What Now?

A Guide for Young People in Nebraska's Juvenile Court System

- Child welfare process
- Planning for your future
- Forms
- Resources

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STATE OF NEBRASKA JUDICIAL BRANCH
Court Improvement Project

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**This resource is not comprehensive. Search the internet for information about places for free legal help and resources for juveniles needing legal assistance in your community.*

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NEBRASKA Good Life. Great Mission. DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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Introduction

So what's going on?

This book was made to help young people learn what happens in child welfare cases (when young people are taken from unsafe homes). If you are also involved in the juvenile justice system, look on page 19 of this book to find a link to a guide on that process.

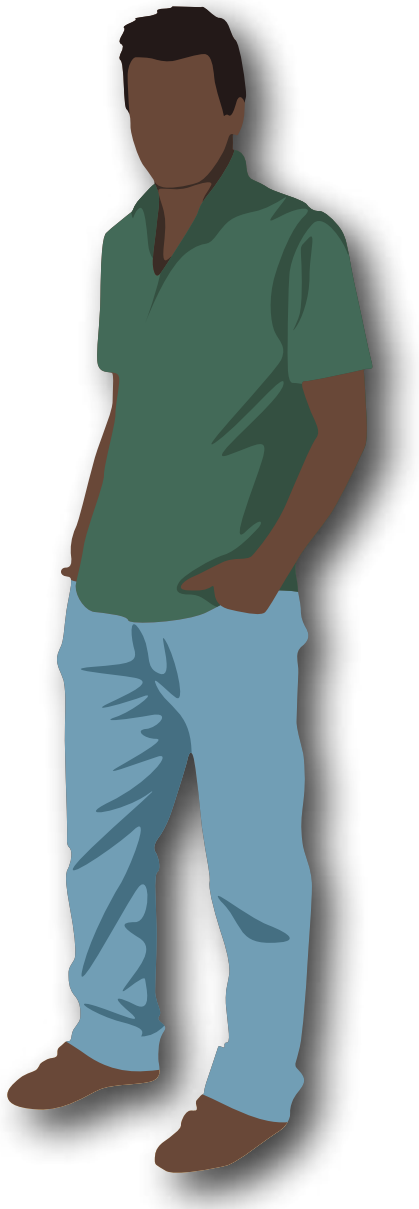
There are three sections that describe who is involved in the things going on, what things might be happening, what rights you have, and who you can contact with questions or problems.

The first section covers the Child Welfare process. If the State believes children are not safe in their home, they will file charges against parent(s). The court will hear the evidence and decide if there was any **abuse** or **neglect** going on. **You have a right to understand the system in which you are involved and to have your voice heard**. This book will show you what you can do to be heard.

The second section will help you to learn about skills and resources necessary as you transition into adulthood.

The last section of the book lists a lot of resources that might help you.

This book will help you understand the roles of the individuals involved, the systems processes and what you can do to help yourself.



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What exactly is the **Child Welfare Process?**

Understanding the process makes the entire experience less confusing and puts you in a better position to let the court know what you need. Juvenile courts started over 100 years ago in Chicago, Illinois, because people recognized that needs of young people were not being met in the adult court. Every state in the United States now has a juvenile court system.

Types of Cases Filed in Juvenile Court in Nebraska:

1. Child welfare cases generally filed against parent(s) when the state believes a child is being abused or neglected; and
2. Juvenile justice cases are filed when the State believes a young person has broken the law.

Child welfare cases are also referred to as "abuse and neglect" cases or "3(a)" cases. They are called "3(a)" cases because the law that allows the State to File the case is Nebraska Revised Statute §43-247(3)(a). In most child welfare cases, if the State files a petition, the judge will **temporarily put you in the custody or care of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)**. Then you will temporarily become a state ward, meaning that the State is responsible for your care and placement. A "3(c)" case is filed if a youth has mental health concerns that put the youth at risk of harming themselves or others.

Definitions of Abuse and Neglect

Abuse: Non-accidental infliction of injury or an act that poses substantial likelihood of bodily injury. Such injury is considered abuse regardless of whether the caregiver intended to hurt the child. Physical discipline, such as spanking, is not considered abuse as long as it is reasonable and causes no bodily injury to the child.

Neglect: Physical neglect means the failure of the parent/caregiver to provide basic needs, for example food, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, and/or a safe and sanitary living environment for the child.

How did this happen?

Hotline or police call — Most likely, this all started because someone believed you were being abused or neglected and called the abuse/neglect hotline or the police. Abuse and neglect can mean many different things. Abuse can be either physical abuse or sexual abuse. Neglect means your parent(s) is not meeting all of your basic needs. Basic needs include things such as safe shelter and food.

Investigation — Once a person calls the hotline or the police, DHHS starts an investigation to determine if you are being abused or neglected.

Petition — If DHHS or law enforcement finds that you at risk of harm in an unsafe home or environment, they ask the County Attorney to file a 3(a) petition in juvenile court. The most common reasons for filing a child welfare case are a parent's drug or alcohol use, a parent's mental health, domestic violence, unsafe home, or lack of supervision.

Court — When a petition is filed, that means a judge becomes involved in the case and will determine if abuse and neglect happened, if you are at risk of harm, and if your parent(s) need to do anything to ensure your safety. The judge may order that you live in a foster, kinship, or relative/supportive adults home while your parent(s) work on ways to address the courts concerns. The judge will also provide you an attorney called a **guardian ad litem (GAL)**, whose job is to learn about your perspective, and the needs that you identify/communicate and tell the judge what is in your best interests.

The goal of DHHS and juvenile court involvement is to help you and your family. They are there to give your family the services and help it needs to ensure success. Some things the court may order involves you, like family therapy, but there are other things the court may order that your parent(s) need to complete on their own, like drug treatment. However, never forget that you are part of this case and you have a voice. Your judge wants, and needs, to hear from you to make a good decision. you can provide the judge with your perspective, wants, and needs by completing the court questionnaire included on page 20.

What exactly is the **Child Welfare Process?**

Who are all of these people?

There are many people who are part of a juvenile court case. Some or all of the individuals listed below may be a part of your case.

Caseworkers

If you are placed in relative care, kinship care or foster care, you may meet a caseworker right away who will talk to you about what is going on. They are called *initial assessment caseworkers*. Later, you will get a caseworker who is assigned to your case. This caseworker will not be the same individual as the initial assessment worker. This is called an *on-going caseworker* or a *family permanency specialist*. Their job is to provide and coordinate services in your case and to keep in contact with you and your family on a regular basis. They also write a report to the judge to let them know how things are going.

Judge

Once a case is filed in juvenile court, a judge is assigned to the case. The judge is the person who makes the decisions about what will happen in your case. They will make sure you are getting the things you need. **If you are not getting what you need, make sure to let the judge know.**

Guardian ad Litem (GAL)

If you are involved in the child welfare system, you and your brothers and sisters will have a lawyer called a **guardian ad litem, or GAL**. The GAL is required to meet with you within two weeks of you being removed from your home. It is important that you talk with your GAL about what you want because **their job is to work for you** and what is in your best interests. Your GAL must meet with you at least every six months but should talk with you more often than that. Your GAL should also know of major changes in your life and should know what you think and want before going into a court hearing. **If you are trying to contact your GAL and they are not responding, tell your judge.** You can do this at the court hearing, or you can fill out the Youth Court Questionnaire (see questionnaire on page 20).

Your Attorney

Sometimes in a child welfare case, you are entitled to an attorney, also called a lawyer. Your attorney knows how the process works and it is their job to let you know what the law is and guide you through the process. Things that you tell your attorney are confidential, meaning they cannot tell anyone else, unless you want them to. They must work towards the outcome, or ending, that you want and the court must provide you with a lawyer at no cost if you cannot afford one.

County Attorney

The attorney who brings your case to the court's attention by filing the petition in court is called a county attorney. The county attorney has to prove to the judge that what they put in the petition is true. The county attorney represents the interests of the State and county.

Parent's Attorney

In a child welfare case, your parent(s) have a right to an attorney whose job is to advise them about the law and to advocate for their rights. If your parent(s) cannot afford an attorney, the court will appoint an attorney to represent him or her at no cost.

Court-Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)

A CASA is a volunteer who works to help you get the things you need and provide recommendations or suggestions to the court of what is in your best interests. Not every young person has a CASA volunteer, but you can ask the judge if one can be put on your case.

What exactly is the **Child Welfare Process?**

What happens in court?

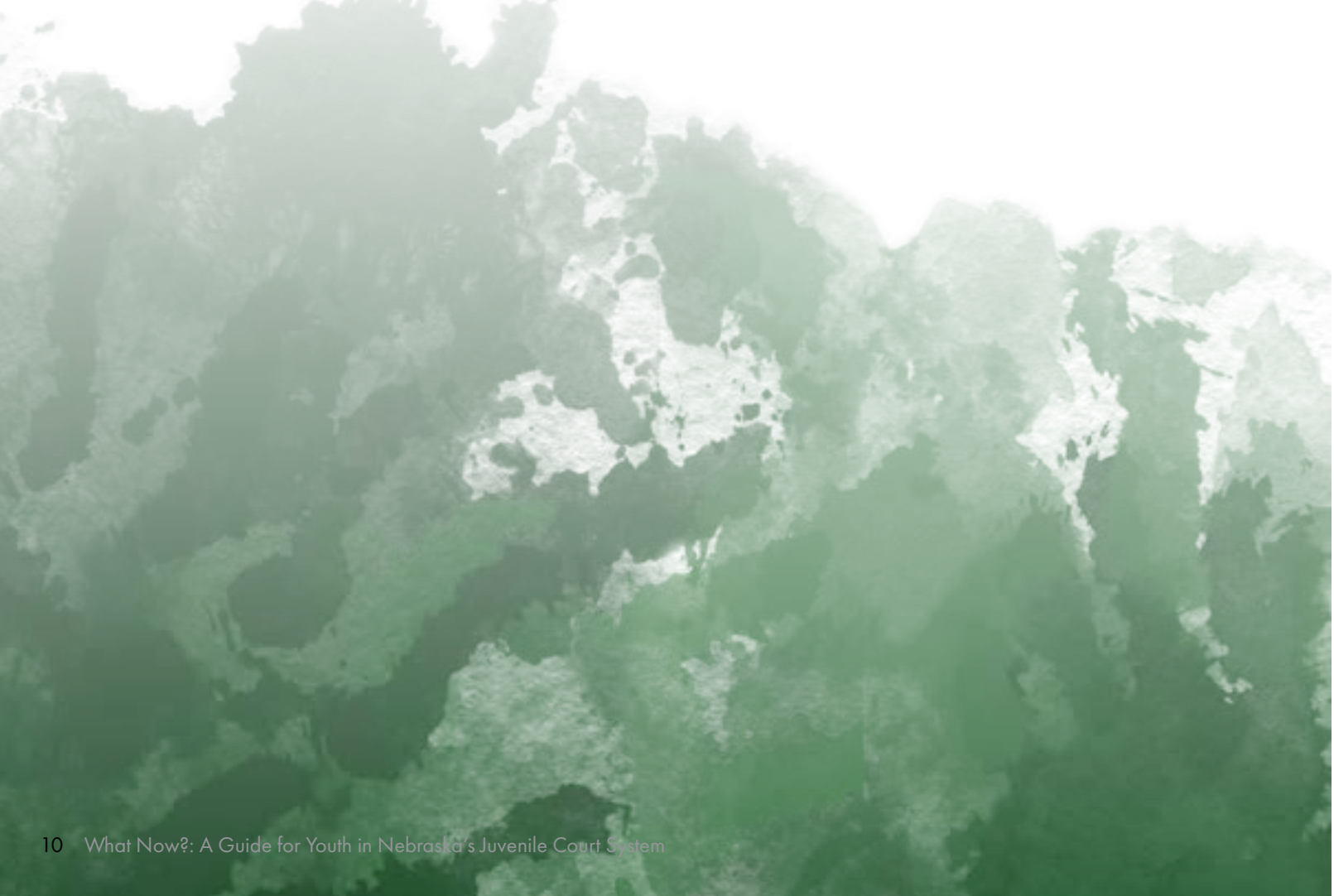
The first step in any case is the filing of a petition. A petition is a form that says what happened that led your family to juvenile court. After the filing of a petition, there are a number of court hearings that will be held. Be sure to ask your caseworker or GAL when the hearings will be held because you have a right to be there and know what's going on. Being in court is another chance for you to talk directly to the judge and make your voice heard.

