Note from the Facilitators

2018 is here, and we’re excited for the possibilities this year has for AMP! If you haven’t checked out a meeting at your local council, yet, consider doing so in January. We’re all gearing up for AMP Day on the Hill, which is an excellent way to see youth in action—sharing their experiences, speaking about the needs of youth and families in the foster care system, and working with their legislators to create a better future for foster and adoptive youth in the state of Iowa.

NOTHING ABOUT US, WITHOUT US!

CALL FOR ARTISTS!
The Dubuque AMP council will be hosting an exhibit for National Foster Care Month in May—the theme is on identity, and we’re looking for submissions from AMP youth across the state. For more details, email: jessica.perry@hillcrest-fs.org.
Facilitator Spotlight: Ames

Terri Bailey is the assistant coordinator for the AMP (Achieving Maximum Potential) program and also the facilitator for the Ames AMP council. She was a foster/adoptive parent for 30 years and taught several classes offered to foster/adoptive parents. Now, she spends most of her time working with AMP youth in Ames and on a statewide level.

Terri has been with this program for 12 years and is often accused of being a teen at heart! Her favorite music is what's on the radio, usually pop but no rap! I must say that the new country artists are sounding pretty good! Her favorite artists are Pink, Bruno Mars, Ed Sheeran, Sam Smith and Panic At the Disco! Best TV shows are Dancing with the Stars, This Is Us, How To Get Away With Murder, Grey's Anatomy, The good Doctor and Survivor.

She has a husband Brian, several children between the ages of 18-38 and 14 beautiful grandchildren.
### Des Moines
Facilitator: Yahaira Espinosa  
Email: yaya.xo4997@gmail.com  
Phone: 515.943.5885  

**Meets @ Polk County Riverplace (2309 Euclid Ave) Enter through W atrium door, AMP is in Room 1.**

**Tuesday 1.2.18 6 PM—8 PM:** TBA

**Tuesday 1.16.18 6 PM—8 PM:** Prepare for AMP Day on the Hill—Review 2018 AMP Legislative Agenda

### Des Moines Mobile
Facilitator: Yahaira Espinosa  
Email: yaya.xo4997@gmail.com  
Phone: 515.943.5885  

Serves youth in and surrounding Des Moines who live in YESS Shelter, Polk County Detention Center, Orchard Place, Woodward and Youth Homes of Mid-America. This facilitator brings the AMP Council meeting to the youth in their facility.

### Dubuque
Facilitator: Indigo Channing  
Email: jessica.perry@hillcrest-fs.org  
Phone: 563.542.9736  

**Thursday 1.4.18 1:30 PM—4 PM:** Dubuque Area Substance Abuse Coalition Meetings @ NICC.

**Saturday 1.6.18 1 PM—3 PM:** New Member Training @ Hillcrest Campus (2005 Asbury Road)

**Monday 1.8.18 6:30 PM—8 PM:** Preparing for Day on the Hill @ Multicultural Family Center (1157 Central Avenue)

**Tuesday 1.9.18 6 PM:** Presentation at TIPS MAPPS class—Must contact Indy if interested in speaking.

**Wednesday 1.10.18 4:30 PM—5:30 PM:** Service Work @ Dubuque Rescue Mission Community Garden

**Monday 1.15.18 7 AM:** Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration @ Grand River Center  **Must RSVP by 1.8.18**

**Thursday 1.18.18 6:30 PM—7 PM:** Iowa Students for Tobacco Education and Prevention @ Hillcrest Campus

**Monday 1.22.18 6 AM—8 PM:** AMP Day on the Hill

**Monday 1.29.18 6:30 PM—8 PM:** Recap of Day on the Hill, learning about voting @ Multicultural Family Center

### Eldora State Training School
Facilitator: Paul McNamara  
Email: pmcnamara@yss.org  
Phone: 319.404.6356  

**MEETINGS ARE FOR RESIDENTS OF THE STATE TRAINING SCHOOL ONLY.**

**CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC.**

### Fort Dodge
Facilitator: Cassie Johnson  
Email: cjohnson.ysc@frontier.com  
Phone: 515.570.4867

Facilitator: Kate Cardenas  
Email: office.ysc@frontier.com


**Meets @ First United Methodist Church (127 N 10th St).**

Contact Cassie for information on January meetings!

### Marshalltown
Facilitator: Alyson Hicks  
Email: Mtownamp@hotmail.com  
Phone: 641.751.1776


**Meets @ Youth & Shelter Services (11 E State St)**

Contact Alyson for information on January meetings!

