



Eric J. Holcomb, Governor
Eric Miller, Director

"Children will live in safe, healthy and supportive families and communities."

If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, call the Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline at (800) 800-5556.

DCS highlights resources and support for older youth during Foster Care Month

INDIANAPOLIS (May 17, 2024) – The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) is promoting awareness of resources available to older youth in foster care as part of Foster Care Month, an annual observance that acknowledges foster parents, foster children, volunteers, child welfare professionals and community members who help ensure Indiana children are safe, supported and loved.

In Indiana, 17 percent of children entering foster care are 14 to 18 years old, which is why DCS places tremendous efforts toward ensuring Indiana has enough foster homes and available resources to support older youth as they prepare for adulthood. Last fall, DCS launched [Every Child Indiana](#) to help recruit more foster homes and support foster families across Indiana.

"I'm incredibly grateful for our foster parents who answer the call to help make sure Hoosier children have a safe and supportive home," DCS Director Eric Miller said. "While we will always work toward permanency, DCS' goal is also to ensure those children – especially our older youth – are aware of their options and resources so we can set them up for success long after they exit foster care."

The national theme for this year's Foster Care Month is "Engaging Youth. Building Supports. Strengthening Opportunities." This theme shines a light on how DCS can support the foster care community by:

- Highlighting resources for children in foster care, especially older youth
- Ensuring foster parents and children feel supported and heard
- Raising awareness about the importance of foster care and how to become a foster parent

DCS is committed to ensuring older foster youth have the tools they need for success. Beginning at age 16, the DCS Older Youth Initiatives program offers a continuum of services that includes an extension of foster care until the youth turns 21 to ensure youth are equipped with the right skills when exiting foster care. Voluntary services also are available as a safety net to young adults ages 18 – 23 who exited foster care.



Services include housing support and resources, educational resources, employment assistance and assistance with car insurance. Youth also can participate in the Indiana Youth Advisory Board to provide feedback to DCS on issues affecting those in foster care.

For a full list of resources, visit <https://www.in.gov/dcs/older-youth-initiatives/>. Watch [Instagram](#), [X](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#) for more resources about foster care throughout the month.

Anyone interested in becoming a foster parent is encouraged to fill out an inquiry form [here](#) or contact [Every Child Indiana](#). For more information about Indiana foster care, visit indianafostercare.org.

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***About Indiana DCS:** The Indiana Department of Child Services leads the state's response to allegations of child abuse and neglect and facilitates child support payments. We consider the needs and values of all we serve in our efforts to protect children while keeping families together whenever possible.*

