

This report details efforts taken to facilitate a DHHS Citizen Review Panel, as required by CAPTA. The Young Adult Citizen Review Panel consists of youth and young adults with child welfare or/and juvenile justice system experience. This report describes projects for FY 2020-21.

Young Adults Citizen Review Panel Year-End Report FY 20-21

Prepared by Nebraska Children

This report addresses the actions taken to satisfy the scope of services for facilitation of a Citizen Review Panel (CRP) as outlined in the agreement between the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services and Nebraska Children and Families Foundation. This report includes activities undertaken to facilitate and maintain a CRP as part of the duties of Project Everlast. These activities are described in more detail below.

Scope of Work: Provide administrative support to the Nebraska Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA) Citizen Review Panel.

Nebraska Children provides staff support to facilitate all activities of the CRP. This support includes partnering with CRP members to arrange meetings locations, dates, times and agendas; and, providing lodging, meals and transportation, as needed. By working with CRP members to plan and facilitate meetings, young adults receive professional experience with meeting facilitation and leadership, in addition to the opportunity to share their perspectives as members.

The Youth Adult CRP is funded through braided public and private dollars, including those provided under this grant. This strategy maximizes the youth’s ability to apply their voice and experience without asking for too much travel and enhances the opportunities and supports that Nebraska Children can provide to remove any barriers to participation while staying within funding stream parameters.

Additionally, support staff provides informal coaching to young adult CRP members throughout the year. Areas of coaching include conflict resolution, disagreeing respectfully, meeting facilitation, presentation development, among other soft skills. Such support is provided via one-on-one conversations before, during, and after meetings; and, to the entire group during meetings, when needed.

Of final note is the number of CRP members who are parenting. To ensure that parenthood is not a barrier to participation, CRP meetings are open to children. The group provided a stipend to help the members find appropriate childcare. By providing a safe, supervised space for children, CRP members were able to focus on the meeting agenda. We believe that these supports help ensure the panel is inclusive.

Scope of Work: Provide support for meetings that occur at least once every 3 months.

The Young Adult Citizen Review Panel (CRP) continued to meet monthly to help increase productivity and follow-through from meeting to meeting. While we continued to meet virtually for the first part of the year because of the coronavirus pandemic, we eventually returned to meeting in-person with proper social distancing and masking precautions.

<i>Virtual Meetings</i>
October 25, 2020
November 22, 2020
December 20, 2020
January 10, 2021
February 6-8, 2021
March 14, 2021
September 26, 2021
<i>In-Person Meetings</i>
April 11, 2021 - Omaha
May 16, 2021 – Lincoln
June 13, 2021 – Omaha
July 24-25, 2021 – Aurora
August 15, 2021 – Lincoln

The group's first meeting happened on October 25. We welcomed six new members to the group, so we started the meeting with a teambuilding activity and setting group norms and expectations. Members reviewed the final recommendations submitted to DHHS as part of the 2019-20 CRP process and discussed edits and changes to the final report. They also met with NCFE's Alyson Goedken to discuss the organization's family engagement workgroup charter. The group finished providing feedback on the LGBTQ policy from CFS.

The second meeting happened on Nov. 22. The group met with Sara Riffel to talk about the status of the Connected Youth Initiative. They looked at what happened in 2020 and what priorities should be for 2021. They began work on Legislative Days 2021 and decided to have the event go virtual. They spent time working in committees. They then met with Deanna Brakhage and Rebecca Daugherty to get updates about their recommendations from 2019. Finally, the group closed by approving a new structure for the group that eliminated officers.

Our third meeting during the quarter happened on December 20. The group continued their work on Legislative Days finalizing the schedule and dividing responsibilities. They wrapped up the meeting by dividing up committee groups for future projects.

The group's first meeting of the second quarter happened on January 10. The focus of the meeting was preparation for Legislative Days. The group met with Sara Riffel to gather feedback for the Court Improvement Project. She asked the members about Guardians Ad Litem, what judges need to know about young people leaving care and what information would be valuable for young people aging out to know. The group spent the rest of the meeting finalizing the agenda and the shirt design for Legislative Days. They walked through the weekend and went over expectations for the members during the event.

More than 30 young people attended the annual Legislative Day from February 6-8, 2021. Those youth represented the Governor's Youth Advisory Council (GYAC), Connected Youth Initiative (CYI). The Youth Advisory Board planned and facilitated the event and aimed to connect youth from diverse backgrounds around civic engagement and provide an opportunity for them to have a voice. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we decided to host the event online. To try to avoid screen burnout, we limited the daily sessions to just three hours each day.

During the first day, the youth heard a presentation from James Michael Bowers, a Lincoln City Council member, and attended training topics included the legislative process, public speaking, grass-roots advocacy, and how to have solution-focused, non-confrontational discussions about issues about which they are passionate. Among all the skill development, youth discussed current legislation impacting young Nebraskans and selected five bills to capture in brief presentations. Members then created, practiced, and recorded their presentations on Sunday.

