

Good morning,

Please see below and attached for information and resources related to your work with older youth.

- FAFSA Night at PHEAA (attached)
- Paid Research Opportunity!! **The Field Center is seeking two more participants for a study on adults who maintain ongoing relationships as a caring adult in the lives of youth who age out of foster care.** Learn more [here](#).
- Suicide Prevention Month Guide
- Foster Care to College (FC2C) Resources
- PHEAA Resources
- The Road from High School to Higher Education

Suicide Prevention Month Guide

The Jana Marie Foundation, Aavidum, Prevent Suicide PA, STAR-Center at the University of Pittsburgh, and Garrett Lee Smith (GLS) Youth Suicide Prevention Grant are pleased to share a [resource guide](#) for **National Suicide Prevention Month**. This September, the week of September 6th-12th is recognized as **National Suicide Prevention Week**, with Thursday, September 10th marking **World Suicide Prevention Day**. For the past three years, the national theme has been “Changing the Narrative on Suicide,” and the new guide emphasizes the importance of “Strengthening the Connection, Expanding the Conversation.”

The guide provides a variety of suicide prevention resources and activities that you can implement in your organization or community to raise awareness about suicide prevention. This includes infographics, ideas for events, social media posts, virtual backgrounds, a sample proclamation, and more. Many of these resources are also available as standalone [one-pagers](#) for use at trainings, conferences, and other awareness events.

We encourage you to share this resource guide with partners in your communities that can work together to help prevent suicide in the Commonwealth.

Questions may be directed to Dr. Perri Rosen (c-prosen@pa.gov).

Thank you,
OMHSAS Executive Committee

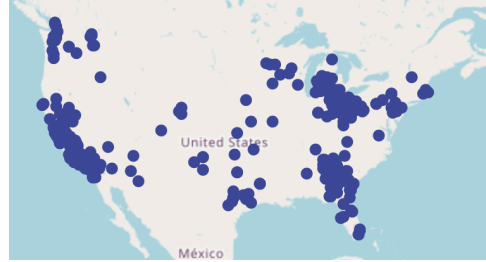
FC2C Resource Highlight

National Postsecondary Support Map

The Fostering Academic Achievement Nationwide (FAAN) National Postsecondary Support Map provides links and information on state tuition waivers, statewide education support programs, and 4-year campus-based support programs for students who experience foster care.

If you are a campus program in PA that is not on this map, contact FAAN to get added!

Have a resource to share across PA? [Email us](#).



In July, the [Higher Education Access and Success for Homeless and Foster Youth Act \(HEASHFY\)](#) was reintroduced by Congresswomen Sydney Kamlager-Dove (D-CA-37) and Erin Houchin (R-IN-09), and Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), legislation built to close the gaps that often affect students with prior foster care experience or homelessness through:

- **A campus liaison.** HEASHFY would require every institution to designate one.
- **Campus break housing.** HEASHFY requires institutions to plan ahead for housing during and between academic breaks.
- **Work-study priority** helps students build financial stability while enrolled.
- **In-state tuition access** removes a cost barrier for students without stable residency.
- **TRIO and GEAR UP access** gets students connected to college support before they're already falling through the cracks.

PHEAA Resources:

PA FAFSA Requirement

Act 47 of 2025 adopted legislation making Pennsylvania the 14th state requiring FAFSA completion for seniors (unless they opt out) beginning with the 2026-27 academic term. PHEAA can provide reports of students who have completed the FAFSA for your school if you have a Remote Access Agreement completed. Please go to [Sign Our Remote Access Agreement](#) to complete the High School Remote Access Agreement if you have not done so previously. If you are not sure if you have an agreement on file, please reach out to your [access partner](#).

PASSHE Pledge Program Will Cover Tuition Costs for Eligible In-State Students

A [new initiative announced by the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education \(PASSHE\)](#) will cover tuition for all in-state students who are eligible to receive federal PELL Grants and the Pennsylvania State Grant. The new program is available at the 10 state owned universities.

