COUNTDOWN TO 21 (C21) SUPPORTING TRANSITION-AGED FOSTER YOUTH TOWARD SUCCESSFUL ADULTHOOD

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MEET THE TEAM



Kristi Anthony
C21 Facilitator



Dr. Tracey Burris
C21 Facilitator



Tamela Tunnell
C21 Facilitator



Cherry Lyman
C21 Facilitato



Dianna Wilson
C21 Facilitator



Kathy Lane
C21 Facilitator



Janise Alston
C21 Facilitator



Renita Foster
C21 Facilitato

DCFS Program & Policy Procedure 302

See Procedures 302.APPENDIX M – Transition Planning for Adolescents

Countdown to 21 is a Department initiative aimed at improving outcomes for transition-aged foster youth in care that improves youth driven transition planning activities starting at age 19 and continuing until the young adult's 21st birthday.

Empowering youth through partnership, planning, and support.

Program Overview

What is Countdown to 21

- Youth-driven transition planning begins at age 19 and continues through age 21
- Emphasizes:
- Youth voice
- Youth focus
- Youth empowerment

Empowering youth through partnership, planning, and support.

Journey to Young Adulthood

Key Areas of Transition Planning

- Engage young adults in decision-making
- Education & employment
- Financial independence
- Physical & emotional health
- Housing, safety, & stability
- Coordination of systems and services

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Connections Matter

Importance of Supportive Relationships

Transition-aged foster youth benefit from:

Trusted adult relationships
Stable support systems
Positive mentorship
Community resources
Networks that encourage growth and success

Goal

Increase life skills, self-sufficiency, and long-term stability.

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When C21 Meetings Occur
Meeting Schedule

Required Meetings
Age 19
Age 20.9 (within 90 days of aging out)
Additional Meeting
Pregnant or parenting transition age foster youth:
Additional meeting at age 20.3
Referral to Teen Parenting Service Network (TPSN)
C21 Intake Coordinators will email a calendar invite to all Child Welfare team members Illinois.gov email address – including the date, time, assigned facilitator and zoom link along with clients information

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Before the C21 Meeting
What to Expect

Facilitator Responsibilities

Contact youth and supports directly

Explain the purpose of the meeting

Encourage participation

Review/update transition planning documents

Required Documentation

CFS 2032-1 Youth Driven Transition Plan

CFS 375-2 ILO/TLP Transition Plan

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Before the C21 Meeting
What to Expect

Youth Participation

Young adults are encouraged to invite supports including:

Parents
Foster parents
GALs/CASA
Teachers Mentors
Siblings
Significant others

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During the C21 Meeting

19.0 & 20.3 Meeting Tasks

Meeting Objectives

Create/update transition plans
Review eligible programs and resources
Discuss healthcare power of attorney
Verify placement status
Refer youth for financial literacy training

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During the C21 Meeting Youth Voice & Partnership

The Focus

Youth identify their priorities and goals

Youth are given VOICE and POWER

The transition plan belongs to the young adult

Team Role

Partner with youth

Provide support and guidance

Balance wishes with realistic planning

Important Reminder

Not every domain must be completed during one meeting.

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During the C21 Meeting

19.0 & 20.3 Meeting Tasks Department of Children and Family Services

Programs Discussed

EIP (Employment Incentive Program
ETV (Educational Training Voucher)
YIC (Youth In College)
FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid
DHS Services (Adult to Transition Services – meeting the DD critera)
SSI and Teen Parenting Services Network
DCFS Youth Cash Assistance and Youth Housing Programs

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During the C21 Meeting

20.9 Meeting Tasks

Preparing for Transition from Care

Additional Tasks

Complete CFS 374 Transition Fund Application

Complete C21 902 Exception Form (if applicable)

Verify:

- Birth certificate
- Social Security card
- State ID
- Medical records

Planning Topics

Healthcare continuation

Housing Supports

Employment Supports

Educational Supports

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Financial Literacy Training

Required Financial Education

Course Topics

Understanding paychecks/paystubs
Opening/managing bank accounts
Budgeting
Building and protecting credit
Saving and investing

Requirement

Youth should be referred upon turning age 19.

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Transitional Funds Eligibility

Eligibility Criteria

Youth must:

Participate in the 90-day C21 meeting

Complete transition planning documents

Identify housing plans

Identify a supportive adult resource

Complete financial literacy training

Submit CFS 374 Application & Budget Sheet

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Healthcare After DCFS

Medical Coverage & Support

Healthcare Benefits

Medicaid eligibility up to age 26

Managed Care Organization enrollment

All Kids enrollment for TPSN youth/children

Important Information

Private insurance must be reported to avoid automatic YouthCare enrollment.

YouthCare Contact

(844) 289-2264

Illinois YouthCare

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Countdown to 21 Summary

Building Stability & Success

The Countdown to 21 process supports:

Youth voice

Transition planning

Stability

Independence

Long-term success

Final Message

Together, we help transition-aged foster youth prepare for adulthood with confidence, support, and opportunity.

Empowering youth through partnership, planning, and support.

Countdown to 21 (C21) Supporting Transition-Aged Foster Youth Toward Successful Adulthood

Questions & Comments

Thank You

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