



PHOTO BY NATHANIEL SCHWAB

Foster youth leaders convened this summer to formulate solutions for Oregon's foster care system.

Foster Youth Speak Out

Current and former foster youth in Oregon have a prescription for improving foster care in the state.

The solutions call for expanding mental health services, increasing funding for court appointed special advocates and prioritizing housing needs of youth at risk of homelessness. They were developed this summer by youth attending the Oregon Foster Youth Conference.

"These policy recommendations have the potential to create needed change in Oregon's foster care system," said Marilyn Jones, child welfare director at the Oregon Department of Human Services. "Foster youth are the experts when it comes to how we can improve foster care. The Oregon Department of Human Services values the insight and leadership of Oregon Foster

Youth Connection and looks forward to continuing to work with youth leaders to better serve children in care."

In the past, every piece of legislation proposed by members of the foster youth conference has been passed into law and signed by the governor for the past five biennia, and it all starts with the bi-annual OFYC Policy Conference, officials said.



Betty Jones helps a child with reading as a volunteer with Experience Corp, a local mentorship program.

Trusted, Caring Adults Needed

Mentor a child this school year

Are you age 50 or over, and want to help children succeed? A little bit of extra support from a trusted, caring adult can help many children thrive academically. This is where you can come in as a mentor. AARP Experience Corps is an intergenerational program that focuses on helping children become great readers before finishing third grade. Working one-on-one and in

small groups with young children in elementary schools, mentors provide the needed support and attention for students to succeed.

Metropolitan Family Service, a non-profit serving the Portland area for over 67 years helping move people beyond limitations of poverty, inequity and social isolation, is actively recruiting volunteers for the program. AARP Experience Corps provides opportunities for adults 50 and over to mentor and tutor children in select eastside, north Portland and

Gresham public schools. Volunteer mentors commit to four or more hours per week throughout the school year. Those able to commit eight hours or more may receive a monthly stipend. No formal experience is needed, just the desire to help children succeed. Training and ongoing support are provided.

Volunteer today for the 2018-19 school year by calling 503-290-9427, or email: volunteer@mfs.email. For more info visit metfamily.org

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