



# Transitions Mentoring Program

## Central Missouri Foster Care and Adoption Assoc.

The Transitions “Empower Me Up” Mentoring program focuses on foster teens that are between the ages of 17 and 21 years old. The immediate focus of this program is on foster teens as they will be “aging out” of the foster care system and are graduating seniors involved in the Transitions program. These youth are on the “verge” of their life where it is a necessity they have the life skills to prepare for adulthood. When a foster child “age’s out” of foster care, they are on their own, regardless if they are prepared for adulthood. They do not have parents who they can call for advice. There are circumstances that foster children will need some sort of support. For instance, if a foster teen that has just become independent needs to get car insurance, checking account, rental insurance or a birth certificate but does not know where to go who to contact or how to fill out the lengthy forms, they will not have anyone they can call for assistance. The mentoring program will teach foster youth the skills required to prepare for adulthood and becoming independent so that they can be productive, confident, self-sufficient, successful and healthy citizens. This will help to “break the cycle” and prevent these foster youth from becoming yet another statistic that will be unemployed, homeless, incarcerated or dependent upon welfare.

The Transitions “Empower Me Up” mentoring program teaches youth how to prepare for independency and “empowers” them with a set of skills and tools needed to become contributing and informed adults. Typically, older teens in foster care have had frequent foster care placements and have not necessarily learned the skills essential for growth into adulthood. The Transitions “Empower Me Up” Mentoring Program will give them the confidence and self-esteem necessary to be successful for life outside of the foster care system.

### **Being a Volunteer:**

Are you interested in assisting a youth in foster care as they transition out of the system and into adulthood? If you are a caring, energetic individual who has an interest in volunteering we have just the right opportunity for you. CMFCAA have created a wonderful mentoring program called “Empower Me Up” to provide hope and a path to higher education and vocational training for youth in foster care.

### **Who we need:**

We are looking for adults who can commit at least two years to provide support and guidance to the youth who are receiving services via the Transitions Program. Since a sense of consistency is so important to youth who have had their lives uprooted, we want mentors who can make this two year commitment through their Junior level of college.

The “Empower Me Up” Mentor program has a three phase system. We are hopeful all volunteer mentors can achieve all three of these levels below for the mentee you are matched with. Please let us know if you are not available to meet all three phases.

### **Educational Mentors:**

Each educational mentor will work with one child with the goal of keeping the youth in school and ensuring that educational progress is being made. The educational mentor will coordinate with the foster youth, CMFCAA Transitions program coordinators, their college advisor (if appropriate), the foster parents and the staff of the Children’s Division or The Missouri Alliance for Children and Families. The mentor will be expected to accompany the foster child to college visits and college orientations to help relieve any anxiety the child may experience. An initial meeting at our “Mentor Meet and Greet”, a three month visit and yearly meeting is mandatory for our mentors for our Transitions program youth. We encourage visits monthly via email, phone or in person with our youth just to see how they are doing in their transitions to college. Assessment forms will be available to all mentors to inform CMFCAA staff how each recipient is transitioning to their new experiences. We would like these to be sent to CMFCAA quarterly. If you feel there is an emergency with a recipient we ask you contact us immediately.

**Business/Higher Education Mentors:**

Business or higher education mentors will meet the youth and assist them in envisioning the educational and employment opportunities they can pursue. The mentor will be expected to provide 2 "Job Shadowing/Intern" experiences for the child and give an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the youth after the shadowing or intern experience. This will help CMFCAA determine the areas of training the youth needs to further their educational/business goals.

**Community Mentors:**

The community mentors will provide emotional support and guidance, coordinate and if needed accompany the youth to social events. The community mentor will introduce the foster child to a community organization they are familiar with or are involved in personally. Examples may include the Women's Business Association, Zonta, PEO or other affiliations. This will give the foster youth a sense of community service and volunteerism. This opportunity will also give the foster youth a sense of support to whom they can count on if they become a part of the organization upon "aging-out" of the foster care system.

**Volunteer Applicants:**

Adults 25 and older are eligible to apply to be one of our volunteer mentors.

**Volunteer Requirements:**

1. All applicants must complete a Volunteer Services Application Packet. This includes a personal information form, a confidentiality agreement and a release of information for schools, employers, and other forms as required.
2. Applicants must complete a criminal history check.
3. Applicants will be interviewed in person and matched with an appropriate youth
4. CMFCAA will hold a "Meet and Greet Mentor Luncheon." to introduce mentors to their mentees –This typically takes place in November @ a local restaurant in Jefferson City, Missouri.
5. The Transitions program coordinator will provide accepted volunteers with a general overview of the agency. Volunteers will receive an hour of training to include the policies and laws governing child protective services, foster care, special needs of youth in foster care and educational needs of foster youth.



**How Do I Start?**

Fill out the form below and e-mail it to Debbie Walker @ ccfosteradopt@gmail.com. If you have questions, you may call 573-353-0574 or 573-298-0258, or Debbie at 634-2309 or 690-4180

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any previous volunteer experience?

Have you had experience working with youth in general, and or youth in foster care?

In order to match you with a youth, what interests, hobbies, work experience or field of study are you involved in?

Are you willing to commit to a youth for 2 years?

Have you, or will you apply for registration with the Missouri Department of Health Family Care Safety Registry OR have a criminal background check run with the Missouri State Highway Patrol? Both have a \$10.00 fee.

Are you willing and able to comply with the required meetings and reports to CMFCAA?

Are you willing to take an hour of training regarding the policies & laws governing child protective services, foster care, special needs of youth in foster care and educational needs of foster youth, and having done so adhere to those laws, rules and guidelines?

Do you feel you can help in all three phases of the program, Educational, Business, Community?

Central Mo. Foster Care and Adoption Assoc.  
Volunteer Mentor Inquiries  
P. O. Box 1505 Jefferson City, Mo 65102