Protective Custody Hearing

When a child is removed from the home, the judge must have a hearing to decide if taking you from the home was necessary and whether it was fair. The judge will decide whether reasonable efforts were made to keep you at home and whether you need to remain in foster care for a longer amount of time. The judge will likely talk about plans for you to see your parent(s) and your brothers and sisters (if you are not with them) and any services that can be started which can help your family. If the judge keeps you in temporary DHHS custody, this means that DHHS can make decisions regarding your care that would normally be made by your parent(s). Examples of decisions DHHS is charged with may include placement decisions and which school the youth will attend.

Adjudication Hearing

This is the hearing where the judge decides whether the *allegations* (allegations are the things someone claimed were happening to you that were unsafe) in the petition are true. Your parent(s) may either admit what is stated in the petition is true, or there may be a trial where the county attorney must present evidence to prove that what is stated in the petition is true. If the judge finds that the *allegations* are true, the court takes *jurisdiction* over the case. This means that the court can order certain things to be done. The court can order a plan of rehabilitation for the family so the children can return home. The rehabilitation plan may include treatment services like individual or family therapy, chemical dependency treatment. It may also include items such as obtaining suitable housing. The plan will be tailored for the needs of each individual family.



What exactly is the **Child Welfare Process?**

Disposition Hearing

The disposition hearing is where your caseworker presents a report to the judge, which lays out what steps must be taken before you can safely be returned home. The report will recommend that your parent(s) do certain things like complete drug treatment or go to therapy.

Review Hearing

After the disposition hearing, the court will hold review hearings every three to six months. The purpose of the review hearing is for the judge to check on the progress in the case and see if anything needs to be added or removed from your case plan. (See definition of Case Plan on Page 41.)

Permanency Hearing

If you are in foster care over 12 months, there will be a permanency hearing. (Learn more about Permanency on Page 13.) At this hearing the judge will review your current permanency plan and decide if it should change or remain the same. For example, if the case goal has been for you to return home to your parent(s), but there has not been much progress towards that goal, the judge may change the goal to guardianship or adoption. The judge may also keep the goal at *reunification* (going back home) depending on the specific facts of your case.

Motion for Termination of Parental Rights

The law also allows the county attorney to file a motion for termination of parental rights (TPR) if it appears that reunification with your parent(s) is not possible in your case. If a TPR is filed, it is the State requesting that your parent(s)' parental rights be terminated. If your parent(s) voluntarily give up their parental rights or if the judge finds enough evidence to terminate your parent(s)' rights, you are then free to be adopted by another family member, your foster parent(s), or another person.

What exactly is the **Child Welfare Process?**

When do things happen?

So how long do all of these things take? The short answer is that it really depends a lot on other people.

The time lines in child welfare cases are guidelines meant to help families and get you back home, or in the best possible permanent placement, as soon as it's in your best interest. Case time-lines may be longer or shorter. Sometimes attorneys ask judges to continue, or delay, a hearing. If the judge agrees, they will grant a *continuance* and the hearing will be scheduled for another date.

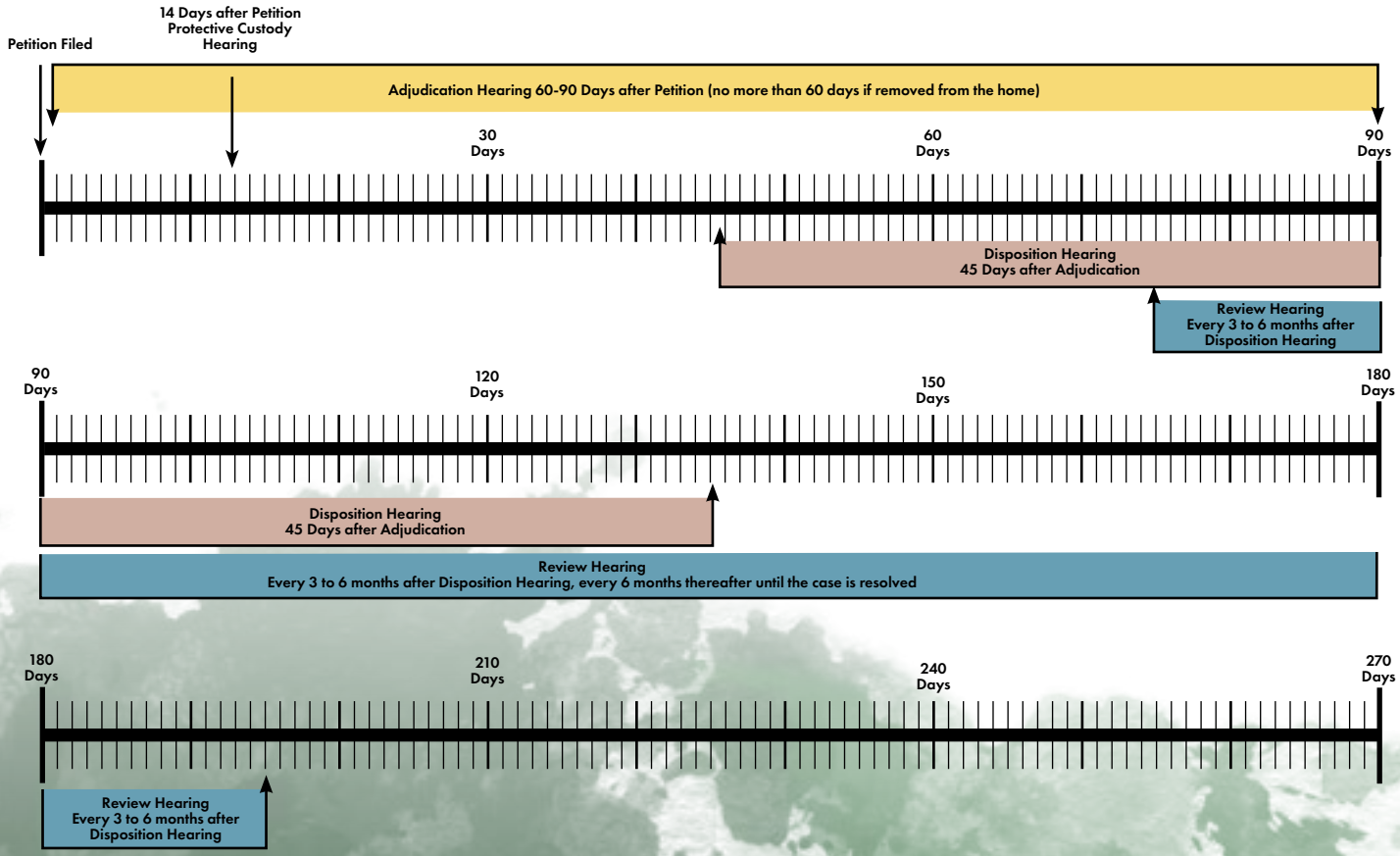
Protective Custody Hearing: This hearing should be held no later than 14 days after young person is removed from home.

Adjudication Hearing: For children/youth removed from the home, this should be within 60 days of the petition being filed. For children/youth not removed from the home, this should be held within 90 days of filing the petition. If there are other factors, such as a termination of parental rights happening at the same time as adjudication, the case has complex issues, or the service requires additional time, the hearing may not be held in the above time-lines.

Disposition Hearing: Should be held within 45 days from the date of the adjudication hearing.

Review Hearings: Every six months.

Permanency Hearings: Twelve months after the date child/youth entered foster care, and annually every year after that.



What is a **Permanency Plan?**

What Can Happen — Permanency Goals

What is Permanency?

Permanency for children in foster care includes family-based living situations that are permanent. Below are some of the permanency options available to you based on your individual case. The law is clear that the goal of juvenile court is to help you and your family in a way that causes the least amount of upset to your life. If you cannot stay at your home because of treatment or safety reasons, you should live as close to your home as is possible. (https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=43-532)

What is a Permanency Plan?

Every young person who is a state ward will have a permanency plan and a concurrent plan. A state ward is any child or youth whose legal custody by judicial determination has been retained by the court or assigned to the Department of Health and Human Services. A permanency plan is the main focus of the case and the concurrent plan is a back-up plan that is created in case the permanency plan does not work. In almost 70% of cases in Nebraska young people are reunified with their parent(s). It is the judge's job to decide which plan is in your best interests, and your input is key for the judge to make the best decision. You have a right to tell the judge what you believe is in your best interest.

The following are types of plans a court may adopt in your case:

Family Preservation

Family preservation means living with your mom and/or dad instead of going into foster care.

Reunification

Reunification means that you are in foster care now, but the goal of the case is that you return to the home that you were removed from. This could look like a Relative or Kinship Foster Home, or Foster Care. Kinship care is placement in the home of one of your family members, like "like a grandparent, cousin or teacher. Foster Care is another family home that the judge may place you in. The word "foster" means to help someone (or something) grow. You may not know the foster family you are living with, but they are there to give you a safe place to live and grow until you can return home. Let your caseworker, probation officer, GAL (guardian ad litem) and/or attorney, or CASA volunteer know if there is a relative or close family friend you would like to live with.

Guardianship

Guardianship is where relatives, your foster parent(s) or other adults in your life become your legal guardian. Any young person 10 years and older must consent to a guardianship. As your guardian they have many of the same rights and responsibilities as parent(s), but guardianship does not require the termination of your parent(s)' rights.

