



---

**Senate Health and Social Services Committee**  
**February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026**



# Statewide Youth Leadership Board (YLB) & Membership

300 active foster youth &  
alumni members  
annually

11 Regional Youth  
Leadership Board  
Members

Full time staff with lived  
experience



# Programs



## Advocacy

FFCA Members share lived experience with child welfare professionals, caregivers, and public officials, to influence decisions affecting children and families.



## Training

FFCA hosts four annual leadership retreats, open to foster youth and alumni ages 15-24 IN Anchorage, Matsu, Juneau.



## Peer Support

FFCA connects foster youth with alumni to offer navigation and support for daily living and transitions.



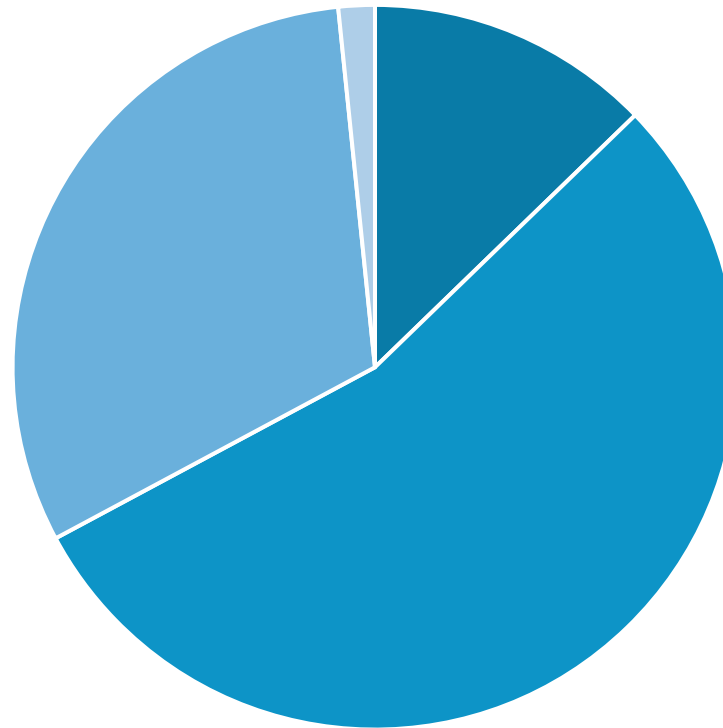
## Financial Empowerment

FFCA provides foster youth and alumni with direct funding support for housing, food transportation, education, medical care and most basic needs.



# Funding

FY26 Revenue



■ Individual ■ Foundation ■ Government ■ Corporate



# Advocacy

Freedom of speech	Extended foster care to 21	Re-entry	Higher Education Funds	Mentorship	Social Security
FosterWear	Foster parent recruitment	Attorney Appointments	Orthodontia	Permanency for older youth	Normalcy/Prudent Parent Standard
Sibling contact and placement,	Relative search	OCS Staff positions (SSA, PSS, IL, Mentors)	Youth ages 14+ participation in case planning	Loosened licensing Reg's for rural communities	School stability
Training	Caseload standard	Placement Preference	Notice of Hearings	Transition Staff	Youth Rights



