



FACT:

As youth age out of the child foster care system they are more likely than their peers to:

- ❖ Be serviced in the adult social service system
- ❖ Be serviced in the adult correctional system
- ❖ Be homeless
- ❖ Experience unplanned parenthood
- ❖ Engage in unhealthy behaviors such as addictions, prostitution etc...

FACT:

Youth with special needs who age out of the foster care system are challenged with:

- ❖ Shrinking or non existent post foster care services and resources
- ❖ The need for more time and/or specialized services to prepare them for self sufficiency
- ❖ Too little or no post foster care planning
- ❖ No community based support net work

FACT:

Barriers foster youth experience in accessing public assistance and community resources on their own are:

- ❖ No permanent address established after foster care
- ❖ Lack of reliable transportation
- ❖ Challenges relating to medical, mental, or educational disabilities
- ❖ Limited or no problem solving skills
- ❖ Limited or no supportive mentors and caring adults in their lives

FACT:

Barriers to self sufficiency for youth exiting foster care are:

- ❖ Unemployment
- ❖ Lack of credit or rental history
- ❖ Addiction
- ❖ Mental health and illiteracy concerns
- ❖ Limited or supportive caring adults in their lives
- ❖ Limited or no holistic transition plan.
- ❖ Functioning/maturity level below chronological age

Bridge Builders Project ... *the link to youth self sufficiency*

WE OFFER:

- ✓ Client centered futures planning
- ✓ Year long holistic transition planning
- ✓ Access to post foster care services when needed
- ✓ 10 week practical skills building course
- ✓ Relationship with a transitions coach and transitions team
- ✓ Relationships with supportive caring mentors in the community
- ✓ Assistance to youth in resolving past issues

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WHAT IS THE BRIDGE BUILDERS PROJECT?

Bridge Builders is a client centered, futures oriented program for teenagers 16 and over. Youth in the program will develop and implement a customized transition plan with the support of a Transition Coach and a team of caring adults. The Bridge Builders program is unique in the belief that youth should be actively engaged in creating their futures and realizing their potential. They are empowered to believe "It is their life, they have to live it, and they need to decide where it goes."

The youth work with a coach to resolve past issues, in what we term the "Ending Zone" spend time in a "Neutral Zone" as they think and plan where they would like to go in life, then move into their "New Beginning". The Bridge Builders Program is unique in that it is not a cookie cutter approach. For some youth the 10 week practical independent living skills group, which will incorporate, group style learning, field trips and presentations from guest speakers along with the support of their Transition Coach will be all the help they need. However others with challenging medical, mental health, and/or educational barriers which makes it difficult for them to be prepared for self sufficiency by the age of 18 will be able to participate in the Enhanced Bridge Builders Program. This aspect of Bridge Builders focuses in on intensive post foster care services and supports.

PATH has a solid reputation for providing quality treatment foster care and family based services since 1972. The Bridge Builders Program supports our mission of:

"Empowering Children and Families to Achieve Lifelong Successes"

For more information on PATH's Bridge Builders Program contact:

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Note: statistical References available upon request