any behaviors or circumstances that may require a response from DCF.
- DCF notifies YDP immediately of any change in circumstances that may impact the work with the youth and family (custody changes, probation violation, placement change, etc.).
- DCF and YDP obtain releases of information from the youth and family to communicate with each other and other involved service providers to monitor progress toward case plan goals.
- YDP agencies will be evaluated annually by the Statewide YDP Administrative team. DCF district offices will provide feedback for the annual review of YDP services.

Case Plan Reviews and Transition Plans

- DCF writes the case plans and convenes the case plan review meetings. DCF requests information from YDP about the youth's engagement in services to include in the case plan. YDP provides youth-specific information to the DCF Family Services Worker. DCF invites YDP to the case plan review and YDP attends and participates.
- DCF is responsible for arranging and facilitating the Transition to Adulthood (90-Day) Plan meeting. With youth and their identified supports, DCF and YDP meet to complete the Transition to Adulthood (90-Day) Plan.

Extended Care, YDP Plans of Care, and Youth Investment Grants

- With youth and their teams, FSWs develop and submit DCF Extended Care Agreements (ECAs).
- With youth and their teams, YDP develops and submits YDP ECAs.
- In coordination with youth and their guardians, YDP develops and submits Plans of Care (POC) that support the youth's goals.
- YDP develops and submits requests for Youth Investment Grants (YIGs).
- DCF and YDP provide ECAs, POCs, and YIGs to each other and collect signatures within 10 days of the start date of the agreement. DCF will maintain a copy of all signed ECAs and YDP POCs in the youth's file.

YDP Transfer Protocol for Youth Placed Out-of-District

- DCF should notify YDP when youth move out of district. When youth are placed outside of their DCF district of origin, YDP and DCF staff should consider transferring that youth to the local YDP office. When appropriate, transfers should be made promptly.
- For youth placed out-of-district, the DCF District, current YDP, and YDP local to placement should establish communication. DCF and YDP should schedule a meeting with the youth and other relevant team members to facilitate the transfer.
- YDP should communicate via email with FSWs to share updates, monthly case notes, schedule team meetings, and to share ECAs and collect signatures from FSWs as needed.
- YDP and DCF should communicate with YDP in the original district when youth have case plan reviews or permanency hearings and for youth plans to return to the original district.
- When youth are placed out-of-state, the FSW should maintain communication with the local YDP regarding the youth, scheduled team meetings, case plan reviews, and the timeframe for the youth's return to Vermont. Whenever possible, YDP should maintain a relationship with the youth while they are placed out-of-state and support transition planning.
- DCF can request statewide YDP contact information from the local YDP or they can access contact information on the YDP website: vtyouthdevelopmentprogram.org. YDP and DCF staff may contact the YDP Statewide Administrative Team via email (YDP@wcysb.org) for additional guidance related to transfers.

DCF EXTENDED CARE AGREEMENT

- A DCF Extended Care Agreement (ECA) supports youth to remain in an approved living arrangement while they finish high school and continue to follow the most recent DCF case plan.
- Family Services Workers, in collaboration with youth, licensed placement providers, and YDP, must complete and submit the ECA, most recent DCF case plan, and the youth’s Transition to Adulthood (90-Day) Plan to AHS.DCFSEExtendedCare@vermont.gov for approval. Agreements must be reviewed, revised, and resubmitted when the youth’s placement or education status changes.
- Youth must turn 18 in DCF custody and be 18-23 years old to be eligible.
- No new residential programming may be established after a youth turns 18.
- Youth must be enrolled in and attending a full-time secondary education program. A DCF Extended Care Agreement may be extended for up to six months following high school graduation to support a smooth transition to young adulthood.
- The Family Services Worker maintains an open case, monthly face-to-face visits, and continues to work with the youth, YDP, the placement provider, and other team members to ensure high school completion and a supportive transition from DCF care.
- Participating youth are adults and do not require DCF permission for medical treatment. Releases of information should be revisited, and youth should provide consent for provider communication.
- If youth choose to stop attending school or following through with other parts of the case plan, Family Services Workers shall convene a meeting with the youth, YDP, and other team members to determine if the agreement can continue as written, needs modification, or should be terminated. Youth who withdraw or are closed from this program may apply for re-entry up to the age of 23.

