HOPE #7
Young people are provided with opportunities to develop financial capability through education, opening a bank account and receiving matched funds for assets.

The Issue
Young people aging out of foster care may not have learned how to manage money and may leave care without basic financial skills. Many have difficulty finding housing, finding and keeping a job, taking care of their health, and undertaking educational and training opportunities, and they often end up experiencing financial and legal trouble. One way to change these outcomes is to provide them with financial education and opportunities to save money through a matched savings account. It can help young people learn financial management, access mainstream banking and save money for assets. Young people in foster care should be afforded similar opportunities as their peers such as having the resources to rent an apartment, purchase a car, and attend college or other training. Data shows that those who purchased assets are more likely to report being employed and having stable housing.

Our Recommendations
- Provide all young people with developmentally appropriate financial literacy training.
- Make matched savings accounts available to all current and former foster youth ages 14 through 26.
- Secure funding for specified matched asset purchases that will assist young people with their transition into adulthood. Matches should be provided for housing deposits, transportation, medical and educational expenses, investments, business start-up and credit building and credit repair.

Our Voice
"After attending financial literacy classes, I understood what credit was and why it is important. I have an IDA match account now and am planning to use it to get my credit moving in the right direction." Tiffany, Maui

I used my IDA match to enroll in CNA classes.
I had always wanted to be a nurse and if it weren’t for the Opportunity Passport Program, my passion would not be rekindled and I would not be feeling as great about myself as I do now as a CNA in an elderly home. I see the benefit of what I do every single day! " Jade, East Hawai'i

The HI H.O.P.E.S. Youth Opportunities Initiative (HYOI) helps youth leaving foster care become successful adults in their communities.

The HI H.O.P.E.S. Youth Leadership Board
The HI H.O.P.E.S. (Hawai‘i Helping Our People Envision Success) Youth Leadership Board is made up of young people between the ages of 14-26 who are currently in or were formerly in foster care. The boards serve as the Youth Advisory Council for DHS-CWS and the youth voice for HYOI. Their roles are to advocate, educate and collaborate to improve outcomes for foster youth. They receive training, meet monthly, participate in the CP Hui, work groups, presentations and events. There are boards on O’ahu, in East and West Hawai‘i, Kaua‘i and Maui.

Media coverage is a basic necessity and critical for young people to enjoy healthy and productive lives. Many young people who experience foster care are at greater risks for exposure to sexual abuse, domestic violence, drug usage and mental health issues which include anxiety, depression and PTSD. Obtaining and maintaining medical coverage should be a priority for young people and the adults that work with them, especially as they transition from foster care to adulthood.

In 2015, the HI H.O.P.E.S. statewide boards will launch their “Powered til 26” campaign to increase awareness around the law which provides Medicaid coverage up to age 26 for young people that emancipate from foster care or who entered guardianship or adoption after age 16.

The campaign includes education around the law’s eligibility requirements and recommendations on how to access health care coverage and services. Communication efforts will be geared towards a wide audience and include judges, social workers, GALs, CASAs, resource caregivers, service providers, health care providers and young people eligible for this Medicaid coverage in Hawai‘i.

What is Medicaid to 26?
The Affordable Care Act provides FREE medical coverage under Hawai‘i state law for eligible former foster youth up to age 26.

Who is Eligible for Medicaid to 26?
- Young adults who aged out of DHS foster care in Hawai‘i or
- Young adults placed in legal guardianship or adopted after age 16 in Hawai‘i
- All eligible adults must reside in Hawai‘i

What are the Benefits of this coverage?
- FREE basic Medicaid coverage (includes mental health care)
- NO income or asset limit requirements

How do Eligible Young Adults Apply for Medicaid to 26?
Young adults can apply online at mybenefits.hawaii.gov or in person at any MedQuest office.
- If applying online, please check off “Yes” when asked, “Were you in foster care at age 18 or older in Hawai‘i?”
- If applying in person, please make sure to say that you’re a Former Foster Youth.
The Issue
When we age out of foster care, we need stable, safe, affordable housing. In Hawai‘i, over 30% of young people surveyed reported that they experienced homelessness. Nationally, 24% of former foster youth experience some form of homelessness by age 24. This increases our exposure to substance abuse, trauma, and harmful environments. Support youth-led transition planning by age 16 and make sure that we are released from care with a place to live and a permanent adult connection. Priority access to subsidized housing and access to private-sector housing should be provided. Access to transportation is important and connects us to work, education, good housing and resources.