Adoption

If reunification or guardianship is not an option, the judge may look at adoption. The judge will look to see if there are other family members who are able to adopt you or your current foster parent(s) may adopt you as well. Before you can be adopted, your parent(s) must either agree to give up their parental rights or the court may terminate your parent(s)' rights. **If you are over 14 years old, the law requires that you consent to the adoption. (https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=43-104)**

Another Planned Permanency Living Arrangement - APPLA (also known as Independent Living)

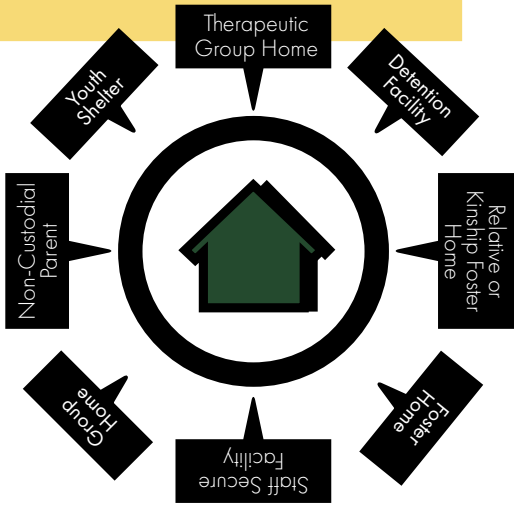
APPLA or independent living becomes more common as you get closer to your 19th birthday. If APPLA or independent living is your permanency plan, the goal of the court is to make sure that you have everything you need in order to succeed once your case is closed. Even if independent living is not your permanency plan, every young person in care who is over 14 years old must have an independent living plan.

In most cases in Nebraska – almost 70% - young people are reunified with their parent(s)

However, if that does not happen, the court will continue to keep your case open until a guardian is found, you are adopted, you enter into independent living or you turn 19 years old. As always, your input is crucial to the judge making the best decision and you have a right to tell the judge what you would like to see happen in your case.

What is a **Permanency Plan?**

Possible Placements



The law is clear that the goal of juvenile court is to help you and your family in a way that causes the least amount of upset to your life. If you cannot stay at your home because of treatment or safety reasons, you should live as close to your home as is possible. (https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=43-532)

Some other possible placements if you are unable to live in a home environment are:

Non-Custodial Parent
This is your parent who may not have custody of you. For example, if you were living with your dad, but you cannot stay there, the judge may have you live at your mom's house.

Relative or Kinship Foster Home
A relative foster home is a home of one of your family members (e.g. grandparent or cousin). A kinship foster home is a home of someone you have a significant relationship with (e.g. coach or mentor). Let your caseworker, probation officer, GAL and/or attorney, CASA volunteer know if there is a relative you would like to live with.

Foster Home
A foster home is another family home that the judge may place you in. The word "foster" means to help someone (or something) grow. You may not know the foster family you are living with, but they are there to give you a safe place to live and grow until you can return home.

Youth Shelter
Youth shelters are short-term placements where young person live together while they are waiting for more permanent placement. Staff are available 24/7 to provide support and supervision while you are waiting to go into foster care or a group home.

Group Home
A group home is a home where several young people live together and staff are trained to provide support to young person. Group homes provide a more structured environment than foster homes.

Therapeutic Group Home
A therapeutic group home is a home where young person live together while receiving supportive services. Therapeutic group homes provide therapy, nursing supports, education, recreational activities, and psychiatric services.

Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility
A psychiatric residential treatment facility provides individual treatment and recovery services to young person. They provide psychiatric rehabilitation, supervision and support for young person who are in need of more intensive mental health support. Highly trained staff work with a young person until they are ready to transition to another placement or home.

Independent Living
Depending on your age and specific circumstances, you may be able to explore independent living. However, you must be at least 16 years old for APPLA Independent living situation.

Things to think about when giving your opinion about a Permanency option:

- Where you will be located, if you are able to remain in the same school or around family, etc.
- How old you are when your case is closed can impact several financial assistance programs you may be eligible for. The Bridge to Independence Program (see page ???) provides services and support for young adults. You cannot join that program if you are adopted or go into a guardianship before you are 16 or if your case closes before you are 19.
- How old you are when your case closes may affect your eligibility for Education Grants or health insurance. Discuss these programs and their benefits with your GAL (guardian ad litem) or another knowledgeable adult before communicating to your judge what you'd like to see.

What are my ***rights?***

Because you matter!
It is important to know that you have legal rights that **NO ONE** can take away. **The goal of the Juvenile Court System is to help YOU and it is important you are involved in the process.**

Children and youth have the same basic rights under the United States Constitution as any human being.

You have the right to be protected from physical, sexual, verbal and emotional abuse. See "How do I get people to listen to me? section on where to turn for help.

Who should be reviewing your rights with you and when?
Guardian ad Litem (GAL), Caseworker, Attorney, Foster Parent(s), CASA volunteer. If you're not sure who these people are, you can look at page 9. When you meet the people assigned to you, write their names and numbers (and email) down. There is space for that at the end of this book.

You should receive the DHHS Bill of Rights to read and sign within 72 hours of being removed from your home. This is what it looks like.

You can find a copy on page 17 of this book.

The adults on your team should also go over these rights every 3 months at your team meetings. But you don't have to wait for these meetings to ask questions. When you have questions, you should contact the people assigned to your case.

NEBRASKA
Good Life. Great Mission.
DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
FOSTER YOUTH RIGHTS

- To have my basic needs met.
- To have my voice heard.
- To have honest and clear communication.
- To live in the most family-like setting that is safe, healthy, and comfortable and meets my needs.
- To maintain family connections.
- To safely visit my family including my siblings unless the Department of Health and Human Services provides myself and the court reasons why such visitation or ongoing interaction would be unsafe.
- To participate in age or developmentally appropriate extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities and to have my caseworker and judge consult with and talk to me about my opportunities to participate in activities.
- To understand the system or systems in which I am involved.
- To access my personal information including but not limited to: my certified birth certificate, social security card, proof of Medicaid enrollment, health care card, immunizations, medical and educational records, and medical power of attorney.
- To receive a copy of my consumer credit report on an annual basis and help to correct any inaccuracies on the report.
- To be provided with the opportunity to learn life skills needed to successfully transition into adulthood.
- To an education.
- To be provided necessary medical care, including dental, mental health, behavioral health and substance abuse.
- To be notified of court hearings in my court case and to attend court hearings.
- To stay safe and avoid exploitation.
- I will have a voice in who will be my informal supports.
- To be provided the same rights and opportunities if I should become pregnant or a parent as any other individual who is not in foster care.
- If I am parenting or become pregnant, DCFS will connect me to resources and supports available to young parents.

Next Court Hearing:

I have been provided with and understand my rights.

Youth Signature:	Date:
Children and Family Service Specialist:	Date

Youth refused or was unable to sign:

Substitute Caregiver Signature:	Date

CFS-240 5/2019

What are my ***rights?***

United States Bill of Rights

The Constitution of the United States includes the Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights is the first 10 amendments of the Constitution. We're all guaranteed these rights by the United States Constitution. We've highlighted the amendments that you probably need to know most.

1st Amendment: Freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition. You are free to practice your religion of choice, say what you think, gather peacefully in public and express your opinions to the government without punishment.

2nd Amendment: Right to keep and bear arms in order to maintain a well regulated militia.

3rd Amendment: No quartering of soldiers.

4th Amendment: Freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures. The government cannot arrest a person or search their property unless there is "probable cause" that a crime has been committed.

5th Amendment: Right to due process of law, freedom from self-incrimination, double jeopardy.

6th Amendment: Rights of accused persons, or example, right to a speedy and public trial. A person has the right to be told what they are charged with, have a fair and speedy trial by a jury, to have a lawyer during the trial and has the right to question witnesses against them and have the right to get their own witnesses to testify.

7th Amendment: Right of trial by jury in civil cases.

8th Amendment: Freedom from excessive bail, cruel and unusual punishments. The government cannot demand excessive bail, excessive fines, or any cruel and unusual punishment, including torture.

9th Amendment: Other rights of the people.

10th Amendment: Powers reserved to the states.

What are my **rights?**

DHHS Foster Care Bill of Rights

If you are removed from your home by the State, you should receive and sign a form (page 31) within 72 hours (3 days) of being removed from your home from the Department of Health and Human Services. The State promises to make sure you have the following rights:

Foster Care Bill of Rights

Quality of care provided to children placed in a foster family home or child-care institution is as close as possible to the care a child would receive in a family setting, provide such children with honest and clear communication and information to help them understand the system or systems in which they are involved, to provide consistent opportunities for such children to have their voice heard in their case, to support lifelong family connections.

1. To have my basic needs met.

   Basic needs are food, shelter, safety and well-being.

2. To have my voice heard.

   To provide advocates (GAL, Judge, Caseworker, CASA volunteer) who will listen to you and make sure your wishes are respected. To go to court or give information to the judge.

3. To have honest and clear communication.
4. To live in the most family-like setting that is safe, healthy, and comfortable and meets my needs.
5. To maintain family connections.

   To make sure you can keep in contact with your family members.

6. To safely visit my family including my siblings unless the Department of Health and Human Services provides myself and the court reasons why such visitation or ongoing interaction would be unsafe.
7. To participate in age or developmentally appropriate extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities and to have my caseworker and judge consult with and talk to me about my opportunities to participate in activities.

   To make sure you can attend school, church, or community functions and activities.

8. To understand the system or systems in which I am involved.
9. To access my personal information including but not limited to: my certified birth certificate, social security card, proof of Medicaid enrollment, health care card, immunizations, medical and educational records, and medical power of attorney.

   To make sure you can see and read your documents when you need to.

10. To receive a copy of my consumer credit report on an annual basis and help to correct any inaccuracies on the report.
11. To be provided with the opportunity to learn life skills needed to successfully transition into adulthood.

    To make sure you are being taught things like how to use a bank account and how to drive.

What are my **rights?**

12. To an education.
13. To be provided necessary medical care, including dental, mental health, behavioral health and substance abuse.
14. To be notified of court hearings in my court case and to attend court hearings.
15. To stay safe and avoid exploitation.
16. I will have a voice in who will be my informal supports.
17. To be provided the same rights and opportunities if I should become pregnant or a parent as any other individual who is not in foster care.
18. If I am parenting or become pregnant, DCFS will connect me to resources and supports available to young parents.