# 2026 Policy Agenda

<b>PSYCHIATRIC TREATMENT</b>	<b>SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS</b>
<p><b>HOUSE BILL 36</b> Foster youth placed in hospitals for psychiatric treatment may linger up to 30 days before getting a court hearing. A 2024 opinion by the Alaska Supreme Court noted that this is far too long and the legislature should identify a solution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>House Bill 36 gives foster youth the right to a hearing within 7 calendar days of placement in a hospital for psychiatric treatment to determine if they meet the criteria for such a high level of care.</li> </ul>	<p><b>HOUSE BILL 157</b> Sibling connections are imperative to the well-being of children and youth who experience foster care and are often separated. Current law requires the connection among siblings to be maintained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>House Bill 157 allows siblings to remain legal siblings after an adoption by separate caregivers/parents of the youth.</li> </ul>
<b>SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY</b>	<b>HOUSING</b>
<p><b>DRAFT LEGISLATION</b> The Office of Children’s Services currently reimburses itself using foster youths’ Social Security Disability benefits. Many states have moved away from this practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft legislation proposes placing these benefits into a trust, similar to how a youth’s Permanent Fund Dividend is protected, ensuring the funds are used for the youth’s long-term stability.</li> </ul>	<p><b>FYI VOUCHER EXPANSION</b> 45% of Alaskan Foster Youth report experiencing homelessness by age 21. Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Vouchers are available to youth aging out of foster care. In Alaska, FYI Voucher access is limited to only 12 communities served by the Alaska Housing Finance Corp.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expanding FYI vouchers statewide is essential to ensure all transitioning foster youth—regardless of location—have access to stable housing.</li> </ul>
<b>HIGHER EDUCATION</b>	<b>COST OF CARE</b>
<p><b>RESTORE SUPPORT</b> Alaska typically has 50+ foster youth enrolled in higher education each year. Recently, the Office of Children’s Services eliminated dedicated support for these students, shifting the burden to transition workers who already manage caseloads of 100+ youth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restoring dedicated higher-education support is critical to ensuring foster youth can succeed in college and career pathways.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SUPPORT FOR DAILY LIVING</b> Each year, an average of 100 youth ages 18–21 are in extended foster care in Alaska. Half live in non-foster home settings where no foster care reimbursement is provided to cover their cost of living.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>OCS should pay the cost of care for all youth in state care, regardless of placement type, ensuring access to housing, food, medical care, and other basic needs.</li> </ul>



*\*And continued Implementation of HB151 (2018)*



# Psychiatric Treatment

---

## **HOUSE BILL 36**

Foster youth placed in hospitals for psychiatric treatment may linger up to 30 days before getting a court hearing. A 2024 opinion by the Alaska Supreme Court noted that this is far too long and the legislature should identify a solution.

---

**House Bill 36 gives foster youth the right to a hearing within 7 calendar days of placement in a hospital for psychiatric treatment to determine if they meet the criteria for such a high level of care.**

---



# SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS

---

## **HOUSE BILL 157**

Sibling connections are imperative to the well-being of children and youth who experience foster care and are often separated. Current law requires the connection among siblings to be maintained.

---

**House Bill 157 allows siblings to remain legal siblings after an adoption by separate caregivers/parents of the youth.**

---



# SOCIAL SECURITY

---

## **DRAFT BILL**

The Office of Children's Services currently reimburses itself using foster youths' Social Security Disability benefits. Many states have moved away from this practice.

---

**Draft legislation proposes placing these benefits into a trust, similar to how a youth's Permanent Fund Dividend is protected, ensuring the funds are used for the youth's long-term stability.**

---



# HOUSING

---

## FYI VOUCHER EXPANSION

45% of Alaskan Foster Youth report experiencing homelessness by age 21. Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Vouchers are available to youth aging out of foster care. In Alaska, FYI Voucher access is limited to only 12 communities served by the Alaska Housing Finance Corp.

---

**Expanding FYI vouchers statewide is essential to ensure all transitioning foster youth—regardless of location—have access to stable housing.**

---



# HIGHER EDUCATION

---

## **RESTORE SUPPORT**

Alaska typically has 50+ foster youth enrolled in higher education each year. Recently, the Office of Children's Services eliminated dedicated support for these students, shifting the burden to transition workers who already manage caseloads of 100+ youth.

---

**Restoring dedicated higher-education support is critical to ensuring foster youth can succeed in college and career pathways.**

---



# COST OF CARE

---

## **SUPPORT FOR DAILY LIVING**

Each year, an average of 100 youth ages 18–21 are in extended foster care in Alaska. Half live in non-foster home settings where no foster care reimbursement is provided to cover their cost of living.

---

**OCS should pay the cost of care for all youth in state care, regardless of placement type, ensuring access to housing, food, medical care, and other basic needs.**

---



# IMPLEMENTATION OF PAST REFORMS

---

## **HOUSE BILL 151 (2018)**

Landmark legislation passed in 2018 to overhaul Alaska's Child Welfare System. The state has struggled to implement the law, particularly in the area of reducing caseloads.

---

**OCS needs support to implement the caseload standard to ensure healthy outcomes for children and families.**

---



# Contact us

---

- [www.ffcalaska.org](http://www.ffcalaska.org)
- [info@ffcalaska.org](mailto:info@ffcalaska.org)