Our Recommendations
- Help us begin to develop our transition plan at age 16 prior to transitioning from foster care.
- All foster youth aging out of foster care should leave foster care with a stable, safe, affordable place to live and a permanent connection with a caring adult.
- Help us build social capital while we are in foster care so we have relationships and resources that can help us with housing when we become adults.
- Encourage financial capability so young people can build credit and provide access to programs that match for housing deposits, rent and utility deposits.
- An array of housing options, including access to private-sector housing should be identified.
- Housing options should be close to public transportation.
- Ensure that social workers or other caring adults provide us with packets which include applications and information for affordable housing and Imua Kākou.

Our Voice
“After foster care, I went away to college on the mainland. When that didn’t work out, I returned to find myself homeless. For 10 months, I slept in parks, on the beach and under bridges until I was able to obtain an apartment with help from my Hale Kipa worker and programs like Imua Kākou.” Noel, O‘ahu

“Because I cultivated a strong relationship with my foster dad, I was able to live with him when my dorm was closed during college break.” Keola, East Hawai‘i

“When I was aging out of foster care, I didn’t know where to go. I had the option of paying $800 plus electricity or moving out by my 18th birthday. I couldn’t afford that and I’m lucky my mom allowed me to stay with her until I could stabilize myself and save money for my own place.” Karen, West Hawai‘i

HOPE #1
Young people will have safe, stable, and affordable housing with access to transportation, work and school.

HOPE #6
Young people will have lifelong, supportive relationships in the community that help them achieve their personal goals.

The Issue
In Hawai‘i and nationally, young adults who aged out of foster care with strong social capital had positive outcomes in housing, healthcare, employment and education. Social capital is made up of networks and relationships that support healthy development and is essential for all young people, particularly those who are transitioning out of foster care and into adulthood. Sources of social capital include family, school, community and peers. The foster care experience often disrupts several of these sources, leaves us vulnerable and can hinder our healing and progress. We need support to participate in activities that maintain connections with family and peers. This support will broaden our opportunities, promote healthy risk-taking and create healthy relationships that will help us achieve our goals.

Our Recommendations
- Ensure young people maintain stable relationships regardless of their placements.
- DHS-CWS and resource caregivers should support foster youth to participate in recreational, school, community, faith-based and family activities.
- Support young people to identify and nurture a wide range of relationships with adults as well as to maintain healthy peer and family relationships that can last a lifetime.
- Resource caregivers who serve transition-aged foster youth should receive mandatory annual training and education around trauma, social capital and the need for healthy risk-taking and youth development activities.

Our Voice
“When I was in a group home, my Hale ‘Opio worker allowed me to go to church and have sleepovers with my family. Receiving this opportunity helped me build social capital that continues to be part of my life today.” Brayden, Kaua‘i

“To me, personally, having that social network is really important, because when I aged out of foster care, I didn’t have a large network and I was struggling trying to hold a job or stay in school. Now I have my adoptive family and positive church members around me, I am able to hold my job and think positive about going back to school! I love my social capital network.” Mala, O‘ahu
The Issue
Permanency is having a supportive network of caring adults and family. While we are in care and when we exit care, it is critical to our success as young adults to support our connections with family as well as adults who can serve as mentors. Sibling connections are very important to us. Our siblings represent the longest, most enduring relationships we have. Maintaining these connections is critical to our stability, emotional and mental health, self-worth and it also adds to our social capital. Having these permanent relationships helps to lessen our anxieties, fears and makes a traumatic transition into foster care easier.

Our Recommendations
- Help youth develop and maintain healthy relationships with a support network, including resource caregivers, who could be lifelong connections.
- Connect every foster youth age 14 or older with a mentor or another caring adult.
- Place siblings together in foster care. When that’s not possible, help them stay in the same neighborhood or school and support efforts to maintain consistent sibling connections by ensuring frequent visits, phone calls, and other forms of communication.
- When appropriate, give support to adult siblings who choose to act as a legal guardian to their younger siblings.
- Support respectful connections with self-identified kin and biological family.

