



Ohio Children's Alliance

Leading change for child and family service providers

OHIO BRIDGES SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

INSTRUCTIONS. Between now and June 14, consider sending a letter to the editor of your local newspaper. Be sure to look up the paper's specific submission guidelines for important details. DO NOT SEND THIS DOCUMENT. Adjust the letter to meet guidelines, and personalize it as you see fit. This template is for our members and partners only; not for the general public.

To the editor:

Imagine being forced to leave home at 18 with no support or security. This was the harsh reality for children aging out of foster care before the Ohio Bridges Program.

Without a safety net, young people faced homelessness, and half lacked gainful employment. Less than 3 percent earned a college degree. More than a third were incarcerated. Across the board, they suffered from PTSD and had a greater risk of falling victim to human trafficking. Seven out of 10 girls became pregnant before age 21.

As someone who works with foster children, I am grateful Ohio established Bridges. Bridges provides skill-building opportunities and financial support to foster youth ages 18-20. And it works.

77% of participants attained an education or employment.

93% secured stable housing.

93% have food security.

94% have access to healthcare.

Supporting Bridges also is fiscally responsible. Without the program, communities pay an estimated \$300,000 in costs like public assistance, incarceration, and lost wages over the lifetime of each former foster child.

But Bridges is in jeopardy because the current state budget bill falls short.

We cannot go backward.

I urge the Ohio Generally Assembly to fully fund the Bridges program. Let's keep a good thing going.

Add Your Name