Nebraska Strengthening Families Act - **Recommended Rights**

In April of 2016, Nebraska passed LB746. This bill adopted the Nebraska Strengthening Families Act. The Strengthening Families Act Committee makes suggestions and recommendations - basically giving advice to lawmakers - about how to make families stronger and more stable. This includes foster families. The SFA Committee gathered feedback rom many young people who were in foster care and put together a list of rights that they recommend to be adopted. They cover everything from making sure you can keep in touch with siblings and other family members to making sure you have the opportunity to learn skills to help you grow into adulthood. A lot of this is called *normalcy*. It's all advice to try to make your foster care experience as close to normal family life as possible, like allowing you the right to be a young person with age appropriate activities: learning to drive, going to prom or having sleepovers.

You can read all of the SFA Committee's rights for foster care at this website: https://childrens.nebraska.gov/Taskforces/Normalcy-TaskForce.html

Some of the things covered by the SFA Recommended Rights

They cover your **personal rights**, like having your basic needs met and being able to get to a doctor when you need to. The recommended rights were drafted to make sure young people are free from discrimination on the basis of their race, gender, national origin, religion, mental or physical disability, gender identity, or sexual orientation

They cover **family connections**, making sure you can stay with siblings if possible, and keep in contact with family and other mentors and supportive adults. You should also be able to select an Advocate for Normalcy. This is an adult person in your life (coach, teacher, religious leader, family friend or relative) who you trust and can help you make sure that even though you are involved with the courts, your life can be as normal as possible.

There are sections on helping you get all of the rights due to you and making sure your voice is being heard throughout the process.

The **permanency** and **transition to adulthood** sections are there to make sure as time passes, you are experiencing the most normal environment possible.

Read all the SFA Committee Rights here:

https://childrens.nebraska.gov/Taskforces/NormalcyTaskForce.html

What if I **also have a juvenile justice case** in juvenile court?

Youth who have both a case in child welfare and juvenile justice, are commonly referred to as "crossover youth". That is because they "cross into" both the child welfare and juvenile justice system. When working with crossover youth, the people involved want to work as a team to help you meet your needs and do what is best for you.

The people helping you in both cases will work with you and your family to:

- Meet your needs in your home, while you stay in the community.
- Increase your use of helpful programs in the community.
- Increase information sharing and explain what is happening to you and your family.
- Reduce repeating services for you and your family.

The ultimate goal is wanting to shorten your time in both the child welfare and juvenile justice system.

Are you also involved in Juvenile Justice court process?

If someone has accused you of breaking the law, you may be interested in the What Now? Guide to Juvenile JusticeCourt Processes. It has a TON of relevant information and resources

Download the Juvenile Justice Guide here:

https://supremecourt.nebraska.gov/programs-services/court-improvement-project/resources/publications/what-now-juvenile-justice-guide

How do I get people to **listen to me?**

Knowledge is power, it is important that you **use your voice**, no one will know what you want to do with your life. It can be frustrating when people are making decisions about your life without your input. **This section contains tips on how to make sure that your voice is heard.**

Be Involved

It is important to know who your case worker is and how to contact them. There is space in the back of this book to write down their contact information. If you move or change numbers, make sure that you tell your caseworker or probation officer so they know how to contact you.

It is also important that you talk with your case worker on a regular basis. Tell him or her that you want to attend family team meetings or other meetings where people will be talking about your *case plan* and your future. Your opinion matters and should be taken into consideration at every point in your case. If you don't know what's in your case plan, talk to your case worker, GAL, attorney, CASA volunteer or foster parent(s). You can also talk to the judge whenever you attend court hearings.

Attend Court

You also have a right to know when court hearings are and to attend court hearings. Judges want to know what you think about everything that is going on and will take your views into consideration when they make their orders. In child welfare cases, be sure to tell your caseworker, GAL and CASA volunteer that you want to attend court hearings.

When you go to court make sure that you are on time, dress appropriately, take off your hat, and make sure to turn off your cell phone or put it on "silent". **Always be respectful when you speak to the judge and others in court. Call the judge "Your Honor."**

Write down notes or ask someone to help you keep track of what the judge orders, the names of the people involved in your case, and the next court date. Make sure to ask questions if there is something you do not understand, and ask for a copy of any court orders from your case. Most people don't understand everything that happens in court so don't worry if you don't understand, but always **ask questions of your attorney or GAL if you don't understand.**

If you are not comfortable speaking up during the hearing, you can ask to speak with the judge "in chambers." They may allow you to talk to them with a few other people, like your GAL, in their office.

Notes to take when you're in court

- What the judge orders
- Names of everyone in the case - like CASA volunteer, GAL, case worker
- Ask questions about anything you don't understand
- Ask for a copy of any court orders from your case

Complete Youth Court Questionnaire

Another way you can communicate with your judge is by filling out the Youth Court Questionnaire. A copy of the form can be found on this website:
https://supremecourt.nebraska.gov/sites/default/files/JC-14-11-13.pdf
There are several ways to deliver the questionnaire to your judge:

- Give it to your GAL, CASA or caseworker
- Bring it with you to your next court hearing
- Mail it to the Clerk of the Court in your city or county

You can also ask your GAL, CASA or caseworker for a copy of the Youth Court Questionnaire.

Scan to go directly to the Youth Court Questionnaire

How do I get people to **listen to me?**

Talk with your GAL and/or Attorney

It is very important that you have regular contact with your GAL and/or attorney. There is space in the back of this book where you can write down their contact information like phone numbers and email addresses. It is very important that you let them know if your address or phone number changes.

It is the job of your GAL and attorney to guide you through the court process and make sure you understand what is happening throughout your case. Your attorney has to advocate for what you want to happen in your case. What your GAL advocates for may or may not be exactly the same as what you want to happen. However, your GAL must consider your opinion before they tell the judge what they believe is in your best interest.

If you disagree strongly with your GAL about what they recommend, be sure to go to court or send in a Youth Court Questionnaire so the judge knows what you think. You can also ask the judge to appoint an attorney for you.

Talk with your Case Worker/Family Permanency Specialist

If talking with your GAL or attorney doesn't work, you should talk to your case worker. It is their job to help you through the court process. The people who are working on your case also have supervisors whose job is to make sure your workers are doing their job. You can always ask to speak to your worker's supervisors.

Talk with your Judge

Never forget that your judge is there to help. Complete your Youth Court Questionnaire at the back of this book to tell your judge what you need to.

Grievance process

A grievance (complaint) process is a way of making your voice heard on circumstances or action(s) that you want to protest. State agencies like the Foster Care Review Office, and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and their departments (like Children and Family Services), detention facilities, as well as other agencies like Project Everlast and Voices for Children all have processes to file grievances. The best way to find out how to complete a grievance on any other agency is to explore the website to find out how the agency you might be having problems with has laid out their own process. You can find more information about the DHHS grievance process by referencing a Public Guidance Document at https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Guidance-Documents.aspx.

Through the DHHS grievance forum, you are able to make a complaint based on circumstances or action where you believe DHHS failed to follow:

child welfare statutes; To search statutes visit https://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/

Regulations; To review regulations please follow the link at https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Title-395.aspx

Procedures. If a youth wants additional information on procedures, a youth can send an e mail to the DHHS CFS Policy email at DHHS.PSPolicyandguid@nebraska.gov

Within 10 working days of receiving the grievance, a representative will contact you to gather additional information and ensure the issues are understood. Based on information obtained during the information gathering phase and with your approval, the representative may arrange a team meeting. All of the steps in the process are available to the public and can be found at https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Guidance-Documents.aspx

Although your grievance may not be provided directly to the worker, a summary of your concerns will need to be provided to the caseworker and their supervisor so that the central office staff processing the grievance can appropriately address the concerns with them.

How do I get people to **listen to me?**

Individuals can file a grievance by either completing the paper Grievance form, which can be submitted via mail or email, or through completing the new online submission process at http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Child-Welfare-Complaint-Process.aspx. To find this link on the DHHS website, search for "child welfare compliant process." To connect to this page through the DHHS public website, on this page several options are available. A tab to click on "File a Grievance on Paper" to electronically fill out, print and mail in. The address to mail the Request for Grievance is included on the form. A tab to complete the grievance online. Fill out the questions and hit the "submit" button. For more information about this process such as response method and timeframe please follow the link to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Guidance Document at https://dhhs.ne.gov/Guidance%20Docs/Grievance%20Complaint%20Process.pdf.

Ombudsman information The Office of the Public Counsel (also known as the State Ombudsman's Office) is an independent complaint-handling office for the use of citizens who have complaints about the actions of administrative agencies of state government, that is, the bureaucracy of state government.

Contact Information:

Office Location: Centre Terrace Bldg, 1225 L Street, Ste #300, Lincoln, NE

Mailing Address: State Capitol, P.O. Box 94604, Lincoln, NE 68509-4604

Email: ombud@leg.ne.gov

Fill out an Ombudsman's Office Complaint you can go to https://www.nebraskalegislature.gov/pdf/ombudsman/Complaint_Information.pdf.

Other groups or agencies that can help

Project Everlast (www.projecteverlast.org)

Foster Care Review Office (www.fcro.nebraska.gov)

See Appendix B for a more extensive list of resources and contacts.

If you are in immediate danger call 911 or the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline 1-800-652-1999.

Plan for Your **Future**

Planning for your future

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Plan for Your **Future**

Soon you will be responsible for things like rent, gas and food. Everyone is different and what works for one person may not work for you. However, one thing is certain, to reach your goals you need to work at it!

Transition to Adulthood

Every young person who is 14 years or older, who is also a state ward, is required to have a Transitional Living Plan. A Transitional Living Plan lays out what your future goals are and how you can reach those goals. It can also help you figure out what you want your goals to be. This is your plan, and you are to be in control! Make sure you talk to your caseworker, GAL, CASA, and other trusted adults about your Transition Plan.

This Transition Plan should be reviewed at every court hearing. Tell the judge if you have any concerns with the plan or turn in a Youth Court Questionnaire. Once you turn 16 in a child welfare case, you may possibly get a *PALS worker.* A PALS worker knows about services, like education assistance and job training, that are available in your community which have helped lots of other young people reach their goals.

The Transition Plan covers the following areas of your life:

- Education
- Housing
- Job
- Transportation
- Relationships
- Health & health care
- Support if you are pregnant or parenting
- Money: credit cards, bank accounts, etc.

What Vital Forms do I need?

These forms are especially important as young people transition from one placement to another, or out of care. We believe that vital forms should be accessible to all times, and these documents need to be kept in a safe place to avoid misuse or misplaced information. These documents are important in the case of purchasing a car, applying for a job, attending higher education i.e. college, and renting an apartment.

Vital forms include but are not limited to:

- Birth Certificate (certified)
- Foster Care Verification Letter
- Social Security Card
- Indian Heritage Verification Letter
- State issued ID Card or Driver's License
- Educational Records
- Credit Report
- Medical records
- Immunization Records
- Medicaid Card
- Passport (if applicable)
- Social Security Card (original)
- Citizenship/residency information (official)
- Medical Power of Attorney information

If you are in foster care or living with a kin or relative, your caseworker is required to provide you with these vital forms when you exit foster care. If you are in need of any of these documents, you can request the documents from the caseworker. If your caseworker is unresponsive to your request, contact their supervisor. To get contact information for your worker's supervisor, call DHHS at 402-471-3121 and ask for the Division of Children and Family Services. (See important contacts pages 43-45).