Our Voice
"Because I maintained a permanent relationship with my former ILP worker, when I became homeless, she offered me a place to stay and helped me get on my feet. Without her support I would not be where I am today." - Kapua, West Hawai‘i

"Being moved so far from my hometown while in foster care was difficult due to all my afterschool activities being in Haiku, Maui. My friends and my Boys & Girls Club were my permanent relationships. I had to work with my social worker, GAL and Family Court judge to maintain consistent connections with my permanent important relationships." - Tia, Maui

The Issue
Medical coverage is a basic necessity for foster youth to become healthy, successful adults. On a national level, only 57% of former foster youth under 24 have health insurance, compared to 78% of their counterparts. In Hawaii, 90% of young people ages 18 to 24 have health insurance. In 2013, a Hawai‘i Medicaid policy was changed to allow youth who aged out of foster care access to medical coverage up to age 26. However, young people are often not aware of these changes. They are not accessing resources that may be available to them, even if they are eligible and need it. Provide young people with the proper information regarding the change so they know where and how to access medical coverage and medical care.

Our Recommendations
- Provide automatic enrollment into Medicaid and Dental coverage for foster youth up to age 26.
- Provide ongoing information sessions throughout the State informing young people of the new changes and services PRIOR to their exiting foster care.
- Provide young people with an INFORMATION CARD which includes the phone numbers and address of Med-Quest offices and a point person’s contact information who can help them apply, check on their status, or direct them to someone who can.
- Establish a contact person in the health care community to help young people access services.
- Disseminate free/sliding scale clinic information.
- Educate stakeholders in the community (resource caregivers, adoptive parents, guardians, Independent Living Providers, DOE, community colleges, Youth Circles, and other youth serving agencies) on new Med-Quest policy change.

Our Voice
"I injured my hand while working on a car and did not have medical coverage. I applied for coverage after I went to the ER but was denied because of income and racked up a big hospital bill. The Medicaid workers were unaware of the law which provides coverage for former foster youth up to age 26 regardless of income or assets. I received help from an agency that told me about the new Medicaid law, helped me to get coverage and address my medical bills. Glenn, East Hawai‘i"

"When I aged out of care, it was a frustrating process to apply for medical insurance. Thankfully, my foster mom helped me apply. We must make it easier for foster youth to access, apply for and maintain coverage." - Gernani, Oahu
HOPE # 3

All current and former foster youth ages 14 through 26 are aware of and assisted with their post-secondary education and training options and resources.

The Issue
Education provides young people with more options for stable employment and increased earnings. Nationally, only 3% of former foster youth complete a four-year degree and 6% complete a two-year degree by age 24. In Hawai‘i, one survey indicated that 43.9% of former foster youth have attended at least one year of college but only 6.8% have finished some type of degree. Help us prepare for post-secondary education and training by helping us with applications and ensuring that we know about all of our educational and financial resources. Having adequate financial and educational supports will increase our chances of completing a college degree, which will increase our opportunities and our earnings. Adequate housing, support from counselors, mentoring, academic planning and tutoring, is important to our success, as well.

Our Recommendations
- Prepare foster youth for post-secondary education and training starting at age 14.
- Help us access and apply for educational assistance: Higher Ed payments, scholarships, ETVs (Education Training Vouchers) and financial aid. Provide Youth Circles to help with planning.
- Provide connections for resources in the community and various post-secondary institutions to support us with counseling, tutoring, mentoring, and finding affordable, stable housing and transportation to promote retention and completion of education.
- Educate high school faculty, community about educational needs/challenges of foster youth.
- Establish an education mentor for former foster youth to connect with at each community college and university.

Our Voice
“Education has always been a top priority for me. Aging out of foster care, I was made aware of all my post-secondary resources and options which has aided me tremendously as I pursue my Bachelor’s degree in journalism.” Stephanie, O‘ahu

“The issue is that most young people seek some form of employment when they exit foster care whether or not they pursue higher education. National statistics show that youth exiting foster care have incomes below poverty level after leaving care. Statistics also show that by age 24, only 48% of young people who aged out of care were working, compared to 72% of their counterparts. They also earn significantly less than other young people their age, $8,000 annually compared to $18,000 for the general population. We need opportunities, while we’re in care, to gain work experience. Allowing us to work while in care and providing us with mentoring, internships and soft skills training will help us develop work ethics and connect us with employers and opportunities to grow and obtain skills that will help us gain and maintain employment.”

Our Recommendations
- Mandate that vital documents be provided before exiting foster care (birth certificate, ID, social security card). We need these to obtain employment, education and housing.
- Provide employment opportunities, mentoring, internships, and soft skills training for us while we’re still in care. Supportive adults should help us with resumes and take us to job fairs.
- Develop relationships and opportunities in the community that can provide employment and continued skill building for us after we exit foster care and become young adults.
- Provide and advocate for opportunities for us to obtain a driver’s permit and license in care.

