Achieving Maximum Potential (AMP) is a youth-driven, statewide group that seeks to unleash the full potential for personal growth among foster and adoptive children in Iowa. AMP works to help youth become independent adults who can successfully educate others about the child welfare system and take an active role in making life better for themselves and others in state care.

AMP 2020 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Collected from all 13 AMP Foster Care Youth Councils: Ames, Carroll/Denison, Cedar Rapids, Council Bluffs, Des Moines/Des Moines Mobile, Dubuque, Eldora State Training School, Fort Dodge, Marshalltown, Mt. Pleasant, Ottumwa, Sioux City and Waterloo

STATE OF IOWA LEGISLATION

1. AMP youth request more housing options for teens.
   - Youth deserve to grow up in a family. We need adults (foster/adoptive parents, relatives & guardians) to step up and care for teens!
   - When youth are placed away from home, they want to be placed closer to their families for the purpose of visits and family interaction.

2. AMP youth request an increase in foster care clothing allowance stipend.
   - The amount allowed per youth is unrealistic to the cost of clothing ($250 maximum per year).

3. AMP youth request additional training specific to teenagers for foster, adoptive, kinship and guardian parents.
   - Teenagers can be difficult to parent; especially those who suffer trauma.
   - Teens want parents who have the skills so they can be successful in a family setting.

4. AMP youth request transition training for all system involved youth.
   - Offer specific curriculum that addresses the areas of: Housing, Money Management, Health Benefits, Employment, Secondary Education and Life Skills training.
   - Provide options other than college such as: trade jobs, apprenticeships and other hands on – work based learning programs.
YOUTH REQUESTS FROM PREVIOUS YEARS...Legislative Action Still Needed!

1. AMP youth request that all youth in the state of Iowa, who are educated in their homes, be dual-enrolled in a local community school for at least physical education or extra-curricular activities. This is for safety.

   - Education Oversight / Regulation for all educational settings.

2. AMP youth request safe and affordable housing for young adults aging out of the foster care system.

   - Work on implementing tax incentives or tax breaks for landlords who rent to transitioning youth (use New Mexico law as a model)

   - Tax incentives / tax breaks for employers that hire foster youth. (New Mexico Employers Tax Credit For Hiring Foster Youth May 8, 2018 – SB231)

3. AMP youth request that each judge ask a youth age 12 and older if they want to have their own legal representation (in addition to their Guardian ad Litem - GAL).

   - Work on a one pager with Drake law students for GAL’s to notify system youth on when it’s in their best interest to bifurcate the GAL role.

4. AMP youth request to get their driver’s license before they age out of care.

   - Work with insurance companies to decrease liability for the person signing for the license

   - Underwrite state liability insurance for these situations (Florida Keys To Independence SB744 & Transportation Really Is Possible (TRIP) North Carolina Driver’s License Project)

5. AMP youth request when a young adult turns 18, they need contact information for their adopted siblings.

   - Educate adoptive parents on the value of sibling contacts

   - Consider cooperative adoption for youth adopted out of Iowa’s child welfare system