If you still live with your family and your family is involved in an alternative response or a non-court case, your family is responsible for helping you to attain the vital forms. If you and your family need help in obtaining these documents please call Nebraska Vital Records at 402-471-2871 or visit https://dhhs.ne.gov/pages/vital-records.aspx

Keep in mind when you apply for a Driver's License or State ID, you will receive a temporary ID without a photo. In order to access your records, you will need a permanent photo ID.

Plan for Your **Future**

Before you age out of foster care, be sure to get all of these documents from your caseworker. You are also entitled to information on the following prior to exiting foster care:

- Written information for adult disability resources and benefits
- Information on how to apply for public assistance or an application
- List of community resources

If you need a verification letter for Financial Aid https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Former-Wards-Personal-Records.aspx

If you want a copy of your foster care records such as court reports, case plans. https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Former-Wards-Personal-Records.aspx

Understand the Bridge to Independence (B2I) Program

Bridge to Independence (b2i) program through Division of Children and Family Services is for young adults from the age of 19 and who have not reached their 21st birthday. The b2i program is developed primarily for those young adults who:

- Aged out of foster care at age 19 with an abuse or neglect filing or whose guardianship was disrupted and re-entered care before their 19th birthday; or
- Achieved independent living and the court closed the juvenile case successfully; or
- Entered into a guardianship or adoption assistance agreement at age 16 or older;
- Tribal youth who aged out of foster care with an abuse or neglect filing.
- Additional requirements include:
- A Nebraska resident
- A United States citizen or lawfully present in the United States

The b2i Program is designed to help young adults transition into adulthood with support from an Independence Coordinator who will provide case management services and transitional planning. Each participant will receive a monthly stipend.

Tips for Succeeding in High School

Moving homes does not mean you should move schools. You have a right to ask to stay at your same school, and they can only move you if it is in your best interests.

Stay on top of your grades. Check in and make sure your grades are where you want them to be. Do this early! You will be out of luck if you wait until the end of the semester.

Extracurricular activities offer an opportunity to explore your interests and build skills for your resume. Get involved with extracurricular activities, like sports, band, or clubs. If the activities cost money or you need help with transportation, talk to your caseworker, attorney or foster parent(s). If you still need help, tell your judge!

B2i is a voluntary program and a young adult must agree to participate. With the goal of successful transitioning into adulthood, the young adult must be involved with programs that enhance skills for self-sufficiency such as:

- Attending high school or post-secondary school at least on a part time basis;
- Employed at least 80 hours a month;
- Working with programs or on activities that will enhance employment skills at least 40 hours a month.

However, if you are unable to participate in any of the above activities due to medical reasons, a young adult can still participate with a medical professional letter explaining the medical barrier.

A young adult can re-enter the program as many times as they want to as long as the young adult meets the eligibility guidelines.

To learn more about the b2i program and application you can visit the website at https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Bridge-to-Independence.aspx

Connected Youth Initiative

The Connected Youth Initiative (also called CYI) is a partnership that offers all kinds of support to any transition-aged young person in Nebraska, aged 14 to 26, that is living without the support of family and have any of these life experiences that can make transitioning to adulthood feel overwhelming:

- Spent even one day in foster care or the child welfare system
- Transitioned or aged out of foster care
- Transitioned or is close to transitioning from the Juvenile Justice system or Probation
- Are houseless, homeless, or near homeless (e.g., couch surfing, living in shelter, unhoused)
- Are pregnant and/or parenting
- Are survivors of human trafficking, violence, or other exploitation

Plan for Your **Future**

To find support and learn about advocacy opportunities visit: https://neconnectedyouth.org

CYI Focus:

- Youth and young adults are in control of their future and having the skills, resources, relationships, and equitable opportunities to thrive as a productive member of their community.
- Decreasing generational involvement in the child welfare system by increasing Youth Thrive protective and promote factors of youth and young adults and their children to have resources, relationships, and equitable opportunities to thrive.

CYI continues the approach of positive youth development (PYD) that emphasizes building on youths' strengths and providing supports and opportunities that will help them achieve goals and transition to adulthood in a productive, healthy manner. CYI has encouraged and trained stakeholders in local communities to use a PYD model that can be used to enhance their local youth-serving programs. Using PYD, Nebraska continues to see the increase in positive relationships and development of programs that provide supportive connections for youth and young adults.

CYI serves youth who are in between the ages of 14-26, which identify as the following:

- Current or Former Participation in Nebraska's Foster Care System between the ages of 14 to 19: Defined as youth currently in the legal custody of the Department living in the home of their parents or in out of home care. Youth currently or previously in legal custody of DHHS living independently.
- Former Foster Care Young adults ages 19-23: Young adults who have aged out of foster care, entered into independent living prior to aging out of care, or entered into a guardianship at age 16 or older.
- Tribal Youth: Youth and young adults who live on the Omaha and Winnebago tribal reservations receive case management through their identified child welfare office on their own reservation. DHHS contracts with the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska to serve youth who are identified as Native American and living in their Service Delivery Areas. The Santee Sioux Nation receives their Chafee funds directly from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF).
- Human Trafficking Victims: Youth and young adults who have been victims of human trafficking.
- Unconnected Youth and Young Adults:
  - Youth and young adults age 14 to 26 who are not connected to any adults (system or no system involvement);
  - Youth aged 14-18 that have been adjudicated as a juvenile offender, and committed to the Office of Juvenile Services due to a status offense of truancy or misdemeanors, and are within six months of case closure;
  - Youth aged 19-26 that have been adjudicated as a juvenile offender, were committed to the Office of Juvenile Services due to a status offense of truancy or misdemeanors, are at risk of being homeless and are post case closure;
  - Youth for whom it is not possible to live in a safe environment with a relative and who has no other safe alternate living arrangement; or
  - Youth who have been identified as missing from care, or indefinitely or intermittently (couch surfing) homeless, for whom it is not possible to live in a safe environment and who has no other safe alternate living arrangement.

Central Navigator

Central Navigation is the entry point for Connected Youth (and their families) to access services and programs in their own community. Central Navigation is like a hub for lots of services and supports for you and means you only have to tell your story one time and get connected to all kinds of supports and services that will help you achieve your goals.

To access services contact the Central Navigator in your area. If you do not know who that person is, simply text "HELP" to 402-226-5842 or 308-280-8383.

Nebraska Family Helpline 888-866-8660

The Nebraska Family Helpline at (888) 866-8660 makes it easier for families to obtain assistance by providing a single contact point 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Trained Helpline operators screen calls to assess immediate safety needs, identify the potential level of a behavioral health crisis, make recommendations or referrals to appropriate resources, and help callers connect to emergency resources or providers. The Helpline is supervised by licensed mental health professionals. Family Helpline operators also can connect eligible families to the Family Navigator Service. This service helps families move through Nebraska's child- and family-care system more efficiently to get the assistance they need. Available within 24 to 72 hours after a Helpline referral, Family Navigator helps families identify existing community-based services and provides support from people who have had personal experience in the system.

Plan for Your **Future**

Things to Think About

There are lots of things to think about as you get older. Listed below are a few of the major issues that you will need to think about.

Education

High School

Earning your high school diploma or your GED puts you in a better position to get the kind of job you want and to earn more money.

School is worth your efforts, and you do not have to do it alone. There are lots of people whose job is to help you graduate. Visit your school counselor. Go see your teachers after class. Tell your caseworker or judge that you need extra help.

Getting a GED

If you were unable to stay in school and graduate, you can also earn your GED, which stands for General Educational Development. Most people treat this the same as a high school diploma but not everyone. Some colleges may not accept a GED. You can find out more about the GED test at the Nebraska Department of Education website: education.ne.gov.

You can also find more information at gedtestingservice.com. To pass the test, you are going to have to study. And you can get help studying online for free at the McGraw-Hill's GED Online Learning Center (https://www.mheducation.com/highered/home-guest.html) and GEDforfree.com. The Center for People in Need also provides GED classes for free. Go to centerforpeopleinneed.org.

If you live in Omaha, another option besides a GED is the D2 Center. The D2 Center allows you to earn high school credit. They also have a Careers & Community Engagement Program that helps you find out what career might be best for you. For more information, go to d2center.org or call 402-502-8534.

College & Vocational Schools

After you earn your high school diploma or GED you can enter college or a vocational school. Colleges come in all shapes and sizes from local community colleges to public universities. You can also attend a vocational school or complete a technical program that will help you get the job you want. Licensed electricians make an average of $21 per hour in Nebraska and a four-year college can help you achieve your dream of being a nurse or a lawyer. There are lots of scholarships and financial aid available too.

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (or FAFSA) is the main hub for all college goers to apply for federal and state grants (free money) as well as public loans (borrowed money). If on your FAFSA application you responded "yes" to the question, "At any time since you turned 13, were both of your parents deceased; were you in foster care; or were you a dependent or ward of the court?", you must provide documentation of your status to complete your FAFSA application. Call 402-471-9272 to make this request.

Be sure to ask your workers and counselors for help as you prepare for your career.

Assistance in Paying for Education and Training

Learn more about educational and training vouchers (ETV) at www.central-plains.org/etv.html.

Project Everlast: LEAP Scholarships - Learn more about LEAP at http://www.central-plains.org/leap.html

If you do find yourself homeless or in a crisis, you can call the Boys Town National Hotline 1-800-448-3000 or the Answers 4 Families Hotline 1-800-746-8420.

Plan for Your **Future**

Housing

Finding the right housing is one of the toughest things you'll have to figure out as you become an adult. Many young people end up moving from apartment to apartment or even becoming homeless. You need to plan ahead to make sure you have a good place to live.

Relative or Permanent Connection
Do you have a strong, permanent connection with someone in your life? Maybe an aunt or a pastor? Is this someone who may be willing to make a commitment to you to let you live with them? Start thinking about this early and talk with them. Work out a plan with them for how long you expect to stay and what you will be doing to try to get a home of your own.

Low Income Housing
Some towns have low-income housing available. There are income requirements to live in this type of housing but if you qualify, your rent will be based on how much money you make. To find out if there is low-income housing in your area, contact your local Housing Authority.

Sharing an Apartment
Do you have people you trust who are also looking for a place to stay? Together, you can look at signing a lease for an apartment. Leases are usually for one year so you need to make sure you will stay there that long and that you and the others will be able to pay rent. Make sure you read and understand the lease before you sign it.

College Dorms
If you are in college, living on campus may be a good option. Make sure you include these costs in your budget when figuring out where to go to college and how to pay for it. If you live in the dorms and need a place to stay during winter and spring breaks, talk to the Dean of Student Services at your college.