Our Voice
“When I was in care, I was very fortunate to have an awesome case manager who helped me find jobs, fill out resumes and practice going through a “mock” interview. It helped me because I was able to utilize these skills when I moved to Kaua‘i with finding a job and being prepared.” Patricia, Kaua‘i

Our Voice
“After graduating high school, my ILP case manager and foster parents emphasized how important it was to utilize my resources as a former foster youth. I came into college well-informed of my resources and made the Dean’s List each semester at UH-Hilo. I’m able to do this with resources and encouragement from family, friends and mentors.”

Tuan, East Hawai‘i

“This is my last semester before I receive my AA degree. I’m grateful for the help of my hanai family and mentors, who helped me to register for school and scholarships. I was able to make the Dean’s List.”

Rachel, West Hawai‘i

Current and transitioning foster youth will be provided with job skills and employment opportunities through programs and supports.

The Issue
Most young people seek some form of employment when they exit foster care whether or not they pursue higher education. National statistics show that youth exiting foster care have incomes below poverty level after leaving care. Statistics also show that by age 24, only 48% of young people who aged out of care were working, compared to 72% of their counterparts. They also earn significantly less than other young people their age, $8,000 annually compared to $18,000 for the general population. We need opportunities, while we’re in care, to gain work experience. Allowing us to work while in care and providing us with mentoring, internships and soft skills training will help us develop work ethics and connect us with employers and opportunities to grow and obtain skills that will help us gain and maintain employment.

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Patricia, Kaua‘i

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Education provides young people with more options for stable employment and increased earnings. Nationally, only 3% of former foster youth complete a four-year degree and 6% complete a two-year degree by age 24. In Hawai‘i, one survey indicated that 43.9% of former foster youth have attended at least one year of college but only 6.8% have finished some type of degree. Help us prepare for post-secondary education and training by helping us with applications and ensuring that we know about all of our educational and financial resources. Having adequate financial and educational supports will increase our chances of completing a college degree, which will increase our opportunities and our earnings. Adequate housing, support from counselors, mentoring, academic planning and tutoring, is important to our success, as well.

Our Recommendations
- Prepare foster youth for post-secondary education and training starting at age 14.
- Help us access and apply for educational assistance: Higher Ed payments, scholarships, ETVs (Education Training Vouchers) and financial aid. Provide Youth Circles to help with planning.
- Provide connections for resources in the community and various post-secondary institutions to support us with counseling, tutoring, mentoring, and finding affordable, stable housing and transportation to promote retention and completion of education.
- Educate high school faculty, community about educational needs/challenges of foster youth.
- Establish an education mentor for former foster youth to connect with at each community college and university.

Our Voice
“Education has always been a top priority for me. Aging out of foster care, I was made aware of all my post-secondary resources and options which has aided me tremendously as I pursue my Bachelor’s degree in journalism.” Stephanie, O‘ahu

“After graduating high school, my ILP case manager and foster parents emphasized how important it was to utilize my resources as a former foster youth. I came into college well-informed of my resources and made the Dean’s List each semester at UH-Hilo. I’m able to do this with resources and encouragement from family, friends and mentors.” Tuan, East Hawai‘i

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The Issue
Most young people seek some form of employment when they exit foster care whether or not they pursue higher education. National statistics show that youth exiting foster care have incomes below poverty level after leaving care. Statistics also show that by age 24, only 48% of young people who aged out of care were working, compared to 72% of their counterparts. They also earn significantly less than other young people their age, $8,000 annually compared to $18,000 for the general population. We need opportunities, while we’re in care, to gain work experience. Allowing us to work while in care and providing us with mentoring, internships and soft skills training will help us develop work ethics and connect us with employers and opportunities to grow and obtain skills that will help us gain and maintain employment.

Our Recommendations
- Mandate that vital documents be provided before exiting foster care (birth certificate, ID, social security card). We need these to obtain employment, education and housing.
- Provide employment opportunities, mentoring, internships, and soft skills training for us while we’re still in care. Supportive adults should help us with resumes and take us to job fairs.
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Our Voice
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HOPE # 5
Every young person will have at least one adult to rely on for a lifetime and a supportive family network.

The Issue
Permanency is having a supportive network of caring adults and family. While we are in care and when we exit care, it is critical to our success as young adults to support our connections with family as well as adults who can serve as mentors. Sibling connections are very important to us. Our siblings represent the longest, most enduring relationships we have. Maintaining these connections is critical to our stability, emotional and mental health, self-worth and it also adds to our social capital. Having these permanent relationships helps to lessen our anxieties, fears and makes a traumatic transition into foster care easier.

