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## **Philadelphia's Youth Fostering Change Releases Groundbreaking Toolkit on Permanency**

*Youth advocates share their recommendations for best practices to providing youth in foster care with connections to permanent family, supportive adults*

**Philadelphia, PA** (February 26, 2019): Youth Fostering Change, an advocacy program at Juvenile Law Center for youth with experience in the child welfare system, today released [\*Tools for Success: A Toolkit for Child Welfare Professionals\*](#). As youth with experience in the child welfare system, [Youth Fostering Change](#) advocates were familiar with the real-life consequences older youth face when permanency planning fails. They decided to create this toolkit and focus on this work as part of their 2017-2018 advocacy project in the hopes of improving outcomes for other youth.

The toolkit is for social workers, advocates, case workers, and other professionals to support youth in care to achieve permanency. Youth Fostering Change defines permanency as having supportive adult connections, not just a place to live. Permanency and the process to achieve permanency should actively involve youth, recognize adolescent development, and include best practices for every youth's plan.

"Many of us aged out without family or supportive connections, or we are about to leave the system without gaining permanency and are uncertain about our lives after foster care," wrote members of Youth Fostering Change in the report. "We believe all youth deserve permanency and supportive adult connections—both are essential to success in adulthood. Based on what we know about our own stories and those of our peers in foster care, we created a toolkit and recommendations to improve permanency outcomes for children in foster care, regardless of circumstances or age. This publication identifies some of the challenges we faced or are still facing as older youth in care."

Youth Fostering Change dedicated last year to work around permanency issues. The group has several activities planned to disseminate this information, from national webinars to presentations and media appearances.

"As a social worker, I hope that this guide can serve as a resource for professionals and those specifically working with youth in the foster care system to ensure the best outcomes for young people," said Marcía Hopkins, MSW, Senior Manager, Youth Advocacy Program and Policy at Juvenile Law Center. "We know that all people—specifically children—thrive best when they are in safe, loving, caring environments that promote their well-being. We believe and hope that this resource can be an added tool for those representing youth in care to further achieve permanency for foster youth. This tool is especially valuable as it was developed from the point of view from the youth themselves."

Youth advocates from the program as well as staff who oversee the program are available for comment.

Youth Fostering Change and its partner program Juveniles for Justice (a youth advocacy program for youth with experience in the justice system) are also celebrating ten years this year. Follow along for a glimpse of this celebration with #10YearsofYA.

*Juvenile Law Center advocates for rights, dignity, equity and opportunity for youth in the foster care and justice systems. Founded in 1975, Juvenile Law Center is the first non-profit, public interest law firm for children in the country. We fight for youth through litigation, appellate advocacy and submission of amicus (friend-of-the-court) briefs, policy reform, public education, training, consulting, and strategic communications. Widely published and internationally recognized as leaders in the field, Juvenile Law Center has substantially shaped the development of law and policy on behalf of youth. We strive to ensure that laws, policies, and practices affecting youth advance racial and economic equity and are rooted in research, consistent with children's unique developmental characteristics, and reflective of international human rights values. For more information about Juvenile Law Center's work, visit [www.JLC.org](http://www.JLC.org).*

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