Transitional Living Centers
There are homes in Nebraska that provide housing for young people until they can find something permanent. They are often called Transitional Living Centers and often provide other services to help you become independent. You should talk to your caseworker about centers that might be in your area, but there are also some listed on our website.

Banking and Finances

Support Service Funds
Support Service Funds is emergency funding which can be accessed through Central Navigation and is available to all unconnected youth across the state ages 14-26.

Navigating the system of available resources can be confusing for anyone. Young people who are in foster care or aging out of foster care often have the burden of finding the services they need and knitting them together into something that can support future successes. That's where central navigation comes in. Central Navigation is a single point of contact for children youth and families in Nebraska when they need help. Youth can voluntarily choose to work with central navigation who can connect them with many different sources of assistance.

Nebraska Children and Families Foundation Chat Bot (NE Help Chat) provides a Central Access Navigator to help young people determine what services they need and access to those services. To connect with the chat bot text "help" to (402) 226-5842 or (308) 280-8383.

Want to talk to a Central Access Navigator?
If you're a young person having a hard time paying for your housing or groceries, you can find support through #NEHelpChat Text HELP to 402-226-5842 or 308-280-8383.
Project Everlast: www.projecteverlast.org or find resources directly at www.projecteverlast.org/resources/
The Hub in Lincoln: www.hublincoln.org.

Connected Youth Initiative
The Connected Youth Initiative provides additional assistance and support to young people aged 14-26 who are lacking the traditional networks needed to make successful transitions to adulthood. The CYI focuses on finances, including improving financial literacy; repairing, maintaining, or establishing credit; reducing dependence on predatory lending practices; and building developmentally appropriate relationships with community banking providers, products, and services.

Opportunity Passport™
Part of the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, the Opportunity Passport ™program helps young people navigate their future goals through a program of financial education and asset development. The goals is to help youth develop an understanding of managing personal finances, credit and banking as they transition to adulthood. Opportunity Passport ™ now operates in over 40 counties in Nebraska. To connect to the Opportunity Passport ™ program, contact your community's central navigator

Community Action Partnership \ 210 O St \ 402-471-4515
Money Management Education, using a curriculum created by the FDIC, the financial literacy program helps clients develop financial skills including budgeting, saving, and credit management. Opportunity Passport: an asset-building program that includes financial education, asset-specific training, and a matched savings account (IDA). Young people between the age of 14-26, who have been or currently are in foster care, are eligible to enroll in the program.

Employment

There are a lot of services that can help you figure out what kind of job you'd like the best. You can search for jobs on NEWorks.nebraska.gov, and find information about employment and training at www.dol.nebraska.gov. You can also take a look at the Workforce Innovation Opportunities Act (WIOA), a part of the U.S. Department of Labor to find employment resources. www.doleta.gov/wioa/

Transportation

Finding a way to get around is very important. You need to figure out how you will get to your job, school, grocery shopping and appointments.

First you might need to get a driver's license. This can be a tricky process when you are in the system so be sure to ask your caseworker to include this in your transition plan. Your worker is required to provided you information about the drivers test and manual to study. You can find out more about how to learn to drive, taking driver's education classes and how and what documents you will need, to get your license at the Department of Motor Vehicles website dmv.nebraska.gov. If you plan to purchase your own vehicle, it would be important to begin saving early. Some important things to consider are that not only. do you have to buy the car, but you have buy gas, car insurance, and car registration. Not everyone needs a car, so see if you have other options.

You may be able to participate in the Opportunity Passport program through Project Everlast. This program helps you save money for a big purchase, like a car, and then chips in 25% of what you have save. To enroll, contact the Central Navigator in your area.

Health Care

Will I have access to my medical history?

Family histories have a huge impact on our health. It has been proven scientifically that our genetic information can have a huge impact on our health based on our lifestyle and choices. Providing health history helps medical professionals with their treatment or diagnosis. Through knowledge of self and family medical history, youth are able to remain in control of any preventable solutions or treatment plans provided by the medical professionals. Having access to medical records will allow youth to know their own history, inform any new caseworkers and or placements of accurate current information, as well as prepare older youth for their transition to adulthood to manage their own medical situation. Youth have the right to access the following personal information but you need to request it from your caseworker. If your caseworker is not responsive, contact their supervisor:

- Immunization records
- Medication list
- Medicaid card
- Doctor's contact information
- Therapeutic and/or mental health history
- Bio family medical history (if available)
- These documents need to be kept in a safe place to avoid misuse or misplaced information.

Health Insurance

Getting insured helps you pay for any medical services you will need. This includes physical health, dental health and mental health. Our website has tips for how to find the right health care for you. You don't want to wait until it is an emergency to take care of yourself. If you were in foster care at age 18 or you aged out of foster care, you can enroll in Medicaid and be eligible up to the age of 26. You could also get medical care after enrolling in the Bridge to Independence program. If you're not able to get Medicaid you may enroll for health insurance at healthcare.gov. https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Former-Foster-Care.aspx

Some doctors will only take certain types of insurance. If you have Medicaid, there are some doctors who won't accept it. Make sure you find out which doctors take your insurance. If you aren't going to be using insurance, you will want to find a sliding-fee scale provider. These medical providers will charge you an amount based on how much money you make. The less money you make, the less money you will pay them. You can search the internet to help you locate sliding scale providers and providers who can help with mental health and /or substance abuse resources.

Medications

You have the right to play a role in any treatment you are receiving. Talk to your doctor or healthcare provider about side effects of and reasons for the medications you may be prescribed, and the overall treatment plan.

Family Planning and Sex Education

You have a right to get birth control. Talk to your caseworker or doctor if you are sexually active or may become sexually active so that you can get more information. If you need an exam, birth control or STD testing and want to keep it private, you can go to a family planning and preventative health services (Title X) clinic. If you become pregnant, you have a right to make your own decisions about your pregnancy. Talk to your caseworker or doctor right away if you think you may be pregnant.

Parenting Resources

There are services available for pregnant mothers and new parent(s). WIC serves pregnant and postpartum women and children up to age 5. They provide food vouchers, health screens and lead tests. Call 1-800-942-1171 for additional resources. You may also be able to get help from home visiting nurses. Home Visiting is a free, voluntary program that supports families. Nebraska Home Visiting is a network across the state; dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/MIECHV-Programs.aspx There are many other parenting programs and resources so talk with your caseworker and ask for a list of services.

Well-Being

It may seem obvious but living a healthy life is the best way to stay healthy. Some ways a person can stay healthy is by minimizing your consumption of alcohol, avoiding drug and cigarette use, and other healthy choices such as, drink water, eat fruits and vegetables, and get enough sleep. It is important that you get some exercise and stay active. You may even qualify for a free or reduced rate membership at your local YMCA.

Youth Support Services and Funds

Needs-Based Funds can also help with money for healthcare: https://neconnectedyouth.org/support-for-young-people/central-navigation.html

Appendix A - **Forms**

DHHS Foster Youth Rights Form

- To have my basic needs met.
- To have my voice heard.
- To have honest and clear communication.
- To live in the most family-like setting that is safe, healthy, and comfortable and meets my needs.
- To maintain family connections.
- To safely visit my family including my siblings unless the Department of Health and Human Services provides myself and the court reasons why such visitation or ongoing interaction would be unsafe.
- To participate in age or developmentally appropriate extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities and to have my caseworker and judge consult with and talk to me about my opportunities to participate in activities.
- To understand the system or systems in which I am involved.
- To access my personal information including but not limited to: my certified birth certificate, social security card, proof of Medicaid enrollment, health care card, immunizations, medical and educational records, and medical power of attorney.
- To receive a copy of my consumer credit report on an annual basis and help to correct any inaccuracies on the report.
- To be provided with the opportunity to learn life skills needed to successfully transition into adulthood.
- To an education.
- To be provided necessary medical care, including dental, mental health, behavioral health and substance abuse.
- To be notified of court hearings in my court case and to attend court hearings.
- To stay safe and avoid exploitation.

Next Court Hearing: _____

I have been provided with and understand my rights.

Youth Signature: _____ Date: _____

Children & Family Service Specialist: _____ Date: _____

Youth refused or was unable to sign:

Substitute Caregiver Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix A - **Forms**

Youth Court Questionnaire - under 19

You can also download this form here:
https://supremecourt.nebraska.gov/sites/default/files/JC-14-11-13.pdf

This questionnaire was designed as a way for you to inform the judge handling your case of your specific situation. The information you provide is strictly voluntary. The more details you share, the better the judge is able to make the best decision in your case. However, you do not have to answer every question.

To make sure this questionnaire gets to the proper judge:

1. Give it to your Guardian Ad Litem (GAL), Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer, Caseworker, Foster Parent, Foster Care Specialist, or your personal attorney,
2. Bring it to your next hearing, or
3. Mail it to the Clerk of the Court in your city or county.

Under current law, the judge, your mother and/or father, Guardian Ad Litem, caseworker and the county attorney are allowed to view your answers.

The judge handling your case may ask questions regarding the information you provide.

If you have questions or need assistance in completing the questionnaire, please contact the Nebraska Court Improvement Project via email at nsc.cip@nebraska.gov.

General Information:

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Age _____

Today's Date _____ Court Location (City and/or County) _____

Judge's Name _____

List the name(s) of anyone who helped you fill out this form and their connection to you:

Is there something that you would prefer to share with someone in private? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Current Situation:

Are you okay with your current home? ❑ Yes ❑ No If no, why not?

Where would you want to live and why?

Do you feel safe where you are living? ❑ Yes ❑ No If no, who or what makes you feel unsafe?

Youth Court Questionnaire - continued

If you have siblings (full, half, step or adoptive), are they living with you now? (Skip, if no siblings) ❑ Yes ❑ No

If you're not living together, where and how often do you see your siblings?

Are your basic needs being met (getting enough to eat, having enough clothing, etc.)? ❑ Yes ❑ No If no, explain.

Do you currently have any dental or physical health conditions? ❑ Yes ❑ No

If you have any dental or physical health conditions, are you receiving appropriate treatment? ❑ Yes ❑ No
If no, why not?

Please use the space below if there is anything you want the court to know regarding your **dental or physical health conditions**. You may also request to speak with someone in private.

Describe any current **mental health conditions** (depression, anxiety, attention problems, thoughts of hurting yourself, problems sleeping or eating, etc.). You may also request to speak with someone in private.

Are you in counseling/therapy? ❑ Yes ❑ No If you are attending therapy, is it helpful? ❑ Yes ❑ No
If no, why not?

Do you take medicine? ❑ Yes ❑ No If yes, do you know what it's for? ❑ Yes ❑ No

If yes, what?

Are you currently attending school? ❑ Yes ❑ No If no, why not?

How are things going at school?

