



BRIDGES NEWSLETTER OR BLOG POST TEMPLATE

INSTRUCTIONS. Between now and June 14, please share this article with your stakeholders via your newsletter or blog.

Support Program for Foster Youth in Jeopardy

Action Alert: Tell Your Legislators to Save the Ohio Bridges Program

In 2017, the Ohio legislature answered our call to create a “bridge” for youth aging out of the foster care program.

The Ohio Bridges Program provides skill-building opportunities and financial support to foster youth ages 18-20. It has a proven track record of helping prepare members of this vulnerable group for a lifetime of success.

Because of the Bridges program, the participants have thrived:

- 77% attained an education or employment
- 93% secured stable housing
- 93% reported having food security
- 94% reported having access to health care

But Bridges is in jeopardy, because the current budget bill falls short of fully funding this state-mandated program.

We cannot go backward and fail our foster children again. Without a safety net, these young people likely will face risks such as homelessness, unemployment, incarceration and human trafficking.

We need you to take action.

Together with other foster care and child advocates, we must urge the Ohio Senate to support the inclusion of an amendment in HB 33 to protect the Bridges program and continue its operations.

There are two ways you can help.

- Call your Senator at 1-800-282-0253. Visit <https://www.ohiochildrensalliance.org/toolkit> to download the sample call script.
- Send a message to your Senator by going to <https://bit.ly/ohiobridges>. It's fast and easy.

The Bridges program makes a difference for our foster youth and is a smart investment in the future of our state. Let's keep a good thing going.