On Monday, they young people met with Judge Riko Bishop from the Nebraska Court of Appeals. The youth shared their bill presentations with senators over lunch and in an afternoon meeting with Governor Ricketts. The group presented on five bills about changing regulations around use of force by law enforcement officers, providing mental health training for school districts, creating protections for the Second Amendment, creating educational opportunities for young people in youth rehabilitation and legalizing marijuana use. The full presentations and their supporting documents can be viewed here: <https://www.nebraskachildren.org/what-we-do/connected-youth-initiative/2021-youth-legislative-day.html>

Our third meeting during the quarter happened on March 14. The group debriefed from Legislative Days and reviewed the evaluations. They then gave feedback on the new CYI coaching survey to understand if they feel whether they are over-surveyed or not. The members then met with Lauren Ward, who is a new NCFE employee who oversees the Trafficking and Violence Prevention work. Finally, the group selected two new members to join in April.

The group's first meeting of the third quarter happened on April 11. The focus of the meeting was to refocus and build bonds since it was the first time many of the group had met in person and we added two new members. After lunch, the group began discussing topics for the Citizen Review Panel. An overview of the process as well as the purpose of the CRP was shared to get everyone on the same page. The group spent the rest of the meeting brainstorming ideas for our summer event in July. We talked about what we want to get out of the weekend and what topics would be beneficial to learn. We also discussed logistics about staying overnight and where to host the event.

In May, the group met for the second meeting of the quarter. The day started by working on the summer event and working out the details of the event. After lunch, they began their discussion of CRP topics. The ideas included financial education, providing vouchers for minority children in the system, scholarship education, tutoring, examining the protection for transgender youth, communication between foster and biological parents and religious practices. The meeting wrapped up with the first part of the Speakers Bureau training, which allows system-involved youth to speak better about their lived experiences.

The third meeting in June started with a discussion with Rebecca Daugherty and Deanna Brakhage from DHHS about the initial ideas from the last meeting. The conversation focused on scholarship availability and educational support for foster youth. They also talked about hair care for youth, especially those not living with the same race as them. The next topic discussed was about youth attending religious services, whether it be for the religion of their choosing or the religion of their foster family. Rebecca and Deanna shared a few DHHS updates about the progress of the Red Book and grievance forms. After lunch, the group finalized details for the LEAD the Summer event and completed the second half of the Speakers Bureau training.

The group kicked off the third quarter with a quick prep call on July 11 before hosting the LEAD the Summer event on July 24-25. The group focused on inclusive communities and how for young people to use their lived experience to their advantage. The weekend also included social time as the young people were able to build social connections with each other in-person for the first time in more than a year.

The August meeting focused on a picking back up the CRP discussions and finalizing the topics for the recommendations. The group decided on three areas and picked issues in each of those to provide recommendations. Claire Hoff met with the members to talk about a new coaching survey and get feedback from the group about what questions to ask and the wording of those questions. The group then talked about what was going on at the local level in their communities and wrote biographies and took pictures for the new CYI website. They wrapped up the meeting by debriefing from LEAD the Summer and looked forward to the work ahead.

The last meeting of the year happened on Sept. 26 with a virtual meeting. The group finalized the CRP recommendations and began writing the language for the recommendations. They then looked ahead to the new year and selected a new member to join the group from the submitted applications.

Scope of Work: Assure that the Panel is composed of volunteer members who are broadly representative of the diversity in the state and include members who have expertise in the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect and may include adult former victims of child abuse and neglect.

The Young Adult Citizen Review Panel consists of 14-26-year-old unconnected young people. These are young adults with direct experience in Nebraska's child welfare, juvenile justice and/or homeless systems. Members have experienced a variety of placements, services, permanency objectives and, in some cases, multiple state systems. Members serve at their digression and cannot be required to participate under any case plan, court order or other obligatory order, making membership completely voluntary.

Current members select new members twice a year in March and September to serve year-long terms. If a member remains in good standing through attendance and involvement, they are eligible to renew membership

for another year. This year the group represented the communities of Omaha, Lincoln, Fremont and Beatrice, Crete and Columbus.

Scope of Work: Inform the members and staff of the CRP that they shall not disclose to any person or government official any identifying information about any specific child protection case with respect to which the Task Force is provided information and shall not make public other information unless authorized by State statute. This assurance shall be documented by the completion of a confidentiality statement.

The group signed a confidentiality agreement as they started the work on recommendations for the 2020-21 year. The CRP does not review individual child protection cases as part of their work. However, they do gather the feedback of their peers and utilize their own stories of system involvement. Confidentiality of the stories shared by CRP members and their peers or families during meetings is captured within the group's values of confidentiality and safe space. No personal stories are captured in meeting minutes or documents without the direct permission of the owner of that story.

