If you have been in foster care at any time after age 13, your classes will likely be paid for at most Washington State colleges.

**College Bound Scholarship**
This College Bound Scholarship is a state-funded program managed by the Washington Student Achievement Council. It is an early promise of state financial aid to help pay for college tuition for youth who have been in foster care any time after turning 13. Your classes will likely be paid for at most Washington State colleges.

**Washington State Governors’ Scholarship for Foster Youth**
This scholarship helps youth in foster care continue their education through a four-year college degree. Scholarship amounts vary depending on the college you attend, and are available for up to four years. You must be enrolled full time and maintain satisfactory grades in order to renew the scholarship each year. For more information, visit http://www.colleges4cascadiafoundation.org/wo/scholarships/governors.

**Fostering College Knowledge: Planning & Paying for Higher Education for Youth in Care**
If you have been in foster care at any time after age 13, you have access to the following financial resources to help you pay for your education. If you have been in foster care any time after turning 13, your classes will likely be paid for at most Washington State colleges.

**Financial Aid**
Financial aid is money to help you pay for college. It comes from the federal government, state governments, colleges and universities, private sources, and organizations. In order to receive financial aid, you must apply.

Applying for financial aid is a separate process from applying for admission to a college. You must do both. To receive financial aid, you must apply for financial aid no later than three weeks before the start of the college term.

Applying for financial aid is a simple process that will help you determine what financial aid you may be eligible to receive. To apply for financial aid, you will need the College Board’s Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA). To determine if you qualify for financial aid, you will need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the WASFA. The FAFSA can be filled out online at www.fafsa.gov or www.wasfa.org. The WASFA can be filled out online at www.wasfa.org.

Both applications open October 1. Complete this application as soon as possible to make sure you receive the maximum amount of aid available.

**Independent Living Program (ILP)**
This program can provide you with basic life skills and support. It is designed to enhance your ability to live independently by increasing your skills, knowledge, and ability in the following areas:

- **Educational stability**
- **Post high school education preparation**
- **Employment/vocational readiness**
- **Income maintenance**
- **Housing**
- **Daily living skills**
- **Interspersial skills**
- **Self-sufficiency**
- **Navigating health/protective relationships**
- **Advocacy and achievement**

For more information about Independent Living, email ILGDS@dhs.wa.gov, contact your local DCFS office, or visit http://independence.wa.gov/programs/independent-living-program.

**Medicaid to 26**
You may be eligible for continued foster care benefits even if you are no longer in foster care or other eligible out-of-home placement. To find out if you are eligible, call 1-866-652-3022 extension 15480. This program is offered at many community colleges and four-year schools. If you are low-income, first-generation, foster youth, and/or have disabilities, this program can be a great support. In TRiO, this program is called Student Support Services Program (TRiO SSS) and is designed to enhance your ability to live independently by increasing your skills, knowledge, and ability in the following areas:

- **Educational stability**
- **Post high school education preparation**
- **Employment/vocational readiness**
- **Income maintenance**
- **Housing**
- **Daily living skills**
- **Interspersal skills**
- **Self-sufficiency**
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For more information about Independent Living, email ILGDS@dhs.wa.gov, contact your local DCFS office, or visit http://independence.wa.gov/programs/independent-living-program.

**Passport to Careers Program**
The Passport to Careers Program helps students from foster care prepare for and succeed in college, apprenticeships, or pre-apprenticeship programs. Through the Passport to College Program, students receive a scholarship that covers the cost of attending college, tuition, fees, books, housing, transportation, and some personal expenses. Support services from college staff, and priority consideration for the TRiO Grant and TRiO Work Study programs. The Passport to Apprenticeship Opportunities program will assist students participating in registered apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship programs with covering occupational-specific costs such as tuition for classes, fees, work clothes, rain gear, tools, and occupation-related tools. Students with questions about eligibility for the Passport to Careers program should contact 1-888-535-0747 (option 3), email passporttocollege@dhs.wa.gov, or visit: https://readysetgrad.wa.gov/college/passport-foster-youth-promises-program.

**Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program**
This program offers financial assistance to eligible youth to attend an approved college, university, vocational or technical college. You may receive funding for qualified school-related expenses, including tuition, fees, books, housing, food, transportation, and other educational costs. For more information, visit http://independence.wa.gov/programs/etv-program, email ETV@WASH@dhs.wa.gov, or call 1-877-433-8388.

*For a list of approved schools in Washington State and to view eligibility requirements visit: http://wsac.wa.gov/colleges-and-institutions-washington-programs/etv-program.

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**Foster Care-Specific Financial Aid Programs**
Foster care programs help you pay for college. It comes from the federal government, state government, colleges and universities, private sources, and organizations. To determine if you qualify for financial aid, you must apply.

Applying for financial aid is a simple process that will help you determine what financial aid you may be eligible to receive. To apply for financial aid, you will need the College Board’s Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the WASFA. Both applications open October 1. Complete this application as soon as possible to make sure you receive the maximum amount of aid available.

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The most important things you can do to help yourself prepare for life after high school are attend school regularly, take challenging courses to meet the Minimum College Admission Standards, and talk to your school counselor and other adults about your plans.

Social
- Ask the college you will attend these questions to help you prepare for the transition to higher education.

Healthcare
- Ask your school counselor about available resources such as tutoring, informal student study groups, meeting with professors during office hours, and seeking a disability advocate if you need it.

Academic
- Make sure you have participated in a summer bridge program, freshman seminar, or similar program.

Financial Aid
- Apply for federal and state scholarships, grants, and work-study opportunities.
- Look into community-based funding options.

Transportation
- Ask your school counselor or academic advisor about transportation options.

On-Campus Support Services
- Are there a writing center, tutoring center, or career services available?

Reading
- Do your best in school.

Savings
- Start a savings account.

Research
- Research careers and do a job shadow.

College Preparation
- High school is an important time. If you want to attend college, you need to start preparing by working hard in high school, taking challenging courses, and getting good grades.

Make It Happen!
- Make It Happen! is a three-day, two-night college campus experience for youth who are or ever have been in the Washington state foster care system. The camp is in June on a college campus in Washington.

Extended Foster Care Program
- This program provides an opportunity for youth at age 18 to voluntarily agree to continue receiving foster care services, including placement services, while you complete high school or a post-high school academic or vocational program, or participate in a program or activity designed to promote employment. For more information, visit www.independence.wa.gov.

First-Year Supportive Programming
- This is available in certain parts of the state. It provides rental assistance and case management services to eligible youth who have aged out of the foster care system.

Foster Care Alumni Services
- This program may be able to help you find a safe, affordable place to live and help you become independent. Learn more about eligibility and its services at www.independence.wa.gov.

Support Services in College
- Many colleges have priority housing and year-round options. The Independent Youth Housing Program is available in certain parts of the state. It provides rental assistance and case management services to eligible youth who have aged out of the foster care system.

Housing
- Some schools offer services for foster care youth such as housing during holiday breaks. Be sure to find out if the college you want to attend offers services for former foster youth.

Transportation
- Ask your school counselor about available resources such as tutoring, informal student study groups, meeting with professors during office hours, and seeking a disability advocate if you need it.

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