

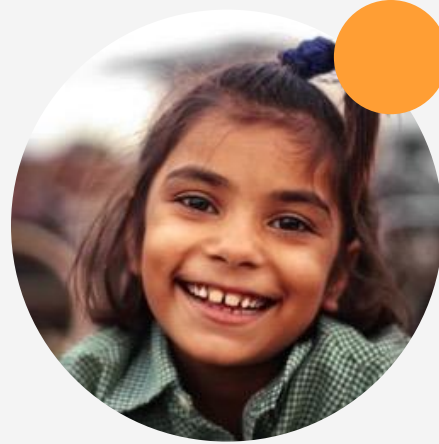


**BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE
FOR CA YOUTH IN CARE**

WHO iFoster SERVES



Transition-Age Foster,
kinship and probation
youth (age 16-26)



Children in Foster Care
(including cross-over),
formal/informal kinship care



**Caregivers and
Organizations**
that support them

iFOSTER HELPS CHILDREN & YOUTH **ACHIEVE SELF-SUFFICIENCY**





Members consume **over \$125 Million** in resources annually



500+ Curated Resources with personalized search and live peer navigators



Accessed regularly by **over 60,000 members** from all 50 states



Digital Locker for TAY to save vital documents, photos, and accomplishments



Evaluated by Children's Bureau to reduce family need, improve child and caregiver well-being, and improve placement stability



How Do I's & Self-Directed Trainings to provide the "knowledge bites" TAY need to achieve self-sufficiency



iFOSTER PORTAL EVERYTHING YOU NEED A CLICK AWAY

IFOSTER JOBS PROGRAM

PREPARES & MATCHES YOUTH TO JOBS WHERE THEY WILL THRIVE



750+ Foster Youth employed to-date



CalFresh Fresh Success Expansion across CA



Living Wage & Career Path jobs



Formative evaluation by Administration for Children & Family Services



40+ Employer Partners

**VIRTUAL JOB FAIR
JUNE 16!**



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INTERNSHIP

iFOSTER TAY AMERICORPS PEERS

- Best new AmeriCorps program nationwide
- Train and hire current and former foster youth
- Work as Peer Resource Navigators
- Build trusted peer relationships
- Connected over 20,000 CA transition-age youth in 2 years to the resources they need to succeed
- 2021: Connecting CA most vulnerable residents to vaccination as part of the Governor's Vaccinate All 58



Angelina Medina, iFoster AmeriCorps

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

SPOTLIGHT DIGITAL DIVIDE

Stay-at-home orders isolate our youth:

- No visits with family, social workers or other supportive adults
- No therapy sessions
- No court hearings for placements & reunification
- No school
- No after school programs

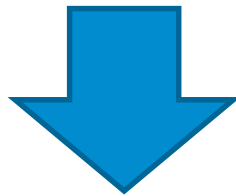


**LESS THAN 15% OF CA FOSTER YOUTH HAD
SUFFICIENT ACCESS TO TECH AT THEIR PLACEMENT**

NOT ALL CALIFORNIANS ARE CONNECTED

6 MILLION K-12 STUDENTS DISCONNECTED

- 25% of CA households do not have access (2 million urban & suburban, 600,000 rural)
- 79% of urban CA youth in care do not have access
- 96% of rural CA youth in care do not have access



- Resulting in coffee shops, fast food restaurants & now sidewalks becoming places for doing homework



TECH ACCESS MATTERS

TECH IMPROVES LIFE

USC School of Social Work evaluation of iFoster's Tech Program showed giving tech to college & high school youth in foster care:

Improved Academics

- Better grades
- Reduced missed school days
- Increased college applications
- Increased job applications

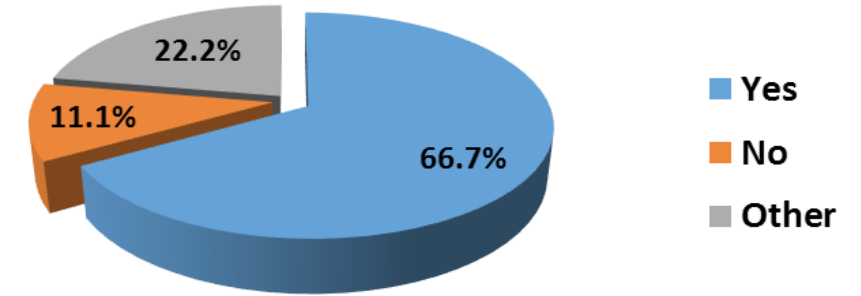
Improved Social Connections

- Better quality & more frequent interactions with family
- Increased support network

