



Youth Transitioning Into Adulthood
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NOTES FROM “Let’s Talk Thursdays” via Zoom – July 23, 2020, hosted by Brenda Lee Knowles and Mary E. Valdez, YTIA Co-Founders.

Guest Presenter: **Aubrey, former youth in care.** Our topic was “Reality Check”.

Aubrey, a now 20-year-old who left foster care at 18, shared that she had been in foster care since she was about 8 or 9 years old. During her time in foster care, she moved around quite a bit (maybe 8 placements), and she offered her thoughts about how things are now that she is on her own. *Below are highlights from Aubrey’s comments.*

- She wishes that there had been a lot more support
- She realizes that she needed a lot more guidance but learned to reach out to people who could help her
- Regarding housing while still in care, she applied for the SIL program but because of the lack of assistance by her caseworker, and because of starting the application process too late, she missed out on this opportunity
- She started working at 15 years old, while still in high school (first job, Journeys Shoe Store)
- Initially, she did not realize the importance of saving money
- When she decided to move back to San Antonio (she had been living in Dallas), the move was “scary” but she did it
- Emotionally, it is still traumatic
- She’s getting her life on track; she starts the Fall semester at SAC soon
- Being a first generation college student is somewhat difficult
- Becoming independent from foster care can be challenging
- Scheduling and planning is very important
- Coping strategies: journaling or drawing had been her method of choice while in care; now she likes to cook and try new recipes; note on journaling: it is important to journal for mental health – focus on a positive viewpoint; she still draws periodically
- She learned how to make decisions
- She found a place called Tobin Lofts, near SAC, that’s affordable but she notes that it’s important to have a good job and to learn to live with roommates
- In discussing credit, she notes that she is slowly establishing credit (Tobin Lofts reports her good payment history to credit reporting agencies, as does her phone service provider)
- She says it’s important to keep building your resume

Another youth chimed in and said that he had been lucky because at first he was with the same foster parent for 4 years but now he's living with relatives (so he has not felt as much of the same trauma). His advice: "Don't take for granted what you have." He followed up by saying that he feels it's important to make and have good friends.

Another youth remarked that, although she was not in foster care as long as Aubrey (she spent a year and a half in foster care before being cared for by her aunt and uncle) she still realizes that she has some things in common with Aubrey. She works long hours (up to 50 hours in recent weeks), she likes to read; she feels blessed to be in a "place" where's she's gotten goals and that she, too, will be attending college in the Fall. One additional remark: always be in good standing with jobs and learn to advocate for yourself.

We briefly discussed CREDIT and CREDIT REPORTS, and the ability to request an annual report free through <https://www.annualcreditreport.com>.

FINAL WORD OF ADVICE: Aubrey says: Take advantage of all benefits provided to youths in care; study up on the resources that are available, save money – always have a "cushion," have a "back-up" plan; be ready with/for changes. And, INDEED is a good source for a job search!

YTIA REMINDER: Stay safe, stay home, be extra vigilant, be mindful of others; wash hands often, wear a mask!

If any youth needs a mask, call YTIA so that we can send you one.

FINAL WORD: Don't forget to REGISTER TO VOTE when you turn 18!

FRIENDLY REMINDER: Our next "Let's Talk Thursday" via Zoom is on **Thursday, July 30, 2020 at noon.**



Presents

LET'S TALK THURSDAYS
(Planning Ahead in Spite of COVID-19)

Join us **every Thursday** from June 25th to August 6th
from **noon to 1:00 p.m.**

Via



Just click this link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86241706860?pwd=UElla0FFMmhhahM3R4aWxhd3ouc3FCUT09>

We will select a topic and then we can talk about your feelings on:
The Present, College, Housing, Employment, The Future.

Let's Keep It Real!