



FAST FACTS

Educational Well Being and School Stability for Youth in Foster and Out of Home Care

Premise: *Youth are entitled to remain in their same school when feasible.*

The *Fostering Connections Act* requires DCF to coordinate with local education agencies to ensure that children remain in the same school at the time of placement, unless it has been determined **NOT** to be in the student's best interest to do so.

The *Uninterrupted Scholars Act* amends FERPA to permit schools to release education records to "an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency" who has the right to access a student's case plan, and when the agency or organization is "legally responsible" for the child's "care and protection."

RESEARCH SUPPORTS school stability:

- Every time a student changes schools they lose approximately 4-6 months of educational progress.
- High school students who changed schools even once were *less than half* as likely to graduate high school.
- The educational outcomes of foster youth trail behind national averages in standardized test scores, a disparity which researchers attribute to frequent school changes.

PROMISING NEWS to encourage stability efforts:

- When youth in foster care stay in the same middle and high school setting their likelihood of graduating high school doubles when compared to youth whose educational placements change.
- Through education and child-welfare collaborations, the Barre, VT DCF district was able to improve educational stability for students in foster care from 37% to 85% in a 5 year period.

Work to keep local kids local.

RESOURCES

- *Blueprint for Change: Educational Success for Children in Foster Care*
www.americanbar.org/groups/child_law/what_we_do/projects/education.html
- *VT-FUTRES Toolkit and Links* (under construction) - www.vtfutres.org

How Schools Can Support Students in Foster Care – General Information

The Role of Schools in Supporting Children in Foster Care – National Support Center Brief

- Strong explanation of the Child Welfare system and how it intersects with education.

<http://www.promoteprevent.org/sites/www.promoteprevent.org/files/resources/The%20Role%20of%20Schools.docx.pdf>

What Teachers and Educators Can Do to Help Youth in Foster Care

- A basic, practical handout to raise teachers' awareness.

<http://www.fostercaremonth.org/getinvolved/toolkit/support/documents/what%20teachers%20and%20educators%20can%20do.pdf>

Meeting the Educational Needs of Students in the Child Welfare System: A Tool for Teachers

- A 14 page guide for teachers.

http://www.jlc.org/sites/default/files/press_release_pdfs/Meeting%20the%20Educational%20Needs%20of%20Students%20in%20the%20Child%20Welfare%20System%20-%20For%20Teachers.pdf

For School Administrators:

The Legal Center for Foster Care and Education - web page with multiple documents

- http://www.americanbar.org/groups/child_law/what_we_do/projects/education.html

Foster Care and Special Education:

Supporting Students in Foster Care: Trauma-Sensitive Team Meetings and IEP's.

- A series of articles from the Federation for Children with Special Needs website-FCSN.org.

<http://vtfutres.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Trauma-Articles-FCSN.pdf>

How the IDEA and the Fostering Connections Act Can Work Together –

http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/publications/center_on_children_and_the_law/education/issue_brief_IDEA2012.authcheckdam.pdf

Helping Traumatized Students Learn: Trauma Sensitive Evaluations, Team Meeting and IEP's

- <http://vtfutres.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Trauma-Articles-FCSN.pdf>

Trauma and School Mental Health:

School Mental Health and Foster Care

- A series of 7 power point trainings.

<http://www.schoolmentalhealth.org/Resources/FostCare/TrainingPPTs>

Helping Traumatized Children Learn

- A series of 4 articles from the Federation for Children with Special Needs. Includes information on trauma-sensitive evaluations, Team Meetings and IEP's.

<http://www.schoolmentalhealth.org/Resources/FostCare/TrainingPPTs>

Video:

“Endless Dreams”

- A video to educate teachers about foster care

<http://www.casey.org/Resources/Initiatives/EndlessDreams/default.htm>