



nchcw News

Finding Success in a Struggle-Filled Year

January 2021



**FSHO
Becomes
Law**

**FSHO Fact
Sheet**

"They say home is where your heart is. Try to live without a heart. Having a place to call my own, finally gave me a feeling of being stable, and being protected. A sigh of relief."

- Antonio, FYI Participant, Ohio.

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"With the inclusion of the Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities Act within the Omnibus package, Sen. Brown has insulated America's current and former foster youth from homelessness. It speaks volumes about how much Sen. Brown and his staff care about vulnerable youth that amid all of the chaos facing our country, they found a way to keep their best interests top of mind."

- Ruth White, NCHCW

Understanding the impact of The Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities Act (FSHO) on Child Welfare Practice

Since the early 80s state and county Independent Living Supervisors, have offered an increasingly sophisticated array of self-sufficiency services to prepare foster youth for adulthood. In 2007, Congress codified this practice in law requiring child welfare agencies to offer independent living services to youth who reach age 14 in state care.

As a result, many youth go on to college, the military, find gainful employment, and take a variety of other paths. Despite progress in child welfare practice, housing options for youth who are at risk of homelessness have continued to be elusive and offered in a frustratingly unpredictable manner. As a result, more than a quarter of the 20,000 youth who age out experience homelessness.

In 2016, a group of foster youth and alumni led by [ACTION Ohio](#) took it upon themselves to eliminate this uncertainty by synchronizing HUD's Family Unification Program (FUP) with emancipation – and eliminating geographic disparities in the Program. Together with

Reps. Turner, Bass, Dean, and Waters and Sens. Brown, Grassley, and Crapo they wrote a bill which became law on December 27, 2020, [The Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities Act \(FSHO\)](#).

FSHO codifies a universal, on "on demand" distribution mechanism for HUD's Family Unification Program. This means that FUP requests can be properly synchronized with emancipation from foster care for youth at risk of homelessness. HUD Sec. Carson used his regulatory authority to begin distributing vouchers in this manner through the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Initiative in 2019. In less than two years, FYI has helped 1,000 youth move into their own apartments.

FSHO also helps youth build assets and rewards youth for working by offering them access to HUD's longstanding [Family Self-Sufficiency Program \(FSS\)](#). If youth voluntarily enroll in FSS or a similar program, they can earn an additional two years of rental assistance. Read how FSHO ends homelessness [here](#).

Gains for Youth



Over 1,000 foster youth accessed homes of their own in 2020 through HUD's youth-written FYI Initiative.

[More](#)

Gains for Families



FUP for families will expand in 2021 as FYI vouchers are added for youth.

[More](#)

Gratitude



NCHCW celebrates the "Chris Patterson Effect" in American Government

[More](#)



Betsy Cronin, joins NCHCW staff and establishes an Early Childhood Committee to end family homelessness.

Did you know that since 2009, the share of HUD's permanent housing (public housing and Section 8 subsidies) occupied by families with children has declined by 30%? In November, Betsy Cronin joined the NCHCW staff as the Director of Early Childhood and Family Housing Policy to attack this issue at the national level. Betsy immediately assembled a National Committee on Early Childhood and Family Housing Policy. Betsy has spent over 25 years helping families access permanent housing as well as developing the systems-level partnerships necessary to increase access to housing choice vouchers and services to keep families together and safe. [Read More](#).

NCHCW and the foster youth of ACTION Ohio nominate Danielle Bastarache, Ryan Jones, Michelle Daniels, and HUD's entire FYI Team for the 2021 Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medal ("Sammies")

[Read the Nomination Letter here.](#)



Everything you need to know about FYI is in our recorded webinars.

Were you aware that youth who are aging out of foster care who are at risk of homelessness can access foster care vouchers regardless of where they live? We spent 2020 partnering with youth, FYI administrators, & the amazing HUD Team to offer free training on all aspects of FUP/FYI. Check out the recordings and training materials. [HUD's FYI page](#) has all the tools you need to apply.

[Watch the Webinars](#)



Please consider a tax-deductible donation to NCHCW. Your donation will support our work to keep families together and help secure a platform for economic self-sufficiency for all youth aging-out of foster care. Join the fight to end homelessness in 2021.

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