Common Misconceptions Students Have About Financial Aid

According to the recent [“How Americans Pay for College” survey](#) conducted by Sallie Mae/Ipsos, cost is a top factor considered by students. This article reviews six common misconceptions students and families face regarding their higher education decisions.

2026 National College Match

QuestBridge is preparing for the upcoming [2026 National College Match](#), a unique college admission and scholarship application process to top colleges. Through this application, students can maximize their admission opportunities by ranking colleges, expanding their reach through QuestBridge Regular Decision, and more.

The application launches within the next few weeks ([view all dates and deadlines](#)), so encourage students to take a moment to review key information to prepare.

Financial Aid Night/FAFSA Completion Event Videos

Please review the attached YouTube videos to assist you in promoting these events to your students and families.

[FAFSA Completion Event](#)

[Financial Aid Night](#)

Past Webinars

Did you miss one of our previous webinars? No problem. Please visit our Past Webinar Events page to catch up on any of our recent presentations. Recordings are available at [Past Webinar Events](#).

BACK TO SCHOOL 2026

The Road from High School to Higher Education

Tools for the new school year





HIGH SCHOOL



FSA ID



FAFSA



COLLEGE

Welcome back to a new school year!

Higher education is one of the strongest protective factors against homelessness for young adults. Yet real barriers remain, from confusing financial aid processes to rising costs and limited support on campus.

Whether you are a high school counselor, McKinney-Vento liaison, financial aid administrator, homeless higher education liaison, college access professional, or service provider, you are the one helping students get past those barriers. Our tools and resources can help you support students experiencing homelessness to and through higher education.

But first, click on the image to hear a message from Jillian and Caleb.



TAKE THESE TO WORK



HIGHER EDUCATION RESOURCES TO HELP YOU SUPPORT HOMELESS STUDENTS



with Jillian Sitjar and Caleb McKay, FAAC®





FALL ROADMAP

1

Now: students create an FSA ID

Setting up the account early removes one hurdle from October.

2

Now: issue unaccompanied homeless youth determinations

Determinations completed now mean students can apply as independent the day the form opens.

Oct
1

The FAFSA opens

Encourage students to apply early! Many state and institutional deadlines come first.



FAFSA TOOLKIT

UHY FAFSA Determination Templates

Ready-to-use determination and [written statement templates](#) for liaisons and financial aid administrators.

[Get the templates](#) →

FAFSA Independence Guide

A step-by-step guide to understanding whether a student qualifies as an independent student.

[Read the guide](#) →

Interactive UHY Determination Tool

A student-facing tool that walks young people through whether they may qualify for an unaccompanied homeless youth determination.

[Try the tool](#) →

How to Answer the FAFSA Questions About Homelessness

Exactly how to answer the homelessness questions on the form, and what to do if a student is selected for [identity verification](#).

[See the walkthrough](#) →

Top 10 FAFSA Questions

The ten questions we hear most from the field, answered in one quick guide. You can also browse the full Q&A archive from our FAFSA webinars.

[Get the answers](#) → | [Browse the webinar Q&As](#) →

Navigating Financial Aid for Immigrant and Mixed-Status Students Experiencing Homelessness

Guidance for supporting immigrant and mixed-status students through the financial aid process.

[Read the guidance](#) →





FEATURED RESEARCH

Removing Barriers, Building Futures

Data-informed policies to support college students experiencing homelessness, with a companion update using the most recent data.

[Read the Report →](#)



SUPPORT THROUGH COLLEGE

Youth Homelessness and Higher Education: An Overview

Research and federal data on college students experiencing homelessness, covering enrollment, financial aid, retention, and FAFSA policy.

[Get the overview, updated July 2026 →](#)

Tips for Helping Homeless Youth Succeed in College

Nationwide best practices for supporting students once they are enrolled.

[Get the tips →](#)

Tips for Homeless Higher Education Liaisons

Practical guidance for liaisons building support systems on campus.

[See the tips](#) →



Every higher education resource, all in one place

Practical guidance for liaisons building support systems on campus.

[Explore the Higher Education page](#)



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Have a great weekend.

Thank you,