Scope of Work: Assure that the CRP provides for public outreach and comment to assess the impact of current procedures and practices upon children and families in the community to meet its obligations.

As previously described, CRP members are involved in local youth leadership, youth-serving programs, and/or peer groups with other alumni or current participants of the child welfare system. They also reach out to groups that have specific expertise in their projects to capture additional perspectives. Further, the CRP is open to any youth with experience in child welfare, juvenile justice, youth homelessness or related systems to participate. These strategies help provide opportunities for additional feedback on CRP activities and recommendations.

Scope of Work: Assure that at least one member of the CRP attends the annual Citizen Review Panel Conference.

The National CRP Conference happened in May 2021 virtually and hosted by Ohio. Fatuma Hassan, Nick Birdsley and Lincoln Arneal presented about the group's structure and objectives. The presentation was well received as many other states were impressed by the youth involvement as well as the other tasks that the group undertakes. Lincoln had follow-up calls from Wyoming, Idaho and Pennsylvania. Lincoln and Fatuma attended other sessions to learn about other states and takeaways from their CRP work. The 2022 conference is scheduled to be hosted in California.

Scope of Work: Assure that the CRP examines the policies and procedures and practices of the State and local agencies and where appropriate, specific cases, evaluate the extent to which the State and local child protection system agencies are effectively discharging their child protection responsibilities in accordance with state plan, the child protection standards and any other criteria that the panel considers important to ensure the protection of children, including a review of the extent to which the State and local child protective services system is coordinated with the foster care and adoption programs.

The Project Everlast Citizen Review Panel (PE CRP) formulated three recommendations based on their lived experience as well as their interactions with other young people at Legislative Days and our LEAD the Summer event. The recommendations are colored by the events of the communities they live in where the CRP members are still seeking social justice for those who live in foster care as well as equal opportunities.

After our discussions, the panel focused their work on three recommendations: to allow young people to practice the religion of their choosing, to provide youth in care with the resources and support to properly care for their hair, and to provide young people with the proper educational opportunities and support so they can pursue better career opportunities.

Recommendation No. 1: Allow foster youth to practice the religion of their choosing so they can maintain their sense of self, belief in a higher power or lack thereof.

Individuality is often stripped away from children experiencing the system because of the turbulent circumstances often associated with becoming a foster/displaced youth. There is no reason to do so further by forcing a child to conform to the religious standards of their placement homes. Foster children are still individuals who can make those kinds of choices for themselves or with their birth family.

This practice is most prominent for youth who do not practice Christianity, whether they follow a different faith, religion or none. Because many of the foster placement organizations in Nebraska are Christian based, it often leads to Christian homes where youth are required to adhere to the faith of the placement family. It is also disproportionately unfair to older children who are placed in foster care who have already been practicing their faith for years.

The youth can often feel exploited by their foster parents when they are forced to participate in religious ceremonies (baptisms, christenings, coronations, bat mitzvah, etc.) when their views do not align with that specified religion. The foster parents might also need to be provided with education for the foster youth so they can be aware of the special practices of the youth's chosen religion. This can include awareness of fasting or dietary restrictions (no pork, fish, etc.) and accommodations needed for prayer.

However, several problems could arise by not having youth participate in the religious outings or ceremonies of their foster placements. Arrangements would need to be made for the foster youth, instead of accompanying the guardians to their religious services. In addition, if the family practices the religion in their home, i.e., prayer before meals or bible study in the house, similar accommodations will need to be made at those times.

These issues can be addressed by having caseworkers lead discussions on these topics to establish ground rules and make sure the youth's religious preferences are respected. This should not fall solely on the caseworker, as the young person should also be connected with an adult support outside of the home and peer mentors to help them with their spiritual journey. In addition, the young person should be allowed to participate in clubs or summer camps that adhere to their religious practices.

One way to help ensure the youth's religious rights are protected is to pass the Youth in Care Bill of Rights, LB 357, in the most recent legislative session. This will ensure that foster youths' first amendment rights are protected, and they can practice the religion, or lack thereof, of their choosing.

Recommendation No. 2: Provide foster youth and parents the needed support and resources to ensure proper hair care for foster children

For foster parents who care for children who are not of their race or ethnicity, they might have a steep learning curve to make sure the child's needs are met. One area that requires extra care and attention is hair care.

A lot of youth might feel uncomfortable discussing their hair needs with their foster parents because they are ashamed of the extra care required or they do not know what products, care, and treatment they need. Often the foster parents provide them with whatever products they have in their house thinking it should work for them, unaware that it might not properly style and care for their hair.

Hair care is important for foster children because it plays a role in their identity and a necessity for a healthy lifestyle. It can have a large impact on their self-esteem and provides a connection to their cultural development.