Youth Court Questionnaire - continued

Are you participating in activities at school or elsewhere (sports, band, art club, etc.)? ❑ Yes ❑ No
If no, why not? Is there something getting in the way?

If yes, what are you doing and how is it going?

Are you currently working? ❑ Yes ❑ No If no, would you like to be? Why or why not?

If yes, where are you working, how often and how is it going?

Case Information

Which of these people/groups have you seen or talked to in the last month?

❑ Mom ❑ Dad ❑ Foster Parent(s) ❑ Sibling(s) ❑ CASA volunteer

❑ GAL ❑ Case worker ❑ Therapist or Counselor ❑ Teacher(s)

Is there someone you're not talking to, but you would like to talk to? ❑ Yes ❑ No If yes, explain.

A **Team Meeting** is a gathering of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) or the foster care agency, your family and you to discuss services that will be provided.

Do you attend your team meetings? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ Sometimes If no, why not?

Do you feel comfortable speaking at team meetings? ❑ Yes ❑ No If no, what makes you uncomfortable?

Do you feel that your concerns are being addressed? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ Sometimes If no, explain.

There was a law passed in Nebraska in 2016 called the **Nebraska Strengthening Families Act,** which allows for youth to have two advisors of their choice on their family team. The advisor would be like a positive role model that's a support to you because of a relationship you've built with that person, such as a teacher, coach, close family friend, etc. This advisor could help advocate for your participation in normal activities like peers who aren't involved in the system.

Do you have a Strengthening Families Act Advisor? ❑ Yes ❑ No If yes, who is serving as an advisor to you on your team?

If no, who would be someone you consider as an advisor?

Youth Court Questionnaire - continued

A **Case Plan** is a document that DHHS or the foster care agency makes and updates regularly. It includes the services provided to you and your family, and says what needs to happen to reach the goals.

Have you received a copy of your most recent case plan? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ Sometimes

If yes, who gave you the copy?

If not, when is the last time you got a copy of the case plan?

Do you understand the case plan? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Do you have questions about your case plan? ❑ Yes ❑ No If yes, what questions?

A **CASA Report** is a document that a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer completes in order to give a summary and recommendations regarding your best interest. Not every young person has a CASA volunteer, but you can request that a judge appoint a CASA for you.

Do you have a CASA assigned to you? ❑ Yes ❑ No

If you do have a CASA, do you receive a copy of their report? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ Sometimes

A **GAL Report** is a document written by the Guardian ad Litem, who is an attorney representing you and your best interests, to update the court on your case.

Did you receive a copy of the GAL report? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ Sometimes

If no or sometimes, when did you last get a GAL report?

Do you understand the GAL report? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ Sometimes

In a **Court Hearing**, the judge makes the major decisions about you by looking at the progress of you and your parent(s) to make sure you are safe and being provided for.

Have you been to a court hearing before? ❑ Yes ❑ No If not, why not?

Do you know when the court hearings are happening? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Do you want to attend more court hearings? ❑ Yes ❑ No

A **Court Order** is a written order from the judge after the court hearing.

Do you receive copies of your Court Orders? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ Sometimes

If not, do you want a copy of your Court Order? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Youth Court Questionnaire - continued

Would you like the opportunity to speak to the judge in court? ❑ Yes ❑ No

What would you like to talk about?

Is there anyone you want attending your next court hearing? ❑ Yes ❑ No If yes, who?

Are you comfortable with certain people attending your hearing? ❑ Yes ❑ No If yes, who and why?

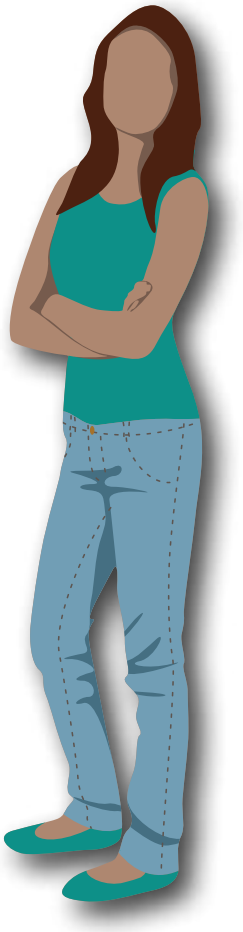
An **Independent Living Plan** is a written plan to prepare for living on your own once you have left foster care. The plan may include goals for completing education, finding a job, finding affordable housing, managing your money, etc. If you are over 14, you should have a plan.

Do you have an Independent Living Transition Plan? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ I don't know

Have you been part of creating the plan? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Do you feel like you are being prepared to become an adult? ❑ Yes ❑ No

What could you use help with?



Personal Goals/Concerns

What is you biggest concern with how things are going?

What are your plans for your future?

How can the judge or other people in your case help you with your goals?

What else would you like the court to know?

Connected Youth Common Referral Form

For more information, https://neconnectedyouth.org/support-for-young-people/central-navigation.html

COMPLETE WITH ALL CR AND CYI PARTICIPANTS AT BEGINNING

CR/CYI Participant Information Form

Today's Date:* ____/____/_____

If you are needing emergency assistance, please contact 911. If you are interested in non-emergency assistance please text "HELP" to 402-226-5842 or 308-280-8383 to be connected with someone in your local area.

Your Preferred Name: _____ **Your Pronoun(s)**:_____

1) How can we help?

What is your most urgent need? Check all that apply

_____Daily living (tel., clothes, hygiene)	_____Finances	_____Mental Health	_____Supportive Relationships
_____Dentist	_____General Life Skills	_____Parenting Assistance	_____Transportation
_____Education	_____Housing	_____Physical Health	_____Utilities
_____Employment	_____Legal Help	_____Substance Use	Other:_____

Is there anything else you need us to know?

2) Current services and supports

I am currently receiving the following services and supports… (check all that apply)

_____Education Services (e.g. ETV, GED, tutoring)	_____Legal Services	_____Transportation Services (e.g. IntelliRide)
_____Employment Services	_____Medical Services	_____Other
_____Food Services (e.g. local pantries)	_____Mental Health Services	_____NA/None
_____Housing Services	_____Substance Use Services	_____Prefer Not to Answer

I am currently receiving the following types of public assistance… (check all that apply)

_____Aid to Dependent Children/TANF	_____Housing Voucher/Section 8	_____Utilities Assist./LIHEAP	_____NA/None
_____Childcare Subsidy/Title XX	_____Medicaid	_____WIC	_____Prefer Not to Answer
_____Food Stamps (SNAP)	_____Unemployment	_____Other	

3) A few questions about you…

Full LEGAL Name (first, middle, last)*	**Phone Number**	**Email Address**	**Birth Date*** ____/____/_____

Current/Mailing Address	**City**	**State**	**County***	**Zip code**

Is there someone who doesn't live with you we can contact if we can't reach you?
_____Yes _____No →

If yes, please list the person's:
Name: _____ Phone Number:_____
Relationship to you (ex: friend, foster parent): _____

What is your gender?*
___ Woman ___ Man ___ Another Gender: _____ ___ Prefer not to say

What is your race/ethnicity? (check all that apply)*
___ White ___ Black or African American ___ Hispanic or Latino ___ Asian ___ American Indian or Alaskan Native → *Are you part of a federally recognized tribe?* **Y** *or* **N**
___ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander ___ Another race/ethnicity: _____ ___ Prefer not to say

Do you or your children QUALIFY for Medicaid, Title XX, and/or free and reduced lunch, even if you don't receive any of them?*
___yes ____no ____Unsure ____Prefer not to say

Do you have a disability?*
____Yes _____No _____Prefer Not to Say

Do you have enough people to count on when you need someone to give you good advice?* _____Yes _____No _____Prefer Not to Say
If yes, how many people? ____(write in number)

As of today's date are you between the ages of 14 and 25 (have not yet had your 26th birthday)?* ____Yes _____No

ONLY if you are between the ages of 14 and 25 (answered "yes" to above)**, have you experienced any of the following?***
___ Foster care/state ward/placed outside of the home ___ In-home services for your family (from DHHS) ___ Guardianship or Adoption
___ Probation or Incarceration ___ Homelessness ____Human Trafficking ___ Prefer not to say ____N/A, no experience with any of these

Are you currently pregnant or expecting a child (mother or father)?* _____Yes _____No _____Prefer Not to Say

4) A few questions about your household…

Including yourself, how many ADULTS (people 18+) are in your household?* _____

How many CHILDREN (people 17 and younger) are in your household? Enter 0 if no children live with you* _____

Do any of your children have a disability?* ____Prefer not to say ___N/A ___No ___Yes → **If yes, how many?** _____ (write in number)

Connected Youth Common Referral Form

COMPLETE WITH ALL CR AND CYI PARTICIPANTS AT BEGINNING

5) Authorization to Share Your Information for Evaluation (Consent)*

I agree to have my information shared for the evaluation. _____ YES _____ NO

As part of the evaluation of Community Response and the Connected Youth Initiative, your data will be shared with Nebraska Children and their evaluators from Munroe-Meyer Institute. Your name will not be included in any of the information that is provided to the evaluation team. All data is summarized as a group. You can choose not to participate in the evaluation. If you have questions please call Dr. Amanda Prokasky at 402-552-6865

I agree to have my information shared for service provision. _____ YES _____ NO

I grant permission for the Central Navigator or other staff with Project Everlast Omaha to share my name, contact information, and other relevant information on this form with other partnering agencies to assist in providing me or my family with services. I understand that if I do not mark this box, I will be responsible for reaching out to other partner organizations for further assistance on my own time.

*If you marked **YES** above, complete the following section*

Name of participant	**Participant Signature Date**
Participant Signature	
Required if young person is 18 or younger- Signature of parent of legal guardian	**Parent or Legal Guardian Signature Date**

Next Section to be completed by staff witness

Witness Signature	**Staff position of witness**	**Witness Signature Date**

6) Information to be completed by the referral agency and/or Central Navigator

Step 1: Referral agency- please fill in the following before submitting this form to the Central Navigator:

Referral Agency Name	**Referral Staff Member Name**
Contact Phone Number	**Contact Email Address**

Step 2: Central Navigator – Assign a participant ID number to this participant

- Has this participant referred into central navigation before? If not, assign them a participant ID number. This is the first two letters of the participant's first name, first two letters of last name, two digit month of birth, two digit day of birth (ex: Sally Jones DOB 10/16/80 would be SAJO1016)
- IF A RECORD ALREADY EXISTS FOR THIS PARTICIPANT, USE THEIR EXISTING PARTICIPANT ID NUMBER.
- Participant's ID Number:_____

Connected Youth Common Referral Form

COMPLETE WITH ALL CR AND CYI PARTICIPANTS AT BEGINNING

CR/CYI Participant Information Survey

Today's Date: ____/____/_____

INSTRUCTIONS: All parts of the Participant Information Survey should be completed at the start of participation in Community Response or the Connected Youth Initiative. The form may be completed with the assistance of a Central Navigator or other service provider, if needed.

