



Foster
the Vote

★ VOTE ★

FOSTER YOUTH
★ VOICES ★
MATTER



Foster Care Reform Begins at the Ballot Box

The decision-makers in foster care are **elected officials**. Advocacy for child welfare reform begins with electing leaders committed to change.

President

The president selects the HHS Secretary and the Commissioners for the Children's Bureau that directly shape the federal child welfare system.

Members of Congress

Can introduce or vote against key pieces of legislation, and determine budgets for HHS

Governor

Appoints the Commissioner of the child welfare agency

Local State House and Senate

They approve budgets and have oversight authority over state child welfare agencies.

Judges

Oversee removal cases and hold status hearings with foster youth about their case. Have a major influence in where a child may be placed or reunified.

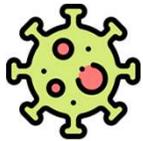


Foster Care is on the ballot



Healthcare

- ★ The Affordable Care Act, which provides support for former foster youth, may be expanded or dismantled based on the election
- ★ Congress is considering legislation to expand healthcare for former foster youth



COVID 19 Relief

- ★ 52% of foster youth didn't get a stimulus payment, 1 in 5 youth have run out of food, 23% are housing insecure
- ★ Congress is considering the Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act HR 7947)



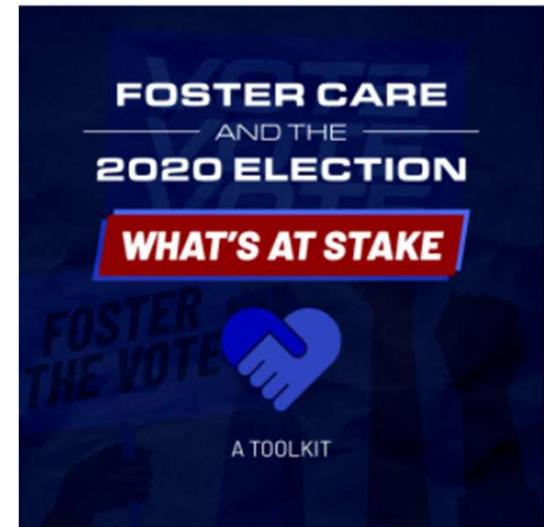
LGBTQ Equality

- ★ The Supreme Court will likely soon take on a case that decides whether local and state child welfare agencies are allowed to discriminate against LGBTQ people, both in the services they provide, the youth they serve, and the foster parents they recruit.

Mobilizing Foster Youth in Elections

During the 2020 Presidential Election I:

- **Created a Facebook page** which grew to over 3,000 followers
- **Developed a Foster the Vote toolkit** with information on how foster care reform was on the ballot and how to vote
- Developed a **Presentation on the Election and How to Vote** and presented to local foster care organizations, including group homes and independent living centers
- Held **3 Town Halls** explaining how the Biden Presidential campaign would prioritize foster care
- Held **2 Listening Sessions** with the campaign to share what foster youth wanted on their policy agenda



Contrary to popular belief, 501(c)3 organizations CAN engage in elections as long as they do not take a partisan stance.

How You Can #FosterThe Vote

1) Talk to Candidates

Ask them how they plan to support youth in foster care. If they don't have an answer, you can help them build their plan!

2) Ask Candidates to Hold a Foster Care Town Hall

If you can show them they'll have a crowd, they or a surrogate will love the chance to speak to voters.

2) Make Sure Foster Youth Are Prepared to Vote:

Ensure they're registered, have their I.D. if needed, and have a plan to get to the polls on Election Day

3) Get out the Voter Flyer or Presentation

Build a flyer or presentation to share with alumni organizations (i.e. statewide boards, advocacy groups). It should include information on what elections are occurring and when, how those candidates impact the child welfare system, and information on how to vote.

Examples of Slides

Voter Registration

Two Chances to Register:

1. The deadline to register online or by mailing a paper form is **October 9th.**
1. Voters can also register or update their registration at an early voting location during the early voting period--**October 15 through 31.**
 - Bring proof of address

Voting in NC

Seth Morris - Voter Protection Director, Fight for NC

North Carolina offers three safe and convenient ways to vote.

1. Early in person
2. Vote-by-mail,
3. Vote at their precinct on Election Day

TOP TIP: First time registrants should bring proof of address just in case

Voter Registration/Voting in NC

Any North Carolina voter can vote-by-mail if they choose.

In order to vote-by-mail, you must request your ballot by Tuesday, October 27th, and mail or hand deliver your ballot to your County Board of Elections by Election Day (Nov. 3). We recommend requesting it as soon as possible.



If you have any questions about voting-by-mail or other questions related to voting, please call the Voter Assistance Hotline at **1-833- 868-3462 (1-833-VOTE4NC)**

How to Vote by Mail

There are four easy steps to voting-by-mail:



Request your ballot.

You can request your ballot online at www.votebymail.ncsbe.gov

**Grab a witness and
vote your ballot.**

**Sign and have your
witness sign the
envelope form.**

**Return your ballot
as early as possible.**

You can return your ballot to your County Board of Elections by mail, or in-person at the County Board office or any early voting site. You can track the status of your ballot request and mailed ballot at www.ncsbe.gov

MAKE A PLAN TO VOTE

- I've registered to vote
- I have identification
- I've requested my mail in ballot or I found my polling place
- I mailed in my ballot or made a plan to vote in person
- I have a ride to my polling place, or have asked my case manager for support securing transportation