

YOUTH RIGHTS: PAYING FOR YOUR EDUCATION IF YOU WERE IN FOSTER CARE

How do I pay for college or training school?

The first step in applying for financial aid is to complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) form. The FAFSA can be completed on paper or online. You can get a paper copy of the FAFSA in your guidance counselor's office or at any college admission or financial aid office. To apply online go to www.fafsa.ed.gov. If you need assistance filling out the application contact 1-800-4-FED-AID. Try to get your FAFSA in as soon as you can, so that you do not miss any deadlines.



When you are filling out the FAFSA form, be sure to answer YES to question 53. This question asks if you are or were a ward/dependent of the court. If you are or were in foster care, answer "YES."

Answering yes makes you eligible for the maximum student aid available. You will need to provide a letter from the county child welfare agency that shows that you have been in care. Contact your caseworker or your lawyer for this information if you do not have it.

Are there grants and scholarships available for youth in care or youth who have been in care?

YES. There are scholarships that are for youth who are, or have been in substitute care. To the right you will see a list of some scholarships you may be eligible for.

Many scholarships are available to students based on their experiences in foster care as well as their gender, race, chosen course of study, or other distinguishing factors. Here are just a few scholarship opportunities that you should look into:

www.collegeboard.com —matches applicants to appropriate scholarships.

www.pheaa.org —lists scholarships, grants, and work-study options

www.pittsburghfoundation.org —contains a database of 190 individual scholarships to students. Located under the "Grantmaking" tab.

www.thesalliemafund.org —provides several scholarships that youth in care may be eligible for.

www.unconf.org —provides scholarships to African American students who attend United Negro College Fund member colleges and non-member colleges. Search the database of UNCF and non-UNCF scholarships at the site. **

Juvenile
Law
Center

Casey Family Scholarship—offers between \$1,500 and \$10,000 per year in scholarships to youth under age 25 who resided in foster care for at least 12 months and were not adopted. In 2009, the application was posted at <http://www.orphan.org/index.php?id=30>.

Chafee Education and Training Grant (ETG)—provides up to \$5,000 per academic year. You may be eligible if you: 1) were adopted after attaining age 16, or 2) are 16 or older and in care, or 3) are under 21 and were in care at age 16 or older. To apply you must complete the FAFSA and the Pennsylvania Chafee Education and Training Grant Program Application. To obtain this application call 1-800-831-0797 or go online at www.pheaa.org or www.independentlivingpa.org.

National Foster Parent Association Youth Scholarship—offers scholarships to foster youth for college, vocational training schools, correspondence courses and even GED prep programs. They award five scholarships of \$1,000 each. To apply you must complete the application, obtain two letters of recommendation, and write an essay. See <http://www.nfpainc.org/content/?page=YOUTHSCHOLARSHIP&nmenu=4&title=Youth%20Scholarships> for more information.



Horatio Alger Scholarship Programs

Offers scholarships for youth who are seniors in high school, have maintained a 2.0 GPA and would like to pursue a bachelor's degree. Student must be considered in "critical financial need." You can find out more information at <https://www.horatioalger.org/scholarships/>