In addition, it also factors into the normalcy of their childhood. If their hair is not properly cared for, it can lead to bullying at school and poor hygiene.

There are several ways to address this issue and help foster children receive the proper hair care. The easiest solution would be an additional stipend or increase in the maintenance fund of \$150 quarterly per child. This would allow the youth to utilize those funds for their hair care, whether that is color, style, cut, or products. A voucher system could also be set up to use at salons, beauty schools, or estheticians.

In addition, training and education needs to be provided to foster parents on proper hair care for different hair types. This should include information that not all hair can be treated with the same products and styling techniques. They should also be provided with simple hair care practices and styling techniques in addition to more resources and a list of salons, barbers, and products.

These ideas might present several obstacles such as setting up an arrangement with salons and barbers to accept a voucher from the state. This can be overcome by partnering with local salons, estheticians, or beauty colleges in Nebraska. In addition, if the maintenance fund is utilized, the foster parents would need to provide information that additional money is being spent on hair care products and not just pocketed. If they were required to turn in receipts for expenses this would ensure that a foster child's hair is being cared for properly.

Recommendation No. 3: Provide foster youth with information about post-secondary scholarships and resources

For most foster children, post-secondary education is a dream that is beyond their reach. However, it has become a necessary pathway for a successful career. Many times, foster youth lack the financial resources, mentorship, support, stability, and guidance needed to graduate from college. As a result of all these hurdles only three percent of foster youth graduate from college.

While Nebraska has established several successful programs such as ETV and LEAP, additional supports and services can be provided to ensure that more foster youth in Nebraska earn post-secondary degrees. It is difficult for foster youth to receive scholarships or financial assistance. They struggle to connect with people who know about resources and which ones foster youth are even eligible for.

These hurdles exist for several reasons. Scholarships are often limited and when the youth do find ones they can apply for, there are often many others that are competing for a limited amount of funds. Because of foster youths' circumstances, they might be eligible for special scholarships but might not know which ones they qualify for.

These issues can be solved by teachers and/or counselors trained about the availability of applicable scholarships and discussing them with the foster youth to prepare them for the next steps. The teachers can teach the basics of finding scholarships, how to apply, how to write an essay, and create a school resume. Foster children might need extra time and attention through this process because they might not have the proper support or experience at home to navigate the scholarship process.

Another solution is to create an annual seminar where all foster students in their junior and senior years are invited to receive information about post-secondary options. They would also talk to experts about scholarships, resources, how to write an essay, how to set up a tour, what to look for in a college, and basic college survival skills. The final step would be to provide actual support and feedback where the youth can start working on these projects and prepare them for the college world.

Providing additional information in the Red Book would be beneficial to foster youth and help them attend and eventually graduate from college. This will help them achieve the goal of finding a successful career path and building years of financial stability and progress.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these recommendations. We feel these three topics would positively impact hundreds of foster youths in Nebraska. We look forward to continuing the conversation about these recommendations.

Appendix A: Meeting Minutes:

NCCFF Advisory Board
October 25, 2020

Minutes

1 p.m. – Attendance: Chyanne, Fatuma, Michayla, Nick, Hannah, David, Sebastian, Nedhal, Julia, Nyaliel, Greyson, Nicole, Yolet, Jessica.

1:10 p.m. – Check-in and introductions: What’s going on in your life, what’s your favorite meal

1:30 p.m. – Teambuilding Activity

- Participated in group activity to solve a crime when everyone is given slightly different information
- Takeaways were that everyone has voice and brings a different perspective
- If you have an idea, share!
- Don’t judge people by their past actions

2:00 p.m. – NCCFF Advisory Board norms and expectations

- Nick made proposal for committees each one would have a lead to help run it.
- Will formally approve and adopt the committees at the November meeting
- Communication is they key; if something comes up with our attendance or commitments you’ve made, please let Lincoln know ahead of time

2:30 p.m. – Break

2:45 p.m. – Legislative Days Discussion

- Most people were comfortable being in person, but having an online option
- Allow people to go home at night if they live close enough
- Ran over details of weekend and what that looks like
- Favored first weekend in Feb. 6-8 over second 13-15

3:15 p.m. – Family Engagement workgroup charter

- Like the charter and the expectations, it sets out
- Make sure young people are involved in every stage
- Still working on developing strategies; but for now, workgroup is focused on making sure the right voices/people are at the table.
- Policy: include an impact statement for previous work done by NCFE

3:30 p.m. – LGBTQ feedback for CFS

- Really good guide for CFS
- Like the policy of not pressuring for transgender youth

3:45 – CRP data and document review

- Mental Health and Medication
- Racism and bias in the system
 - o Provide any feedback to Lincoln this week