Our Recommendations
- Help youth develop and maintain healthy relationships with a support network, including resource caregivers, who could be lifelong connections.
- Connect every foster youth age 14 or older with a mentor or another caring adult.
- Place siblings together in foster care. When that’s not possible, help them stay in the same neighborhood or school and support efforts to maintain consistent sibling connections by ensuring frequent visits, phone calls, and other forms of communication.
- When appropriate, give support to adult siblings who choose to act as a legal guardian to their younger siblings.
- Support respectful connections with self-identified kin and biological family.

Our Voice
“Because I maintained a permanent relationship with my former ILP worker, when I became homeless, she offered me a place to stay and helped me get on my feet. Without her support I would not be where I am today.” - Kapua, West Hawai’i

HOPE #2
All young people who age out of foster care will receive information and access to medical and dental coverage.

The Issue
Medical coverage is a basic necessity for foster youth to become healthy, successful adults. On a national level, only 57% of former foster youth under 24 have health insurance, compared to 78% of their counterparts. In Hawaii, 90% of young people ages 18 to 24 have health insurance. In 2013, a Hawai’i Medicaid policy was changed to allow youth who aged out of foster care access to medical coverage up to age 26. However, young people are often not aware of these changes. They are not accessing resources that may be available to them, even if they are eligible and need it. Provide young people with the proper information regarding the change so they know where and how to access medical coverage and medical care.

Our Recommendations
- Provide automatic enrollment into Medicaid and Dental coverage for foster youth up to age 26.
- Provide ongoing information sessions throughout the State informing young people of the new changes and services PRIOR to their exiting foster care.
- Provide young people with an INFORMATION CARD which includes the phone numbers and address of Med-Quest offices and a point person’s contact information who can help them apply, check on their status, or direct them to someone who can.
- Establish a contact person in the health care community to help young people access services.
- Disseminate free/sliding scale clinic information.
- Educate stakeholders in the community (resource caregivers, adoptive parents, guardians, Independent Living Providers, DOE, community colleges, Youth Circles, and other youth serving agencies) on new Med-Quest policy change.

Our Voice
“I injured my hand while working on a car and did not have medical coverage. I applied for coverage after I went to the ER but was denied because of income and racked up a big hospital bill. The Medicaid workers were unaware of the law which provides coverage for former foster youth up to age 26 regardless of income or assets. I received help from an agency that told me about the new Medicaid law, helped me to get coverage and address my medical bills.” - Glenn, East Hawai’i

“Being moved so far from my hometown while in foster care was difficult due to all my afterschool activities being in Haiku, Maui. My friends and my Boys & Girls Club were my permanent relationships. I had to work with my social worker, GAL and Family Court judge to maintain consistent connections with my permanent important relationships.” - Tia, Maui

“When I aged out of care, it was a frustrating process to apply for medical insurance. Thankfully, my foster mom helped me apply. We must make it easier for foster youth to access, apply for and maintain coverage.” - Gernani, Oahu
The Issue
When we age out of foster care, we need stable, safe, affordable housing. In Hawai‘i, over 30% of young people surveyed reported that they experienced homelessness. Nationally, 24% of former foster youth experience some form of homelessness by age 24. This increases our exposure to substance abuse, trauma, and harmful environments. Support youth-led transition planning by age 16 and make sure that you are released from care with a place to live and a permanent adult connection. Priority access to subsidized housing and access to private-sector housing should be provided. Access to transportation is important and connects us to work, education, good housing and resources.

Our Recommendations
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- All foster youth aging out of foster care should leave foster care with a stable, safe, affordable place to live and a permanent connection with a caring adult.
- Help us build social capital while we are in foster care so we have relationships and resources that can help us with housing when we become adults.
- Encourage financial capability so young people can build credit and provide access to programs that match for housing deposits, rent, and utility deposits.
- An array of housing options, including access to private-sector housing should be identified.
- Housing options should be close to public transportation.
- Ensure that social workers or other caring adults provide us with packets which include applications and information for affordable housing and Imua Kākou.

