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### HOW WE CAN HELP HOMELESS AND FOSTER YOUTH

Foster care is supposed to be a temporary living situation for children living in abuse or neglect - but frequently it is a long-term solution to an ugly problem in today's society. While in foster care, children may live with relatives, foster families or in group homes. The ultimate goal of the foster care system is reunification with biological parents. It's supposed to be a temporary safe placement while the parent(s) can get their life back on track or someone else steps up to be a parent to that child. With more than 500,000 children currently in the foster care system, an estimated 7% of those infants under 1 year old, it would seem like the system isn't doing what it is designed to do.



Here are the staggering statistics (courtesy of [Soar For Youth](#)):

- There are over 500,000 children in the United States foster care system
- 1 out of every 5 of our nation's foster children lives in California
- 3 out of every 10 of our nation's homeless are former foster youth
- 70% of foster youth dream of going to college. Only 3% actually make it
- 83% of children in foster care are held back in school by third grade and 75% are working below grade level
- 35% of foster youth have experienced four or more school changes and each move results in a six-month loss of educational progress
- 51% of former foster youth are unemployed at age 22

With the passage of the federal Family First Prevention Services Act in 2018, the foster system could see a major overhaul - the most extensive change in 40 years. Group home limits, better funding, and more timely help for vulnerable children and families were promised in this legislation. While it is a step in the right direction, it has yet to be implemented across the board in the United States.

Many school districts in California are working towards a better outcome for children in foster care. In April 2020,

California Governor Gavin Newsom signed an executive order allocating \$42 million help foster youth. The money was targeted to help caregivers affected by the coronavirus and give extra resources to social workers who were forced to work remotely or longer hours to help children. Many foster kids don't have access to technology to participate in distance learning, and because of quarantine, are unable to see their biological families to continue building those bridges to reunification. We are still a long way from solutions to big problems in the foster care system, and there are many ways for you to help.

### Ways to help:

[Teens4teens LA](#) is a Los Angeles based non-profit organization raising awareness and funds for youth in the foster system. They fundraise to help create more transitional housing opportunities for kids aging out of the system. They also support a Teen Holiday Drive that aims specifically for helping teens in the foster care system.

[Soar for Youth](#) is a San Francisco based non-profit offering support, rapport, and guidance for foster youth through middle and high school.

[Together We Rise](#) is a national non-profit organization with roots here in California. It provides a multitude of services for kids in foster care.

You can find more resources on the [Foster Youth](#) page on the California State PTA website.

## IMPACT TEEN DRIVERS ONLINE EDUCATION KITS

Impact Teen Drivers (ITD) understands that this is a period of enormous uncertainty and would like to support you in your ongoing efforts to keep your scholastic communities safe. The enduring public health issue of reckless and distracted driving among teens is not the focal point of news reports, but it is claiming the lives of 4,000 teens annually.



ITD, with the support of the Office of Traffic Safety and the California Highway Patrol, has developed and compiled an "E-kit" with the most effective and engaging evidence-based materials for you to utilize in your scholastic community at no cost.

The online E-kit is designed for teachers, administrators, and PTA representatives, and includes lesson plans plus interactive classroom resources such as posters, the iCommit Pledge Card, and the Relative Risk Wheel. To access the E-kit, [click here](#).

## TAKE ACTION!

### Lessons we learned from our "listening sessions"



### PTA in California summer issue now available



### Summer 2020 Member Perks are Here



Read the final report about our listening sessions! Find out what we learned from you – and what recommendations we have going forward.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Read about how our members, schools and families are adapting in response to the pandemic and demands for greater racial equity, and what PTA is doing to support them.

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Check out our great offers from SkyOne, Lifetouch, Legoland and more – only for PTA members!

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