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‘Fostering Pathways’ Conference to Help Current and Former Foster Youth

COLUMBUS, OHIO – The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) is once again hosting a conference just for youth ages 14 to 21 who have experienced foster care. The Fostering Pathways to Success Conference will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 12, at Xenos Christian Fellowship, 1390 Community Park Drive, Columbus.

“I am thrilled to host this conference yet again for young people in foster care,” said ODJFS Director Cynthia Dungey. “Transitioning from adolescence to independence is a turbulent time for most of us, but it can be even more so for young people transitioning from foster care. This conference is one more way to let them know that they’re not alone, that there are many people who want to help, and that many resources are available.”

The conference will kick off with remarks by ODJFS Director Cynthia Dungey and Ohio Department of Education Chancellor John Carey. Ohio Secretary of State Jon Husted also will address the youth on the topic “Inspiring Hope through Fostering and Adoption.”

Youth workshops will cover such topics as OhioMeansJobs.com, Apprentice.Ohio.gov, finding stable housing, health care, budgeting, preparing for college and Bridges, a new program that will allow youth who age out of foster care to request supports toward independence any time up until their 21st birthdays. The theme of the conference – “Crossing Bridges to Your Future” – reflects this new program. Once again, the event will feature “Suits for Success,” a large room where youth can “shop” for donated new or gently worn professional clothing to wear to job interviews, school engagements and other important functions. Workshops also will be held for child welfare professionals and other adults who work with foster youth.

Cosponsors of the event are Ohio Reach, which has liaisons at college campuses throughout Ohio, and the Family and Youth Law Center at Capital University Law School, which partners with local, state and national agencies and organizations to improve the laws, policies and practices associated with the child protection, adoption and juvenile justice systems.

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The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services manages vital programs that strengthen Ohio families. These include job training and employment services, unemployment insurance, cash and food assistance, child care, child and adult protective services, adoption, and child support services.



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