4 p.m. – Wrap up and adjourn

November Meeting Minutes:
November 22, 2020

Attendance –Chayanne Cusick, Fatuma Hassan, Michayla Stawniak, Sebastian Coolidge, Nedhal Al-Kazahy, Hannah Burdess, Nyaliet Teng, Greyson Leffler, Jessica Acosta, Nicole Abbott, Yolet Guevara, Nick Birdsley

CYI Fun Time with Sara Riffel

- 2020 in review
 - o \$8 million invested in older youth work
 - o 2,000 in opportunity passport
 - o 65 percent who enrolled in college successfully completed first year of college.
- 2021
- Is there a way to provide options for post-secondary options or support for them to seek employment and delay college?
 - o Educational Training Vouchers – federal money that help pay for educational expenses for post-secondary (in foster care after the age of 16; eligible up to age 23/26.
 - o Recommendation: Make ETV available for graduate degree work
 - o Quick certifications are a good way to increase earning potential
- Support for young people aging out and
- Website for Red Book with checklist, resources, etc.
- Human Trafficking
- Send feedback to Sara Riffel (sriffel@nebraskachildren.org) by Dec. 11 on the attached proposal from Inclusive Communities

11:30 a.m. – Legislative Days planning and worktime

- Broke out into work groups
 - o Breakout sessions: Fatuma, Nyaliet, Michayla, Hannah
 - o Legislative work time: Nedhal, Greyson, Nicole
 - o Keynote speakers: Nick, Jessica, Yolet

12:30 p.m. – Closing the CRP Feedback Loop

Deanna – Red book is a go and is funded.

- Start with What Now? Program
- Looking to print and distribute next summer

- Is internet access an issue? Can be depending on situation

Rebecca – Linking peer mentor program to Medicaid

- Still a work in progress so reach out if you have questions or ideas

Advisory Board Constitution amendment: as discussed at last meeting, Nick cleaned up and focused the amendments. Nick made a motion to approve. Michayla seconded. Passed 9-0.

1 p.m. – Wrap up and adjourn

December Meeting Minutes:
December 20, 2020

Attendance: Chyanne Cusick, Sebastian Coolidge, Nyaliet Teng, Greyson Lazarus, Nicole Abbott, Jessica Acosta, Nedhal al-Kazahy, Yolet Guevara, David Banning, Michayla Stawniak, Nick Birdsley, Fatuma Hassan, Julia Rodriguez.

1:30 p.m. – Legislative Days planning and worktime

- Online
- Plan for icebreakers
 - o Use of breakout rooms
- Broke out into work groups
 - o Breakout sessions: Fatuma, Nyaliet, Michayla, Hannah, Chy
 - o Legislative work time: Nedhal, Greyson, Nicole, David, Julia
 - o Keynote speakers: Nick, Jessica, Yolet, Sebastian
- Saturday
 - o Overview: Fatuma
 - o Icebreakers: Michayla
 - o Keynote speaker:
 - o Break: Collena
 - o Breakout sessions: Public speaking (Felipe), Unicameral (Cornelius), Bill Review;
 - o Kahoot: Nick creates
 - o Wrap-up session:
- Sunday:
 - o Bill explainer
 - o Online poll
 - o Keynote: James Michael Bowers
 - o Assigning them to groups
 - o PowerPoints and posters
 - o Closing activity
- Monday
 - o Presentations
 - o Judicial Speaker
- T-shirts - Nicole
- Swag: masks, tote bags: Nedhal and Nyaliet

3:15 p.m. – Committee Assignments and work time

- Communication: Grey,
- Improvement & Promotions: Nick, Nyaliet, Nedhal
- Youth Outreach: Nicole, Jessica, Sebastian, Chy, Yolet, David

4 p.m. – Wrap up and adjourn

NCFE Advisory Board

January 10, 2021

Mission Statement:

To advocate for change for unconnected youth within the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Minutes

10 a.m. – Welcome and Check-in

10:30 a.m. – Court Improvement Project discussion – Sara Riffel

1. What did you like and appreciate about your Guardian Ad Litem did for you while you were in care?
2. Where could your Guardian Ad Litem improve?
3. What do you think Judges (and others) need to know about young people leaving care or aging out?
4. Think back to the time you were aging out of care (or imagine being in that position) ... what type of information would you have wanted the Judge to give you at your least hearing? In what way would you and other young people like to get that information (for example, the chatbot, a website link, a flyer/packet, text, etc.)?

11 a.m. – Legislative Days planning and worktime

- Agenda review
- Shirt Design
- Expectations and Weekend Walk Through

12:45 p.m. – Wrap up and adjourn

February Meeting Agenda:

ZOOM LINK FOR THE WEEKEND: [HTTPS://ZOOM.US/J/8167190738](https://zoom.us/j/8167190738)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2021

1 P.M. Welcome, overview, and expectation setting	1:15 P.M. Ice breakers	1:30 P.M. Keynote <i>James Michael Bowers, Lincoln City Council</i>	2 P.M. Break	2:10 P.M. Breakout sessions
3:45 P.M. Reconvene and summarize	4 P.M. Wrap up and adjourn	BREAKOUT SESSIONS: PUBLIC SPEAKING - PRESENTER: <i>FELIPE LONGORIA</i> UNICAMERAL REVIEW - PRESENTER: <i>CORNELIUS LEVERING</i> BILL REVIEW - PRESENTER: <i>LINCOLN ARNEAL</i>		

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2021

1 P.M. Welcome and ice breaker	1:15 P.M. Review legislative and vote on bills	1:35 P.M. Break up into groups and plan	1:40 P.M. Presentation work time	3:30 P.M. Practice/record presentations	4 P.M. Wrap up and adjourn
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MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2021

NOON Senator Luncheon <i>(ends at 1 p.m.)</i>	3 P.M. Judge Riko Bishop, Nebraska Court of Appeals	4 P.M. Meeting with Gov. Pete Ricketts	4:30 P.M. Evaluation and Debrief
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March Meeting Minutes:

Attendance: Grey, Sebastian, Nick, Nedhal, Fatuma, Yolet, Jessica, Nicole, Michayla, Julia, Chy

10 a.m. – Welcome and Check-in

10:30 a.m. – Legislative Days Evaluations and discussion

- Virtual vs in-person
- Have AB members run the breakout sessions?
- Bring speakers in virtually
- Having the extra time would have made better by making connections
 - o Warm up and get to know you before discussing intense topics
- Recording presentations to share with senators after the fact
- Live stream presentation on Saturday
- Missed the social connections.

11:15 – New CYI Coaching Survey Discussion

- Not over-surveyed, when asked survey; 3-time years,
- 5- or 6-times year
- Don't feel like the number of times we are surveyed
- Know that my input is helpful.
- If in need of survey; appreciate the opportunity that they reach
- Not all at the same time and spread out.
- Knowing where information is going; what they gathered

11:30 a.m. – Meeting with Lauren Ward! (NCFE Assistant Vice President of Trafficking and Violence Prevention)

- The goal is to inform the work with lived experience
- Assessing where the systems are at how they are connected
- Developing multi-disciplined teams
- Include domestic violence agencies and sexual assault agencies
- Also includes native communities and tribes

- Talked about the grant process and how this one evolved
- We need youth people to provide their expertise to guide the work
- Contact Lauren at lward@nebraskachildren.org to share your ideas

12:00 – New Member Application Review and Selection

- Selected Emma and Tyeisha for membership

12:45 p.m. – Looking Forward - Wrap up and adjourn

- April meeting will be in person with spacing and masks. The location is TBD (Lincoln or Omaha)

NCFE Advisory Board

April 11, 2021

Minutes

10 a.m. – Welcome and Check-in

- In-person: Chy, Sebastian, Grey, Hannah, Nyaliet, Emma, Nick
- Virtual: Fatuma, Nedhal, Michayla, Jessica, Julia

10:30 a.m. – Team Building and Icebreakers

- Connecting to people that we are advocating on behalf off and develop relationships with people we are advocating to
- Figure out what things are blocking participating for the young people: time, financial, lack of knowledge
- Communicate up and down with what we are trying to do and how to do so.

11:30 a.m. – Norms and expectations

- Communication is key. If something comes up, tell Lincoln before meetings or as soon as you can. Do not wait until after the event/meeting to tell others. (Also, talk to Lincoln directly, don't use another member to relay messages.
- If you have issues, take it up with other in a positive manner as soon as possible.

12:00 – Lunch

1 p.m. – Looking Forward

- Citizen Review Process
 - o We start this process next month
 - o Four meetings to provide direct feedback to DHHS
 - o Start thinking of ideas we can do
- Summer Event planning and discussion
 - o Professional development, i.e., resume?
 - o Privilege walk last time

- Educational mix with social
- Educational topics
 - Speakers Bureau
 - Self-Love/self-worth/mental health/self-esteem
 - Meditation
 - Inclusive Communities
 - Leadership activity or advocacy?
- Social side (Depending on where we meet)
- Locations
 - Aurora
 - Mahoney
 - Platte River State Park
 - Niobrara
 - Fremont area camps
 - Moses Merrill
- Other projects/trainings/events
 - Speakers Bureau Train the Trainers
 - Foster Youth in Action trainings
 - Training deal with traumatic events for others
 - Establishing healthy boundaries
 - Being a helper and internalizing that trauma

3 p.m. – Wrap up and adjourn

- Next Meeting is May 16 in Lincoln Community Foundation Building, 215 Centennial Mall South; Lincoln, NE 68508

May Meeting Minutes:

NCFE Advisory Board

May 16, 2021

Minutes

Attendance: Michayla, Tyeisha, Nicole, Gray, Jessica, Emma, Nedhal, Sebastian, Nyaliet, Nick, Fatuma

10 a.m. – Welcome and Check-in

10:30 a.m. – Summer Event Planning

- Location
 - o Down to two locations: Aurora, Moses Merrill
- Agenda and Leadership/Educational Activities
 - o Michayla, Emma, Fatuma
 - Name tags, Check-In process
 - Inclusivity Presentation, Reflections
 - Privilege Stand- up, debrief
 - Mindfulness
 - Pandemic Resources/ Updates
- Publicity
 - o Grey, Nyaliet, Seb, Nedhal
 - “LEAD The Summer,” flyer idea drawn by Grey
 - Swag ideas: Pop socket, bandannas, camera film, scrapbook/photo album, lip balm, hand sanitizer
 - Use outreach list that NCFE already has
- Social Activities
 - o Nick, Jessica, Tyeisha, Nicole
 - Ice breakers: Bingo Ice breaker, Tic Tac Toe, Sand Volleyball, Water Balloon fights, Jenga with prizes, smores, Pictionary, Telephone, Mad Libs

12:00 – Lunch

1:00 – CRP Brainstorming

- Financial education course
 - o Saving and budgeting (savings account); partner with PEER mentor program
- Hair vouchers for minority children
- Tutoring through agencies or schools
- College scholarships (sophomore/junior)
- More in-depth discussions about finances
 - o Building credit/Credit card
 - o Savings
- Trans youth protections? What currently exists?
- Transition planning in far advance? Not just in
- Normalcy → YMCA camps, Boys/Girls Club
- Clear policy DHHS should pay for stipends for lived experiences
- More communication between foster parent and biological parent
 - o Religious and cultures practices
- More training for foster parents for children of different races
 - o Hair care; skin care → lead to bullying
- More open discussion about religious practices

1:30 p.m. – Speakers Bureau Train the Trainers (Part 1)

- Went through the first half of the training

3:00 p.m. – Wrap up and depart

June Meeting Minutes:

NCFE Advisory Board

June 13, 2021

Minutes

Attendance: Nick, Sebastian, Julia, Jessica, Nicole, Tyeisha, Nyaliet, Michayla, Emma, Gray, Nedhal

10 a.m. – Welcome and Check-in

10:30 a.m. – CRP Discussions with DHHS

- Review topics from last time
- Discuss ideas and collect information from DHHS
 - What scholarships are available for system-involved youth
 - Central Plains is the go-to for educational system
 - From a policy standpoint, fearful that caseworkers aren't sharing names with Central Plains. If CP is involved with coaching, they will get them involved; Case workers are planned to do that in their plans and contacting
 - This could be helped by PEER Support program; it would help to hear this from their peer rather than coming from case workers; Lived experience would
 - Starts with high school, which varies from school to school
 - Foster parent/hair care,
 - Grooming part of it.
 - Collaboration with local barbers and stylists
 - Develop list of products and barbers.
 - Hair care products and lists,
 - Geneva has products for hair type.
 - Instead of voucher, could get additional monthly through maintenance fund.
 - Partner with local beauty school.
 - Training for foster parents.
 - Did you feel comfortable to talk to foster parents?
 - No
 - “Here, this should work for you”
 - Religious services for foster youth
 - Forced to be baptized
 - What Foster parents don't do what they are supposed to do
 - 13 is age of legal decision about placement

- “I don’t think Foster Parent has right to tell what practices, Bio parents supported conversion, so foster parents should do as well”
- Jehovah Witnesses don’t celebrate any holidays, which
- Going to church is inevitable; it’s the participation that makes it more troublesome
- ACLU dealt with complaint in in 2014
- DHHS updates
 - Grievance process is complete and updated
 - Have updated online form, as well as a paper form that will be in the Red Book
 - Working on language consistency: grievance vs complaint
 - Caseworker vs CFS specialist vs case manager
 - Red Book will be published by September 30, Looking for feedback from June 28-July 9. Compensation to review the Redbook
 - DHHS is working policy/procedure to compensate limit of 30 hours, so the income is not taxable. Looking at meeting cancellation policy.
 - Also looking at renaming the Redbook

12:00 – Lunch at [International Cafe](#)

1:00 p.m.– LEAD the Summer planning



AGENDA

SATURDAY

- 9:45 CHECK-IN (JESSICA & JULIA)
- 10:15 ICE BREAKERS (JESSICA & JULIA)
- 10:45 INCLUSIVITY PRESENTATION (EMMA, MICHAYLA, TYEISHA)
- 12:00 LUNCH
- 1:00 REFLECTION (MICHAYLA)
- 1:30 TIE DYE (GREY AND SEBASTIAN)
- 2:00 PRIVILEGE STAND-UP (FATUMA & NYALIET)
- 2:30 DEBRIEF/BREAK (EMMA)
- 2:45 MINDFULNESS (NEDHAL & JULIA)
- 3:30 LEADERSHIP CENTER ACTIVITIES
- 5:30 DINNER
- 7:00 PANDEMIC RESOURCES/ LEGISLATIVE DAYS UPDATES (SEBASTIAN & GREY)
- 7:30 FREE TIME
- 8:00 CAMPFIRE & S'MORES

SUNDAY

- 9:30 ICE BREAKER (CHY & HANNAH)
- 10:00 WEEKEND DEBRIEF (LINCOLN)
- 10:30 CHECK OUT

NCFE Advisory Board

August 15, 2021

Minutes

Attendance - Sebastian, Nick, Fatuma, Michayla, Nyaliet, Nicole, Nedhal, Julia, Hannah, Grey

10 a.m. – Welcome and Check-in

10:30 a.m. – CRP Discussions

Religious - Fatuma & Nedhal

Read the current Bill of Rights that is DHHS policy

ALCU letter

Proposed LB 357 – Each child is permitted to attend religious services and activities of such child's choice, or to choose not to attend, to be balanced with the countervailing rights of the child's biological 2 parents, as provided under the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution of the United States.

Draft Recommendation: Work with the Legislature to pass LB 357, specifically the religious freedom practices

Foster parents should respect their rights and rights of the biological parents.

The issue is the forced participation and preserving the identities of the youth and their biological

Hair Care - Michayla, Nicole

Vouchers - could run into problems

CASA - making sure the money in monthly maintenance fund is being spent on hair care

Nicole will talk to CASA connections about if they could take that on.

Sebastian and Nicole will talk to hair design college about the possibility of a partnership with hair schools about providing a service for system youth

- Dental care - limited availability because of Medicaid

Education - Nick & Sebastian

- Connecting coaches to the

- Educating schools about what schools are available

- Could Central Plains be involved in educating

- Omaha Home for Boys scholarships (Independent Living Specialist)

- Include scholarship information in the Redbook
- Connecting with use councils as well
- Recommendation: education about cases workers resources for advocacy/information and educational opportunities

- 11:30 a.m. – Coaching Survey feedback with Claire

- What is the Coaching Survey?
- Feedback around self-designed questions

- Went over life status areas: housing, transportation, education, employment, health and wellness, parenting and family planning, social supports, financial well-being, advocating frond supporting peers,
- Talked about how the survey is being administered and whether it could be tied to coaching
- Community advocacy is more than just involvement, could be as simple as voting also include after-school programming
- Housing, including safe and stable
- Relationship with boss, word different?

Self-care; ties into our conversation about hair care and religious practices

Like the rating scale.

Talked about adding boxes for comments for the struggle bus and rocked it answers. Don't need to put for everyone but allow them to pick 1-2 to put it down.

Connect well with the coaches

12:00 p.m. – Lunch

1:00 p.m. – Local Council check in with Rose

Reminder to work with local leadership chapters. They are a good connection to what is happening on the local level and an opportunity to practice your leadership skills and take on a different role.

1:30 p.m. – Biography & Photo Time with Brenda

2:15 p.m. – Wrap up from LEAD

- Make sure we do introductions and tie it all to the big picture
- Also set standards and expectations for the weekend, topics subjects matter
- Transportation was an issue for some
- Pick out dates, site far ahead in advance
- Is there training for the AB members on crisis management/mental health first aid
- **CPI training**

Legislative Days 2022: February 5-7

Membership discussion:

- State vs Out-of-State membership
- Attendance reminder

3:00 p.m. – Check out and depart

NCFE Advisory Board

Sept. 26, 2021

Minutes

Attendance: Nyaliet, Jessica, Michayla, Grey, Nicole, Julia, Nedhal, Hannah, Sebastian, Tyeisha, Emma
Excused: Nick and Fatuma

10 a.m. – Welcome and Check-in

10:30 a.m. – CRP Discussions

- Review progress updates
- Finalize Recommendations
 - o Worked in groups to come up with list of recommendations
 - o Hair Care
 - Foster parents don't know how to properly care for foster care
 - Impacts their self-esteem and personal hygiene
 - o Education
 - Problems: scholarships are difficult to receive; too many applicants
 - Hard to communicate with people
 - Talk to scholarships and next steps; education on how to research and find them
 - Host an event and seminar and write an essay; and how to complete form
 - o Region
 - Maintain identity self and belief in power
 - not forcing them participate in service or ceremonies

1:30 p.m. – Looking ahead to Legislative Days

- Feb 5-7

1:45 p.m. – Membership review

Unanimous vote to approve membership for Domonique Mata

2:45 p.m. – Check out and depart