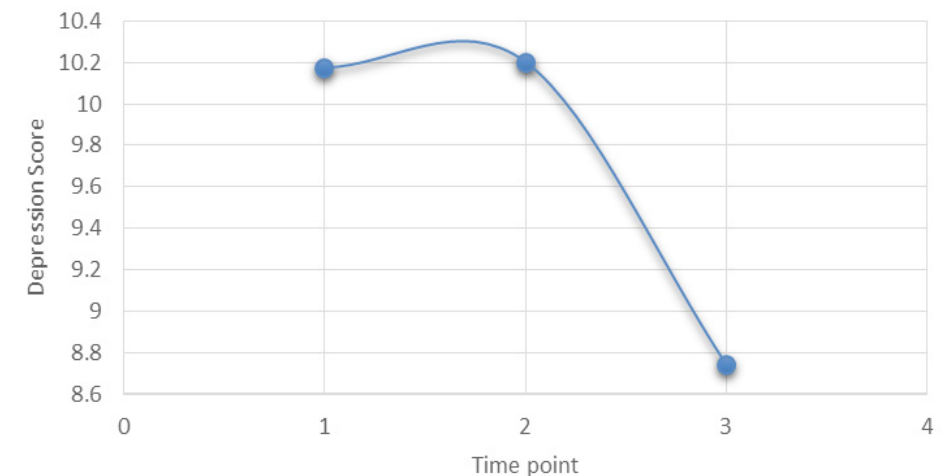
Improved Well-Being

- Increased life satisfaction
- Reduced depression & suicidality

Improvement in Grades



Depression Over Time



1. CA FOSTER CARE BILL OF RIGHTS

SAFE ACCESS RIGHTS FOR YOUTH IN CARE

- CA first in the country to include digital rights in the Foster Care Bill of Rights
- Led to State & County Council Guidance on technology access
- Open discussion of guardrails and training/supports needed within agencies and with youth & caregivers
- Enabled us to be ready for what was to come



2. ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY

THE RIGHT DEVICES

- iFoster Phones for Foster Youth
 - \$22Million CPUC funded LifeLine pilot
 - Launched in November, 2019
 - Funded free smartphone with unlimited voice, text and high-speed data with limited hotspot
- Laptops funded by Philanthropy + State Agencies to fill the gap in K-12 schools ability to provide
 - \$1 Million invested by philanthropy for immediate use
 - California Community College Chancellor's: college
 - California Dept of Social Services: 9-12 + college
 - California Dept of Ed: K-8 with tablets
- Recognition that younger children needed communication supports for visitation, telehealth
 - CDSS funds mirror iFoster Phones program



3. OUTREACH

COORDINATED EFFORT

- Access for all requires coordination across Child Welfare, K-12, College & CBOs
- Example: CA Rapid Response
 - 700 different organizations across 58 counties
 - Standardized tech access questions
 - Standardized referral forms
 - Standardized data collected (first/last names, DOB)
- Example: Reaching all LA County's 14,936 Youth (age 5-20):
 - LA DCFS CSWs asked all the kids on their caseload
 - LACOE Foster Youth Liaisons emailed all caregivers
 - CLC Attorneys asked all their clients
 - Centralized & cross-referenced referrals to ensure every youth who needed a device got one



4. CENTRALIZED & EFFICIENT DISTRIBUTION

REQUEST TO DELIVERY IN 5 DAYS

- iFoster request to delivery teams:
 - Intake
 - Validation
 - Ordering
 - Activation
- iFoster additional activities:
 - Shipping issue resolution
 - Tech support
 - Device replacement policies & procedures
 - Bilingual support team, especially for Caregivers
- TAY AmeriCorps Peer Navigators on the front line



Preparing to hand-out devices at Mira Costa College, parking lot pick up during pandemic

IMPACT

CONNECTING 16,000 CA YOUTH ACROSS 53 COUNTIES

- Primary source of tech for college youth
- Filled the gaps where K-12 schools could not meet demand by the start of classes in fall
- **15,920 CA Youth** age 5 to 26 connected across 53 CA counties
- **20,437 devices provided:**
 - 7,192 laptops & tablets
 - 13,245 smartphones with unlimited service plans



Youth receiving his phone at home

BY THE NUMBERS

3,800 YOUTH SURVEYED

- **100%** of recipients receiving a laptop use it for school-work
- **99%** use phone to communicate with family & friends
- **97%** use phone to communicate with support networks (i.e. social workers, mentors, attorneys)
- **89%** use phone for school including streaming classes, studying using hotspot functionality, & corresponding with teaching staff
- **73%** use phone for work including finding a job, weekly schedule, communicating with employer
- **67%** use their devices for telehealth (i.e. doctor's appointments, therapy sessions, parenting classes)