Our Voice
“After foster care, I went away to college on the mainland. When that didn’t work out, I returned to find myself homeless. For 10 months, I slept in parks, on the beach, and under bridges until I was able to obtain an apartment with help from my Hale Kipa worker and programs like Imua Kākou.” Noel, O‘ahu

“Because I cultivated a strong relationship with my foster dad, I was able to live with him when my dorm was closed during college break.” Keola, East Hawai‘i

“When I was aging out of foster care, I didn’t know where to go. I had the option of paying $800 plus electricity or moving out by my 18th birthday. I couldn’t afford that and I’m lucky my mom allowed me to stay with her until I could stabilize myself and save money for my own place.” Karen, West Hawai‘i

HOPE #6
Young people will have lifelong, supportive relationships in the community that help them achieve their personal goals.

The Issue
In Hawai‘i and nationally, young adults who aged out of foster care with strong social capital had positive outcomes in housing, healthcare, employment, and education. Social capital is made up of networks and relationships that support healthy development and is essential for all young people, particularly those who are transitioning out of foster care and into adulthood. Sources of social capital include family, school, community, and peers. The foster care experience often disrupts several of these sources, leaving us vulnerable and can hinder our healing and progress. We need support to participate in activities that maintain connections with family and peers. This support will broaden our opportunities, promote healthy risk-taking and create healthy relationships that will help us achieve our goals.

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Our Voice
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“To me, personally, having that social network is really important, because when I aged out of foster care, I didn’t have a large network and I was struggling trying to hold a job or stay in school. Now I have my adoptive family and positive church members around me, I am able to hold my job and think positive about going back to school. I love my social capital network. Mala, O‘ahu

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The Hawai'i Youth Opportunities Initiative (HYOI) helps youth leaving foster care become successful adults in their communities. We work with young people and community partners to improve access to education, employment, health care, housing, social capital, family relationships and financial capability.

The HI H.O.P.E.S. Youth Leadership Board
The HI H.O.P.E.S. (Hawai'i H.O.P.E.S. Helping Our People) is an advisory council for individuals who were formerly in foster care. The boards serve as the Youth Advisory Council for DHS-CWS and the youth voice for HYOI. Their roles are to advocate, educate and collaborate to improve outcomes for foster youth. They receive training, meet monthly, participate in the CP Hui, work groups, presentations and events. There are boards on O’ahu, in East and West Hawai‘i, Kaua‘i and Maui.

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- Provide all young people with developmentally appropriate financial literacy training.
- Make matched savings accounts available to all current and former foster youth ages 14 through 26.
- Secure funding for specified matched asset purchases that will assist young people with their transition into adulthood. Matches should be provided for housing deposits, transportation, medical and educational expenses, investments, business start-up and credit building and credit repair.

Our Voice

I used my IDA match to enroll in CNA classes.
I had always wanted to be a nurse and if it weren’t for the Opportunity Passport Program, my passion would not be rekindled and I would not be feeling as great about myself as I do now as a CNA in an elderly home. I see the benefit of what I do every single day! "
Jade, East Hawai‘i

Medical coverage is a basic necessity and critical for young people to enjoy healthy and productive lives. Many young people who experience foster care are at greater risks for exposure to sexual abuse, domestic violence, drug usage and mental health issues which include anxiety, depression and PTSD. Obtaining and maintaining medical coverage should be a priority for young people and the adults that work with them, especially as they transition from foster care to adulthood.

In 2015, the HI H.O.P.E.S. statewide boards will launch their “Powered til 26” campaign to increase awareness around the law which provides Medicaid coverage up to age 26 for young people that emancipate from foster care or who entered guardianship or adoption after age 16.

The campaign includes education around the law’s eligibility requirements and recommendations on how to access health care coverage and services. Communication efforts will be geared towards a wide audience and include judges, social workers, GALs, CASAs, resource caregivers, service providers, health care providers and young people eligible for this Medicaid coverage in Hawai‘i.

What is Medicaid to 26?
The Affordable Care Act provides FREE medical coverage under Hawai‘i state law for eligible former foster youth up to age 26.

Who is Eligible for Medicaid to 26?
• Young adults who aged out of DHS foster care in Hawai‘i or
• Young adults placed in legal guardianship or adopted after age 16 in Hawai‘i
• All eligible adults must reside in Hawai‘i

What are the Benefits of this coverage?
• FREE basic Medicaid coverage (includes mental health care)
• NO income or asset limit requirements

How do Eligible Young Adults Apply for Medicaid to 26?
Young adults can apply online at mybenefits.hawaii.gov or in person at any Med-Quest office.

• If applying online, please check off “Yes” when asked, “Were you in foster care at age 18 or older in Hawai‘i?”
• If applying in person, please make sure to say that you’re a Former Foster Youth.

The Hawai‘i Youth Opportunities Initiative partners with the national Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative.