



Peers Paving the Path



Youth Crisis

- **5 Million youth (16-24)** disconnected from school or work
- **3.5 Million youth** homeless
- **750,000 youth** in or exiting child welfare, juvenile/adult justice
- **Crisis is worsening** with a sharp, pandemic-driven reversal in a decades long decline in disconnection



- **50%** by age 24 experience homelessness
- **33%** drop out
- **8%** earn a college degree
- **50%** will be unemployed by 24, those employed earn **\$7,500/yr**
- **\$1M cost** to society for every youth who does not achieve self-sufficiency

Rising Medicaid Costs Provide Opportunity

- **Medicaid accounts for 25%** of all mental health expenditures
- Our youth account for **3% of the youth Medicaid population**, but **29% of Medicaid behavioral health expenditures**
- To reduce cost, Medicaid has designated them priority populations for **community-based Enhanced Care Management (ECM) services**
- ECM allows for **1:1 case management for a year**
- iFoster has become a **Medicaid provider in CA** and is working on **NV and KY** to provide and bill for these services



Power of Peers

- Research shows that Medicaid-recognized **Peer Support Specialists (PSS)** improve engagement and reduce costs by ~ \$2,000 per month
- Trusted peers – **individuals with lived experience** – work especially well for disconnected youth
- iFoster's strategy is to **train, certify and employ former foster youth as Medicaid Certified PSS** to deliver ECM services to disconnected youth
- Built on our **AmeriCorps jobs program** track record of providing peer resource navigation
- Approach resonates with our community – **more referrals** through a single newsletter **than our staff can handle**



iFoster Peers Paving the Path

- **Medicaid Provider** of ECM services for disconnected youth
- **PSS Academy** for workforce development
- **Staffing Agency** to augment partner CBO capacity



| KPI Metrics | 2026 to 2028 |
|-------------------|---|
| Social Enterprise | \$15.7 Million billed |
| Youth Workforce | 600 youth earning \$4 Million |
| Social Impact | 3,500 youth supported to achieve self-sufficiency |
| Economic Impact | \$59 Million Medicaid cost avoidance |

iFoster Medicaid Provider

| Care Plan Topic | Milestones with Periodic Check Ins on Adherence to Plan |
|-----------------------|--|
| Care Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-sufficiency care plan with goals and milestones developed |
| Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolled in continuing education • Accessing financial aid (FAFSA/Pell/Chafee, school) |
| Employment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job skills training / work experience • Secured employment • Maintains employment (through 3, 6, 9, 12 months) |
| Housing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secured housing • Accessing available housing supports (i.e. vouchers, THP-Plus) |
| Other Key Supports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated certified PSS and is engaged in at least bi-weekly check-ins • All needed vital documents, right to work documents • Accessing all eligible government benefits (enrolled, meeting requirements, providing necessary documentation for redetermination) • Youth has a bank account and has a budget • Youth has transportation plan and resources • Youth has created a wellness plan- physical exercise, self care and mental health, healthy eating |
| Support Network | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solid and active supportive network • Enrolled in CA LifeLine Phones for FY program |
| Health Insurance Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolled in Medi-Cal MCP of choice and remains enrolled (redetermination). |

ECM Case Example

- **Tyree** is PSS-certified Lead Case Manager
- **Initial assessment** completed and **self-sufficiency goals** set, which results in a care plan
- **Bi-weekly meetings** focused on achieving goals, including both barrier reduction and gaining employment
- Connection to and support in **navigating resources** (vital documents, housing, transportation, etc.)
- **Ongoing meetings to support stability** and manage any ongoing or newly emerging needs



PSS Academy Workforce Development

- 40% of the U.S. population lives in designated mental health professional shortage areas
- Foster youths' #1 career path of choice is **healthcare and social services**
- Two pathways to employment:
 - **Rapid certification over 5 weeks** for entry into apprenticeship and entry level youth worker or patient services
 - **Apprenticeship over 1 year** with 1,700 of hours work experience providing ECM services to iFoster clients for first-in-line interviews as Lead Care Managers and other like community-based para-professionals



Staffing Agency



- **iFoster AmeriCorps experience** – CBO host sites want and need peers, but can't afford to hire them full-time once iFoster is no longer paying for them
- CBOs don't want to become Medicaid Providers due to complexity, case rigor, billing management, etc.
- iFoster is a **proven, trusted source** of well-trained and supported youth with the capability of placing youth as PSS at host sites to amplify host site impact
- iFoster can “**bill-on-behalf of**” as a **staffing agency**, emulating how most healthcare clinics operate today
- Creates a **sustainable employment pathway** for youth and a **subsidized workforce** for CBOs

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Power of



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