Foster Youth & Higher Education

Presented by:

Massachusetts Department of Children and Families

Adolescent and Young Adult Services Unit
How to Participate in This Webinar

- **Audio Settings**: allow you to control the volume levels.
- **Chat**: feature allows you to send a message to the presenter.
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Have a question during the webinar? Type it in the Q&A section.
About MEFA

Not-for-profit state authority created in 1982 helping families plan, save, and pay for college
Kristen Quinlan has been a licensed social worker with the Department of Children and Families for the past eighteen years. She is currently a Supervisor with the Adolescent Service Unit at Central Office where she provides support to social workers, providers, and youth in transitional planning. She specializes in providing young adults with guidance in navigating the post secondary educational process. This includes the creation of on-campus support networks that are in place today across the Commonwealth to assist students, families and public university staff. In addition to this work Kristen collaborates with Massachusetts Public Community Colleges to provide students academic and financial counseling. Kristen graduated with a Bachelors Degree in Social Work from Plymouth State University and holds a Masters in Education from UMass Boston.
Objectives

- Know the post secondary options for foster youth
- Be able to assist in accessing DCF supports for post secondary education
- Identify and connect students to DCF staff to assist with post secondary planning
Before Senior Year

• **Youth Readiness Support**
  – Identify and support long and short term goals
  – Identify continued student support system.

• **PAYA**
  – Life skills necessary to sustain education

• **Post Secondary messages and expectations**

• **Pre-SAT’s and SAT’s**
Making the Right Decision

- Readiness - Social/Emotional needs
- Academics
- Research colleges and schedule tours
- Costs – Return on Investment
- Vocational vs. College
  - Career Assessment – Career Centers
What is financial aid?

• Money to pay for college or career school. Understanding the difference.

• College is NOT for FREE!
  – Grants
  – Loans
    • Federal vs. Private
  – Work-study
  – Scholarships
What types of aid can students apply for?


- High School Guidance Office – Local Scholarships

- School aid: contact financial aid office at schools being considered

- DCF educational support programs
FAFSA

- Must be completed by all foster youth
- Deadlines are even more important for foster youth
- Take advantage of existing resources:
  - DCF Programs
  - MEFA
  - FAFSA DAY Massachusetts
## SECTION 2 - STUDENT DEPENDENCY STATUS

If you can check ANY of the following boxes, you will not have to provide parental information. Skip to page 4. If you check NONE of the following boxes, you will be asked to provide parental information. Go to the next page.

- I was born before January 1, 1994
- I am married
- I will be working on a master’s or doctorate program (e.g., MA, MBA, MD, JD, PhD, EdD, graduate certificate)
- I am serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces
- I am a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces
- I now have or will have children for whom I will provide more than half of their support between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018
- Since I turned age 13, both of my parents were deceased
- I was in foster care since turning age 13
- I have dependents (other than children or my spouse) who live with me and I provide more than half of their support
- I was a dependent or ward of the court since turning age 13
- I am currently or I was an emancipated minor
- I am currently or I was in legal guardianship
- I am homeless or I am at risk of being homeless
Answer “Yes” if at any time since you turned age 13:

- You had no living parent, even if you are now adopted; or
- You were in foster care, even if you are no longer in foster care today; or
- You were a dependent or ward of the court, even if you are no longer a dependent or ward of the court today. For federal student aid purposes, someone who is incarcerated is not considered a ward of the court.

The financial aid administrator at your school may require you to provide proof that you were in foster care or a dependent or ward of the court.
FAFSA

Student Eligibility

Are you a foster youth or were you at any time in the foster care system?

Yes

2015-2016 Confirmation Page

You reported that you are or were in Foster Care. You may be eligible for assistance through federal programs for foster youth, such as the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and/or the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program.

For more information contact your state ETV coordinator.

If you have questions, visit www.fafsa.gov and click the "Help" icon on the FAFSA home page.
Types of DCF Care and Custody

- Protective Custody
- CRA
- Adoption (Before/After 13)
- Guardianship Placement
- Voluntary Placement Agreement

Other Types of Possible Independents: Probate, Homeless, Runaway, DYS
Documentation for Independents

• DCF Can Assist

• Proof of Custody Status
  – Look at Dates of custody compared to DOB

• Ward of Court Letter

• Guardianship proof from DCF or Probate
What happens next?

• Students will receive financial aid packages from each college
  – *Often does not include DCF educational programs*

• Review Financial Aid Packages with students

• Explain the difference between grants and loans.