EFFECTIVE DATES	
Beginning:	Ending:

MY PERSONAL INFORMATION	
Name (legal and alias):	DOB:
Phone:	Email:
Name of school/education program:	
Expected date of high school graduation:	
Average monthly income:	
Information verified by: <input type="checkbox"/> Self-report <input type="checkbox"/> Other	

MY DCF INFORMATION	
Family Services Worker:	Family/Child #:
District:	Email:
Date of entry into DCF custody:	Anticipated date of discharge:

MY YDP INFORMATION	
Youth Development Coordinator:	Agency:
District:	Email:
Address:	Phone:

MY PLACEMENT (LIVING SITUATION)

Name/Agency:	
Address:	
Phone:	Email:

MY NATURAL SUPPORTS		
Name:	Relationship/Support Offered:	Contact Information:
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

MY SERVICE PROVIDERS		
Name:	Agency/Program:	Services Provided:
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

MY GOALS AND TIMELINES		
Goals:	Steps to achieve:	Timelines:
1.	•	
2.	•	
3.	•	
4.	•	

HOW EXTENDED CARE SUPPORTS MY GOALS

MY WEEKLY PRODUCTIVE TIME	ACTIVITIES AND LOCATION	HOURS PER WEEK
High school or equivalent program		
Post-secondary education or vocational training		
Employment		
Therapeutic activities:		
Community involvement:		
Enrichment activities:		
Other:		

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> Most recent DCF case plan
<input type="checkbox"/> Transition to Adulthood (90-Day) Plan

SIGNATURES		DATE
Youth		
Placement Provider		
Youth Development Coordinator		
Family Services Worker		
District Director		
DCF Central Office		

Youth Name:			DOB:		
Lead Coordinator for Transition:					
Required Tasks		Youth Age	Organization + Individual(s) Responsible		Date Completed
Adult Services	Apply for Developmental Services	17	DCF		
	Assess or re-assess for eligibility	17	DA		
	Determine eligibility	17.5	DA		
	Conduct Needs Assessment	17.5	DA/SSA		
	Submit funding proposal - local	17.75	DA/SSA		
	Submit funding proposal - state	17.75	DA		
	Notify team of results	17.75	DA		
Guardianship	Determine if the youth may need an adult guardian and the specific areas of need, if applicable, OR determine if the youth is a candidate for Supported Decision-Making	17	Team		
	Identify a responsible adult (private guardian)	17.5	Team		
	If a private guardian is identified, file a petition with Probate Court	17.5	Team		
	If there is no potential private guardian, complete the petition for public guardianship and submit to the State's Attorney (Family Court)	17.5	DCF		
	Check on status (State's Attorney/Family Court or Probate Court)	17.5-17.75	DCF		
Benefits	Consult with DCF Central Office (REU and SSU) about the youth's needs and next steps for applying for SSI, if applicable	16	DCF		
	Coordinate with REU to apply for Social Security benefits	17.5	DCF		
	Coordinate with REU to re-apply for Medicaid	17.75	DCF		
	Check with REU on status	17.75	DCF		
	Identify a representative payee	17.75	Team		
Youth that are 18+ make their own educational decisions unless they have been assigned a guardian. Youth without a guardian may continue to use their same educational surrogate, if they wish, to consult on educational matters. For youth with a guardian:					
Education	Contact the appropriate Local Educational Agency (LEA)		AOE		
	If the youth is special education eligible, notify the youth's ed surrogate		DCF/AOE		
	If there is no ed surrogate, AOE will work with DCF, DA, LEA and the Public Guardian to identify an appropriate candidate		AOE, DCF, LEA, DA, PG		
	LEA and IEP Team will review current IEP or 504 plan and determine whether it meets the youth's current needs		LEA AND IEP TEAM		
	LEA will warn IEP meeting and invite all involved parties		LEA		
	If a DA or a State Agency is funding the youth's housing, AOE will deem the student state-placed and reimburse LEA using Worksheet A		DA, AOE, LEA		

Acronyms and Definitions

Developmental Services	Supports and services for individuals with developmental disabilities, provided by SSAs and DAs
Needs Assessment	An evaluation and determination of individualized needs and the services necessary to support an individual
Funding Proposal	A narrative of an individual’s history, strengths, challenges, and needs, accompanied by a budget to fund supports and services to meet these needs
DA	Designated Agency
SSA	Specialized Services Agency or Social Security Administration, depends on context
OPG	Office of Public Guardian
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
Representative Payee	A payee manages the Supplemental Security Income benefit on behalf of a beneficiary who is unable to manage this benefit
Supported Decision-Making	A term used to describe a series of relationships, practices, arrangements, and agreements, designed to assist an individual with a disability to make and communicate decisions about their life
DCF	Department for Children and Families
REU	DCF-Family Service Division’s Revenue Enhancement Unit
SSU	DCF-Family Service Division’s Specialized Services Unit
AOE	Agency of Education
LEA	Local Education Agency
IEP	Individualized Education Plan