### Mason City
Facilitator: Collette Whitney  
Email: cwhitney@yss.org  
Phone: coming soon


Contact Collette for information on January meetings!
Ottumwa
Facilitator: Holly Dommer  
Email: hdommer@ahfa.org  
Phone: 641.682.3449
Co-Facilitator: Joe Schulz  
Email: growingwt@gmail.com  
Phone: 641.682.3449
Web: http://www.ampiowa.org/en/amp_near_you/ottumwa_amp/

The Ottumwa Council meets on the second Sunday of each month at American Home Finding (217 East 5th St.) in Ottumwa from 5:30-7:00 p.m. & the third Wednesday of each month at Ottumwa High School at 12:30pm

Sioux City
Facilitator: Jen Schaper  
Email: jschaper@childrenssquare.org  
Phone: 712.255.9061
Web: http://www.ampiowa.org/en/amp_near_you/sioux_city_amp/

Meets @ St. Luke’s Lutheran Church (2309 S. Saint Aubin St.)

Contact Jen for information on January meetings!

Waterloo
Facilitator: Jessica (Perry) Christman  
Email: iperrychristman@gmail.com  
Phone: 515.451.4233
Web: http://www.ampiowa.org/en/amp_near_you/waterloo_amp/

Meets @ Grace Lutheran Church (1024 West 8th St., Waterloo)

Tuesday 1.9.18 6:30 PM—8:00 PM: We will prepare for AMP Day on the Hill by reviewing the finalized 2018 AMP Legislative Agenda, which is a list of bills based upon the input gathered from each of the 14 AMP councils that we will talk about with our legislators.

Anti-Human Trafficking Day on the Hill

Save The Date
Wednesday, January 17th, 2018
Kickoff Event 10:30 am in the Governor’s Formal Office in the State Capital Building

The Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery (NAHT) will hold its 2018 legislative day on the hill on Wednesday January 17th at the Iowa State Capitol Building in Des Moines. This second annual event will feature Iowa’s Governor Kim Reynolds and Lt. Governor Adam Gregg, speaking on the importance of public awareness of this heinous crime that takes place here in Iowa and across the nation and the world.

At 10:30am in the Governor’s Formal Office in the State Capitol Building, Governor Kim Reynolds will sign a proclamation declaring January as Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention and Awareness Month. The NAHT Board Chair, Dr. George Belitsos and others will also speak to progress made in the fight to end trafficking in Iowa. Outstanding Anti-Trafficking Service Awards will be presented to Governor Reynolds, and others.

Following the proclamation signing event, anti-human trafficking advocates from across Iowa and Teens Against Human Trafficking will hand each legislator a copy of the NAHT 2018 Legislative agenda.

The NAHT would like to thank Governor Reynolds for her advocacy. The NAHT invites all legislators to join us in the fight to end trafficking in Iowa.

To contact us, go to
www.IowaNAHT.org | facebook.com/IowaNAHT

If you see something that doesn’t look right, take action and call
The National Human Trafficking Hotline
888-373-7888
SAVE THE DATE!
Friday, February 16th and Saturday, February 17th 2018
Achieving Maximum Potential
Spring Conference

Where: Indian Hills Community College
525 Grandview Ottumwa, IA

Activities on Friday starting at 7:00 PM
Registration Saturday 8:00 AM
Conference Saturday 8:45-4:00
Saturday Evening Activities 4:00-10:00 PM

For more info contact:
Holly Dommer at hdommer@ahfa.org
Or
Joe Schulz at growingwt@gmail.com
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 2018 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Collected from all 14 AMP Foster Care Youth Councils: Ames, Burlington, Cedar Rapids, Council Bluffs, Davenport, Des Moines/Des Moines Mobile Facilitator, Dubuque, Eldora State Training School, Fort Dodge, Marshalltown, Mason City, Ottumwa, Sioux City and Waterloo

STATE OF IOWA LEGISLATION

1. AMP youth request additional specialized housing options be available for youth; for minors with mental health needs and for all youth transitioning out of foster care. This would include:

   + Emergency shelters are not staffed or trained as treatment centers, creating risky situations for youth with, and without, extreme mental health issues who reside in shelter care. AMP youth request safety, protection and continued family and community connections in our shelters while our peers who need mental health services get their services at treatment facilities with trained staff.

   + Independent housing options for youth, age 18-24, who would benefit from structure and supervision to further prepare them for adulthood.

   + Affordable housing options in safe neighborhoods for youth ages 18-24.

2. AMP youth request the State of Iowa requires all public schools implement a prevention-oriented child sexual abuse program.

   + Thirty one states have already adopted legislation to educate and increase safety for all school-aged minors. Iowa schools need to teach students age-appropriate techniques to recognize child sexual abuse and tell a trusted adult, train school personnel on child sexual abuse and provide parents & guardians the warning signs of child sexual abuse, plus needed assistance, referral or resource information to support sexually abused children and their families.