• Mass Health and Insurance Waivers
  – Identify on-campus health centers and counseling centers for additional student support
DCF Financial Supports

- Foster Child Tuition and Fee Waiver
- Adopted Child Tuition and Fee Waiver
- Massachusetts Foster Child Grant
- Massachusetts Education and Training Voucher
- William Warren Scholarship
Tuition & Fee Waiver

Eligible Youth

- In DCF Custody until the age of 18 (at least six months)
- Unable to return home
- Have not yet turned 25
- Adopted
- Guardianship

The Waiver waives the cost of tuition and fees of state supported classes only at Mass public colleges, community colleges, and universities. Does not cover: books, application fees, or room and board.
Mass Foster Child Grant

Eligible Youth

• Permanent legal Resident of Mass
• US citizen or non-citizen eligible under Title IV regs.
• DCF protective custody
• Not yet reached 25th Birthday
• Enrolled Full-time (12 credits or equivalent)
• Has completed FAFSA
• Meets schools requirements for satisfactory academic progress
Education and Training Voucher

Eligible Youth

- Youth who were in DCF custody until age 18.
- Unable to return home
- Until the age of 26
- Adopted after the age of 16
- Guardianship with Kin after the age of 16
- Must have High School Diploma or GED
DCF – College Support Programs

• DCF College Fair “Think College Early”
• DCF Educational Open Houses - Statewide Area DCF Office
• Education and Training Support
• College Advising Days - One on one planning and reviews
• College Connections
  – Fin Aid Staff
  – Student Support Services
  – Student Account Staff
  – Admissions
  – Housing
On Campus Networks

SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY RESOURCE LIST

Student Advocacy Office
Chris Sullivan, Director
Ellison Campus Center, rm. 219
978-542-7207
csullivan@salemstate.edu
www.salemstate.edu/studentadvocacy
*Answer questions, make referrals
*Assist students with major life issues impacting educational success

Student Navigation Center
Classroom Building, 2nd fl. Central Campus
978-542-8000
www.salemstate.edu/students/
•Financial Aid Office
  Amy Stewart, Associate Director
  astewart@salemstate.edu
•Bursars Office
  *Billing
  *Loan Repayment
•Registrar's Office
  *Class registration
  *Transcripts/grades
  *Transfer credit
•Clipper Card Office
  *Lost card
  *Questions about funds
  *T-pass program

Center for Academic Excellence
Berry Library, 1st fl.
978-542-6215
www.salemstate.edu/sass/
•Academic Advising, tutoring
•Upward Bound/TEC

Health Services
Kim Daly, Health Services Coordinator
Ellison Campus Center, rm. 107
978-542-6413
www.salemstate.edu/chs/health.php

Counseling Services
Elisa Castillo, Director
Ellison Campus Center, rm. 107
978-542-6410
www.salemstate.edu/chs/counseling.php

Disability Services
Lisa Bibeau, Director
Berry Library, Learning Commons, rm. 20
978-542-6217
diability-services@salemstate.edu
www.salemstate.edu/chs/counseling.php

Residential Life
Neil Andriot, Director
Atlantic Hall, 1st floor
978-542-6416
housing@salemstate.edu
www.salemstate.edu/student_life/265.php

Student Involvement & Activities
Becky Jimenez, Director
Ellison Campus Center, rm. 218
978-542-6436
www.salemstate.edu/8236.php
*Student Organizations, Leadership

Career Services
Lauren Hubachek, Director
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978-542-6405
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JANUARY 2016

Diversity & Multicultural Affairs
Rebecca Comage, Director
Ellison Campus Center, rm. 202
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Key dates:
Jan. 19 First day of class
Jan. 25 ADD/DROP period ends
Apr. 15 Last day to withdraw from courses
Mar. 1 Room Deposit due (opens 1/8/16)
May 21 Undergraduate Commencement
www.salemstate.edu/students/27582.php

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Salem State University
https://www.facebook.com/salemstateuniversity

Salem State Athletics
https://www.facebook.com/pages/SSC-VIKINGS/203032806913
DCF Contact Information

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- Ana Maria Tormes– DCF Education and Training Worker
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- Laurie Hernandez– DCF Education and Training Worker
  Phone: (617)-748-2421
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Grant & Scholarship Information can be found through Adolescent Services and Education

www.mass.gov/dcf
Connect with MEFA on Social Media

facebook.com/mefaMA

@MEFAtweets

linkedin.com/company/mefa

youtube.com/MEFAcounselor
Thank You

Questions?

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collegeplanning@mefa.org

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