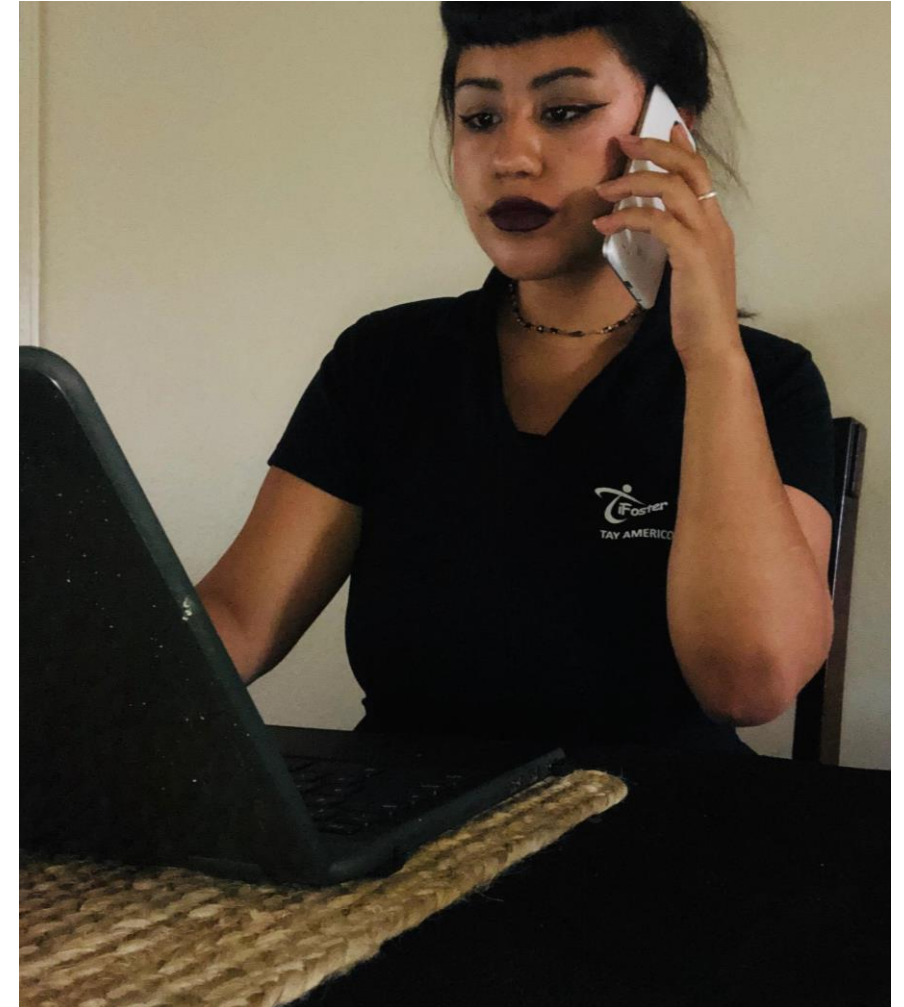
Ivette Esquivel, iFoster TAY AmeriCorps

PEER NAVIGATORS BUILD TRUSTED RELATIONSHIPS

RESOURCE NEED CHECK-INS

Connected **over 2,100 Youth** to the additional resources using the iFoster Resource Portal and Peer Navigators

- **Basic Needs:** housing, food, emergency funds
- **Academic Needs:** tutoring, distance learning tips
- **Health/Wellness Needs:** appointments with iFoster's Life Coach, self-care tutorials, referrals to mental health services, and sometimes crisis intervention
- **Employment Needs:** registration for job skills training, job opportunities, and employment placement through iFoster Jobs Program



Jeszabel Millan, iFoster TAY AmeriCorps

2021 DIGITAL RIGHTS TAKES HOLD

CA LEADS THE WAY

- Continued State investment in phones and laptops
- Continued County, College, School, and Community Agency outreach and requests to meet tech needs
- CA Bill SB546 to ensure permanent access
- CPUC pilot program positive evaluation
- Other States seek to replicate: WA, MS, NY, KY, WV



PHONES FOREVER

iFoster Phones for Foster Youth

- CA Foster Youth (age 13 to 26) will **never** have to pay for another phone bill!
- CPUC vote July 15th to include iFoster Phones into LifeLine permanently
- 14 month extension with T-Mobile to ensure continuity of service while permanency plans are made
- Unlimited voice, unlimited text, high-speed data FOREVER!



BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Thank You!

Kristine Schneller
Program Manager
530-550-9584

Kristine@ifoster.org

Serita Cox
CEO and Co-Founder
530-550-9645

Serita@ifoster.org

**TOGETHER WE CAN ENSURE EVERY CA FOSTER YOUTH HAS THE
TECHNOLOGY THEY NEED TO SUCCEED**