**Transition Age Youth Coalition Meeting**

September 11, 2025 | 1 – 2PM

Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/94301052230?pwd=bWoFv04A1COULS22w6OF257sR1K1uR.1>
Meeting ID: 943 0105 2230; Passcode: 469465

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| NOTES |
| Welcome & IntroductionsChairs: Joshua Grant, The Home; Matt Stone, Youth VillagesMembers:Cindy Powers, NFI, Debi Belkin, Friends of Children, Kristen Levitre, Fall River Deaconess Home, Oonagh Brault, DCF Family Advisory Committee, Mia Alvarado, Roxbury Youthworks, Bryan House, 18 Degrees, Doga Keith, Youth Villages, Julie Segovia, HopeWellCLM: Rachel Gwaltney, ED, Sue Anamier O’Callaghan, Public Policy Dir., Haleigh St. Hilaire, Communications & Public Policy SpecialistState Agencies: Molly O’Neil, DCF |
| * Survey Responses
* Key Challenges
	+ Housing
	+ Post-secondary access/opportunities
	+ Employment/Economic stability
	+ Mental Health Supports
	+ *Other:*
		- *adversity for LGBTQIA+ youth*
		- *transportation/car insurance (economic)*
		- *aging out*
			* *raise age of aging out (22 yr olds often not ready)*
			* *consistency for over 18 yr old policy at DCF*
			* *need more cross agency collaboration for youth transitioning to adult services*
* **Lived Experience Engagement**
* Most Members are willing to mentor an emerging adult with lived experience from your organization to participate in this coalition's meetings and legislative visits (*authentic engagement advised)*
* Top Budget Challenges
	+ Housing: cuts to housing vouchers; transitional housing and wraparound services for current youth and graduates
	+ Budget: Uncertainty of current budget stability; Difficulty increasing state funds to accommodate statewide expansion of service.
	+ Workforce (Budget): Adequate rates - close to 30% vacancy with difficulty hiring!
* March 2026 Youth Hill Day
* Proposed Focus: Aging out - define and discuss resources and supports that youth need when they are aging out.
* Plan: Members support incorporating voices of individuals with lived experience
* TAYC Youth Day Planning Committee Meetings – *Draft:* Oct. 9, 1pm, Nov. 13, 1pm (Members check with youth! And confirm; Sue send invites as placeholders at least)
* Member/CLM Discussion Points
* Aging out at 22 is not really feasible for many to do with stability, preparedness
* DMH – no more housing vouchers (promised vouchers but out)...
* Concern NOFO (notice of funding each year to expand housing – rental subsidies) had been relatively vague/broad on populations you can use it for; youth lumped together without divisions within which enabled LGBTQIA services but now may be barred; concerned about that and what’s delayed and what it’s getting (1 yr grant vs 2);
	+ Regarding bias concerns for LGBTQIA+ youth, CLM has talked with EOHHS. Recommend Rachel/CLM talk to Lisa Klinkenberg in charge of data process for the state at HLC and navigating these issues; Alice Colgrove and Karen involved too)
* DCF – Dept. has TAY youth services. Youth and providers need to know how and where to access them. Currently revamping Mass.gov website – for example to ensure knowledge about resources on tuition fees, foster child grants, and housing (Foster Youth Initiative housing vouchers application access); Molly O’Neil invites all to utilize her as a resource (thank you, Molly!)
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| Member Updates: Events, Successes, Challenges, New Initiatives* 18 Degrees mentioned having hosted a Youth Recognition Ceremony
* Training for Probation Officers/Court connected TAY - Clinton, MA (next couple of weeks; contact Bryan House if wanting more info.)
* Lewison House just opened with ribbon cutting ceremony – it provides TAY housing to 5 young people
* NFI opened group home for TAY – another 9 beds; now have full continuum of care with three step housing from intensive to supported to this (18 to 20 yr olds)
	+ most areas around the state are missing that piece due to insufficient funding;
* Covenant House is coming into the state support 25 TAY housing units in Metro Boston with the intention to grow a lot; provide housing in 7 or 8 states (started in NY with shelter) with good reputation
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| CLM Upcoming Meetings/Next Steps* CLM Member Meeting – Sept. 22, 10am – 12pm (JRI, Needham)
* TAYC Youth Day Planning Committee Meetings
	+ **Members** check with your colleagues/youth in your programs on your organizations plan on engaging with youth to participate in the TAYC Youth Hill Day Planning and whether these meeting dates/times work (email sue@childrensleague.org)
	+ Sue send TAYC Youth Day Planning Committee Meeting Placeholders for
		- Oct. 9, 1pm
		- Nov. 13, 1pm
			* We (TAYC Members and CLM) will engage youth to learn ensure we promote their priorities, know what bills they want to advocate for and how they would like to shape youth advocacy at the TAYC Youth Hill Day
* **Members** also talk to your teams about hosting a legislator at your programs (“ride along”) before the Youth Hill Day in March 2026. Let CLM know if you’d like us to support that effort in any way.
* **Members** Advocacy Opportunity**:** reach out to Senate Ways and Means Committee to promote passage of **An Act Expanding Access to Higher Education Tuition and Fee Waivers for Adopted Foster Children** ([S.918](https://4tm7nzhab.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001_MoZtCKvQVDLmXZ7-uTStW13CL-4OqXCsKJRAatgtRaUNI3qi6AkhFDQBmcYHHUl20WJYrRNbFtco9JQpVddPlovdbgWkshRFlSbHCV_edUYDJdO7ISbbQhuA5JxPFKO_R5oednmjdNDtgv6Ou9wYzDzWqGDcft7NnPIPwy4DXJSVlc5EXH4jg==&c=sStBK0U4iAzYEU_CcwYoxmPgLZDQ1sRIn7CDAT5yYJ9r32XP1wNo4A==&ch=tuM4TJUCl4Sl4sOP7uCP15MAfBsyirveZ8ze1M0fwfnFu7YtgYUuPA==) / [H.1431](https://4tm7nzhab.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001_MoZtCKvQVDLmXZ7-uTStW13CL-4OqXCsKJRAatgtRaUNI3qi6AkhNJM894rwJyLyqIhK7eCIb1PrdChK9MIzGhuP-RZogOi1XajGmvgx0pz-g-gMcD42bmDL38nuB5GJ-tbhYna9zlfz9IzrjZMUCmfCbVQ-WnN5_5Zvbo8Pzt3UX3xvRLNdQ==&c=sStBK0U4iAzYEU_CcwYoxmPgLZDQ1sRIn7CDAT5yYJ9r32XP1wNo4A==&ch=tuM4TJUCl4Sl4sOP7uCP15MAfBsyirveZ8ze1M0fwfnFu7YtgYUuPA==)) - aligns existing law with legislative intent to provide full tuition and fee waivers at public higher education institutes for youth adopted from DCF and youth in DCF custody for all courses.
	+ WHY IT’S NEEDED: Two issues currently impede the existing law’s intent: (1) a loophole in the state’s financial aid system has prevented this tuition waiver from covering courses taught at night or by faculty who are not full time; (2) it could be interpreted as not applying to youth in DCF custody.
	+ BILLS SOLUTIONS: (1) students can use financial aid tuition and fee waivers for any course offered by a state higher education institution; (2) clarifies that youth in DCF custody are also eligible for full tuition and fee waivers.
* CLM: further discuss LGBTQIA+ concerns over bias in housing funds/programs with state agency partners including HLC.
* CLM: discuss concerns noted about the lack of DMH Housing Vouchers
* Next TAYC Meeting: Dec. 11, 1pm
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