For each of the following, mark the response that most closely matches how you feel

Social Connections	**A. Not at all like my life**	**B. Not much like my life**	**C. Somewhat like my life**	**D. Quite a lot like my life**	**E. Just like my life**	**Not applicable - I do not have kids**
I have people who believe in me.						
I have someone in my life who gives me advice, even when it's hard to hear.						
When I am trying to work on achieving a goal, I have friends who will support me.						
When I need someone to look after my kids on short notice, I can find someone I trust						

I have people I trust to ask for advice about (check all that apply)

A. ____ Money/Bills/Budgeting
B. ____ Relationships and/or My Love Life
C. ____ Food/Nutrition
D. ____ Stress, Anxiety, and/or Depression
E. ___ Parenting/My Kids (if applicable)
F. ___ None of the above

Concrete Supports	**A. Not at all like my life**	**B. Not much like my life**	**C. Somewhat like my life**	**D. Quite a lot like my life**	**E. Just like my life**
I was able to cover all my expenses last month *(expenses include costs like rent, utility bills, food, transportation, child care, and medical expenses)*					
The transportation I use is reliable and consistent					
My housing situation is affordable, safe, and stable					
Over the past three months, my children and I have been able to see a doctor when we needed to. *(If you do not have children, answer for just yourself)*					
Over the past three months, I have found a job and/or worked when I needed to					

FOR CENTRAL NAVIGATOR

1) **Write Participant's ID number below**
   - Refer to Section 6 of participant's *CR/CYI Participant Information Form*.
   - Write the **SAME** Participant ID number below.
   - Participant's ID Number:_____

2) **Enter this data into your electronic data system (Quick Base, Clarity, or Child Plus)**

Appendix B - **Contacts and Resources**

See a variety of resources curated by the Connected Youth Initiative: https://neconnectedyouth.org/support-for-young-people/central-navigation.html

Scan this code for a link to a variety of resources.

Appendix C - **Glossary of Terms**

Understanding Terms

The juvenile court system uses a lot of language that is not used by the average person. Here are what some of those terms mean:

Abused or Neglected Child: A child who has been harmed, or is at risk of being harmed by physical violence or emotional abuse, by someone responsible for caring for him or her; or a child who has been harmed or is at risk of being harmed, because the person responsible for him or her does not provide the necessary care for the child.

Adjudication: The process of a judge making a decision as to whether the facts alleged in a petition or other pleadings are true. Judicial determination (judgment) that a juvenile is responsible for the delinquency or status offense that is charged in a petition or other charging document.

Aging Out: Turning the age of 19 while you still have a case open in juvenile court. Once you turn 19, you "age out" of the system, will no longer be a state ward and your case will close.

Allegations: In either a child welfare or a juvenile justice case, these are statements written in the petition of what is believed to have happened. An example of an allegation is "the father hits the mother when he is drinking." In a juvenile justice case, the State would say what law they believe was broken, for example "disorderly conduct." The State has to prove the allegations in court.

Appeal: A request to a higher court to review the decision of the trial court. This happens when a party to the case disagrees with the decision of the trial judge. The higher court will determine if the original decision was correct or not.

CASA: Court Appointed Special Advocate, a volunteer chosen to represent YOUR interests in court.

Case Plan: A written plan from the caseworker about what care and treatment should be provided to you and your family. It includes things like the permanency goal and what services are being provided and recommended. In a juvenile justice case, it may not be called a case plan, but your probation officer should prepare a plan outlining what is expected of you while you are on probation.

Concurrent Plan: A permanency plan generally has two permanency goals: The primary plan and the concurrent plan. The concurrent plan is the "back-up" plan in case the primary plan does not workout. For example, your primary plan may be reunification with a concurrent plan of independent living.

Continuance: The postponement of a hearing, trial or other scheduled court proceeding, at the request of one or both parties, or by the judge without consulting them.

Delinquency: Minor crime, especially committed by young people

Disposition: Within the Administrative Office of Probation, sanction ordered or treatment plan decided upon or initiated in a particular case by a juvenile court. The range of options available to a court typically includes commitment to an institution; placement in a group or foster home or other residential facility; probation; referral to an outside agency, day treatment, or mental health program; or imposition of a fine, community service, or restitution. Within the Division of Children and Family Services, the court's determination of a case in which there is an issuance of a final order or opinion.

Due Process: A legal requirement that the courts follow a certain process so that people's constitutional rights are protected.

Evidence: Proof or testimony submitted by the parties to help the court determine the truth or falsity of the allegations.

Family permanency specialist: A person assigned to your family to assess and ensure child and youth safety, permanency, and well-being.

Finding: A decision made by a judge. An example of this is a finding that it is in the young person's best interest to attend a certain school.

Family Group Conference (FGC): A meeting the judge may order where you and a group of people who you trust, gather to talk about plans for your future. A FGC is led by a mediator whose job is to create a safe space for the team to discuss what is needed in your case.

Guardian ad litem (GAL): An attorney appointed by the court to act in the minor's or an incompetent adult's behalf in a lawsuit and protect the minor's or adult's best interests in court.

Hearing: A proceeding with the judge where the parties discuss issues in your case and the judge will issue findings and orders.

Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA): A state and federal law regarding Native American children that regulates placement proceedings involving Native American families. The goal of the act when it passed in 1978 was to strengthen and preserve Native American families and culture.

Initial assessment caseworker: A case worker or social worker who first makes contact with you after being removed from your home

Jurisdiction: (1) The legal authority of a court to hear and decide a case. Concurrent jurisdiction exists when two courts have simultaneous responsibility for the same case. (2) The geographic area over which the court has authority to decide cases.

Minor: A person who is under the age to make legal decisions. In Nebraska, the age of majority is 19 years of age.

Motion: A formal proposal (suggestion or request) put to a court or judge. The judge must decide whether to agree to the motion or not.

Normalcy: The quality or condition of being normal, as close to how a regular home and family should be

On-going caseworker: A case worker or social worker that is assigned to you after your initial assessment.

PALS worker: A person who represents the Central Plains Center for Services PALS project (Preparation, Transition and Independent Living Services) who will make sure

Appendix C - **Glossary of Terms**

your plan and the work you do is directed to your specific needs, making it unique to you.

Permanency Plan: A plan that states what the permanency goal is (reunification, adoption, guardianship or independent living) and how it will be achieved.

Petition: This is a form that is filed in juvenile court when the State opens a child welfare or juvenile justice case.

Pre-Disposition Investigation (PDI): This is a report prepared by a probation officer for youth prior to a disposition hearing in a juvenile justice case. The probation officer will meet with youth and his or her family to determine what the youth and family need to complete during the period of probation.

Pre-Hearing Conference: A facilitated meeting prior to appearing in court and held to gain the cooperation of the parties, to offer services and treatment and to develop a problem-solving atmosphere in the best interests of children involved in the juvenile court system.

Reasonable Efforts: A legal term describing the level of services and assistance that should be offered to a family during a child welfare case.

Relinquishment: A legal term describing when a parent voluntarily gives up his or her parental rights.

Reunification: A permanent plan for the child that involves the return of the child to any individual who retains parental or legal rights to the child after removal for child abuse, neglect, or both, regardless of the custody arrangement prior to the child entering out-of-home care.

State ward: Any child or youth whose legal custody by judicial determination has been retained by the court or assigned to the Department.

Status Offense, Status Case: Any offense or case in which the juvenile who, by reason of being wayward, or habitually disobedient, is uncontrolled by his or her parent, guardian, or custodian; who deports himself or herself so as to injure or endanger seriously the morals or health of himself, or others; or who is habitually truant from home or school.

For the purposes of the Nebraska Juvenile Code, means a juvenile who has been charged with or adjudicated for conduct which would not be a crime if committed by an adult, including, but not limited to, juveniles charged under subdivision (3)(b) of section 43-247 and section 53-180.01 and 53-180.02 (as provided below). (Source: NRS § 43-245(25))

Under subdivision (3)(b) of section 43-247, means (3) any juvenile:

(b)(i) who, until July 1, 2017, by reason of being wayward or habitually disobedient, is uncontrolled by his or her parent, guardian, or custodian; who deports himself or herself so as to injure or endanger seriously the morals or health of himself, herself, or others; or who is habitually truant from home or school; or

(b)(ii) who, beginning July 1, 2017, is eleven years of age or older and, by reason of being wayward or habitually disobedient, is uncontrolled by his or her parent, guardian, or custodian; who deports himself or herself so as to injure or endanger seriously the morals or health of himself, herself, or others; or who is habitually truant from home or school. (Source: NRS § 43-247(3)(b))

Under section 53-180.01, means a minor unlawfully obtaining, or attempting to obtain, alcoholic liquor by misrepresentation of age, or by any other method, in any tavern or other place where alcoholic liquor is sold. (Source: NRS § 53-180.01)

Under section 53-180.02, means a minor unlawfully selling, dispensing, consuming, or having in his or her possession or physical control any alcoholic liquor in any tavern or in any other place, including public streets, alleys, roads, or highways, upon property owned by the state of Nebraska or any subdivision thereof, or inside any vehicle while in or on any other place, including, but not limited to, the public streets, alleys, roads, or highways, or upon property owned by the state of Nebraska or any subdivision thereof, having physical control of alcoholic liquor as part of a bona fide religious act, ritual, or ceremony or in his or her permanent place of residence. (Source: NRS § 53-180.02)

Transition Plan: A plan that is required for all young people in child welfare cases, age 16 and older to help them "transition" into adulthood. The plan talks about what the young person's goals are and what needs to happen to achieve those goals. You should be closely involved in making this plan.

Victim Offender Dialogue: A process in which a facilitator meets with a juvenile offender and the victim in an effort to have a conversation with the goal of creating an agreed-upon written plan.

Appendix D - **Your Contacts**

This section allows you to be able to have accurate contact information, which should be accessible at all times. Multiple contact sheets are provided for you that include key contacts and a space to store their information. Your CFS Specialist will help you fill this form out. If you're not sure who your caseworker is, ask your placement. If your caseworker doesn't provide you this information, call DHHS at 402-471-3121 and ask for the Division of Children and Family Services.

Important Names, Addresses & Numbers

Current Address of Self

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Family Contact Info

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Family Contact Info

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Family Contact Info

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Your Judge

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Your Attorney

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Appendix D - **Your Contacts**

Your Attorney

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Your CASA volunteer

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Your GAL (Guardian ad Litem)

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Your Probation Officer

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Your Caseworker

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Your Personal Advocate

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Your Caseworker's Supervisor

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Your Therapist

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Appendix D - **Your Contacts**

Your Doctor

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Your PALS

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Supportive Person

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Supportive Person

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Supportive Person

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Other

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Supportive Person

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

Other

Name:_____

Phone:_____

Email: _____

Address: _____

_____

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