

CARE AWARE TERMINOLOGY

Important reminder

Listen to the youth's language, these definitions are not meant to be rigid

Youth in Care (CYIC): A child/youth who is removed from their caregivers and is placed in residential care (e.g., foster care or group home).³

Foster Care: A temporary living arrangement for a child under 19 years old who cannot live safely with their family of origin.¹

Youth Agreement: A legal agreement for a youth aged 16-18 receiving financial support from MCFD to live independently.³

Continuing Care Order (CCO): A child/youth under 19 years old whose sole guardian is the Director of Child Welfare.³

Temporary Care Order (TCO): This care order differs from a CCO because it remains open to review with the goal of family reunification where appropriate.¹

Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD): The ministry of the government responsible for the guardianship of children and youth in care.¹

Delegated Aboriginal Agency (DAA): An Indigenous-led organization authorized by MCFD to provide child welfare services to Indigenous children, youth, and families.²

References

1. Aged Out. (2024). *Glossary*. <https://agedout.com/glossary/>
2. Government of British Columbia. (2025, December 2). *Indigenous Child and Family Service Agencies*. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/data-monitoring-quality-assurance/reporting-monitoring/accountability/indigenous-child-and-family-service-agencies>
3. Rutman, D. D., & Hubberstey, C. C. (2016). *Fostering success: Improving educational outcomes for youth in/from Care*. University of Victoria.

RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS SUPPORTING YOUTH IN CARE

Self-Care Resources

"Self-Care Tips for Teachers UNICEF"
www.unicef.org

"Self Care for Educators Orange
County Department of Education"
ccee-ca.org

Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre

"Supporting Children & Youth Who
Have Experienced Trauma"

"Language Matters: An Introductory
Guide for Understanding Mental Health
and Substance Use"

Healthy Minds B.C

"Everyday Anxiety Strategies for
Educators (EASE) Collection"

"EASE for Grades 8-12: Course with
Certificate of Completion"

"Suicide Prevention and Self-Harm
Video Series and Resources"

"Neurodiversity and Mental Health"

SCAN HERE FOR THE
LINKS TO ABOVE
RESOURCES:



SUPPORTING YOUTH IN CARE

A Guide for Educators



YOUTH INFORMED. TRAUMA-AWARE.
SUPPORT THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE



BARRIERS TO SCHOOL SUCCESS FOR YOUTH IN CARE



Lack of Support Systems

- They may have fewer supports than their peers.
- They may lack financial and material resources.
- Emotional safety/stability may impact their ability to engage in school.

"Some youth may never reach out for help no matter how hard they are struggling."



Feeling Different or Falling behind

- Feeling different or falling behind can lower confidence.
- This can lead to disengagement from learning.

"It's hard, you see the other kids do it and you can't. It makes you feel different."



Life Outside of School

- They may have challenges outside of school.
- Managing external pressures can be difficult (balancing school, social life, work).
- Unmet basic needs can cause stress.

"This [high school] is not my biggest challenge right now... other things are impacting my ability to engage at school."



Negative School Experiences

- Youth may be judged/misunderstood in school.
- Assumptions can lead to unfair treatment.
- Stigma can prevent youth from accessing support.

"Being treated poorly or like I didn't care about my education pushed me out."

WHAT HELPS YOUTH IN CARE SUCCEED IN SCHOOL?



Supportive Relationships

- Consistent, supportive adults can make a difference.
- Regular check-ins and trauma-informed support can help youth feel supported.

"Having a support person with regular check-ins with them, it was like a big system working together."



Strength & Resilience

- Youth in care show strength, resilience, and courage every day.
- These strengths should be recognized and built on.

"Youth in care are resilient, it only takes the right support and teachers to lift us up."



Hope & Encouragement

- Belief in their ability to succeed matters.
- Encouragement and celebrating small wins can help build confidence and engagement in school.

"Celebrate the youth just showing up, just being there [at school]."



Flexible Success & Learning

- Recognize that success does not look the same for every youth; just getting through school can be a success.
- A supportive environment and understanding individual learning needs can help youth stay engaged.

"I felt like for me it was success to just get through it [high school]."

This page reflects real experiences and voices shared by former youth in care through an anonymous focus group (April 2, 2026).

PRACTICAL WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUTH IN CARE



Build Trust & Show Up

- Let youth know you have space and time for them, even if they don't ask.
- Consistent check-ins can make a difference.

"Have a supporting adult remind you of the small things along the way."



Lead with Empathy & Fairness

- Be empathetic and recognize challenges happening outside of school.
- Give grace; avoid assumptions about effort.
- Treat youth as individuals without singling them out or treating them differently.

"Treating youth in care like every other kid, that they aren't different because they are in government care."



Be Flexible & Adapt Learning

- Offer flexibility with deadlines and expectations.
- Provide accommodations like breaks and alternative settings.
- Recognize and support different learning needs.

"Offer alternatives and flexibility when possible."



Support the Whole Student

- Support them to access to basic needs like food and stable support systems.
- Be mindful of assignment design (e.g., access to technology & personal topics).
- Incorporate practical life skills and real-world learning into education.

"Teachers wanting homework typed and not written made life a lot harder, I had to walk over an hour to go to the library to get my homework done."