3. 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.
FEDERAL LEGISLATION

1. AMP youth request minor youth struggling with emotional and behavioral issues should be able to meet with a counselor without parental consent.

   Federal 42 U.F.C. and regulation 42 CFR Part 2 needs to be expanded to allow counselors to meet with minor youth struggling with substance abuse without parental consent. This law needs to be expanded in Iowa to include emotional and behavioral issues.

2. AMP youth request Iowa encourage the employment of transition age foster youth.

   Employer Tax Bill amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include transition age foster care youth as categorically eligible for purposes of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC). Employers may be eligible to receive a credit of up to $2,400 annually for hiring foster youth.

3. AMP youth request Iowa ban conversion/aversion/reparative counseling/therapy for LGBTQ youth.

   The potential risks of conversion/aversion/reparative counseling/therapy are great, including depression, anxiety and self-destructive behavior, since therapist alignment with societal prejudices against homosexuality may reinforce self-hatred already experienced by the youth. Six U.S states and the District of Columbia all have passed legislation banning conversion therapy for minors.
SUITCASE DRIVE FOR YOUTH AGING OUT OF THE SYSTEM

Each suitcase should be filled with the basic items that youth need when moving out on their own. Below is a list of items, created by our older youth, things they needed as they left foster care to begin their journey to adulthood.

New 27 to 30” ROLLING Duffle Bag or Suitcase

Items for filling it with:

- Comforter / Quilt (Twin or Full Size) or “bed in a bag” set
- Sheet set (Twin or Full size)
- Mattress Pad
- Pillow
- Bath & Hand towels/Wash Cloths
- Kitchen Wash Cloths/Towels
- Flashlight/Batteries
- Alarm Clock
- Laundry Bag
- Can Opener
- First Aid Kit
- Bath Mat
- Blanket
- Toiletries: Toothbrush, Toothpaste, Deodorant, Soap

Also needed:

- Laundry Basket (filled with)
- Dirty Clothes Duffle Bag
- Laundry Soap/Dryer Sheets
- Stain Remover (Shout)
- Bleach
- Hangers
- Roll of Quarters

Other items for those moving into their own apartment:

- Dishes
- Glasses
- Silverware
- Pot & Pans
- Cooking Utensils
- Can Opener
- Mixing Bowls
- Toaster
- Coffee Pot
- Kitchen Towels
- Hot Pads
- Baking Pans
- Plastic Storage Containers
- Trash Bags
- Cleaning Products (dish and hand soap, Windex, 409, Pinesol etc.)
- Toilet Brush
- Mop
- Broom
- Garbage Can
- Shower Curtain
- Basic Home Tool Kit
- Toilet paper
- Kleenex
- Paper towels

AMP youth will encourage recipients of each suitcase to attend bi-monthly council meetings by including information about AMP in the suitcases. These meetings are a place to make friends, build supports and learn skills needed by all young adults living on their own.

Thank you in advance for helping us Achieve our Maximum Potential!
Be on the lookout!

Mini-Camps and Mini-Conferences are in the works...The first mini-camp happened at Forest Lake Camp in Bloomfield, IA on October 15th; Variety AMP Camp Reunion had 60 youth in attendance. The second mini-camp will be held in Story City on March 24th, 2018 at the Buckels’ farm. Youth will attend Reggie’s Sleepout in Ames after the camp activities.

Waterloo Future Fest
Tuesday 1.23.18
Stay tuned for flyer!

Nothing About Us, Without Us

Ashley’s Story
Ashley, 17 years old, entered into foster care approximately three years ago. She came into care because she wasn’t following directions and her parents had trouble controlling her. During the three years in care thus far, Ashley has been in two different foster homes.

Similar to other youth in the foster care system, Ashley has experienced both positive and negative things while in care. One negative thing she has dealt with is bullying. Ashley said, “It has always happened in my life” and has gotten somewhat worse since entering the foster care system. Thankfully Ashley feels comfortable talking to her principal as well as her foster parents who have been able to help her. Her friend, Charnell, has also been a great support person by standing up for her and simply listening. In order to further help students dealing with bullying, Ashley would like to see schools teach relaxation techniques and also have a support group for students who have been bullied.

Ashley has also experience some positive things while being in foster care. Prior to entering into care, Ashley’s grades were low but have since gotten much better thanks to receiving the help that she needs. She also has been placed into some general education classes (rather than special education classes) which is something she is very proud of. It took some effort but once she was in the general education classes and focused more on school, it was pretty easy for her. Ashley also feels like she has matured and made several friends through school and AMP.

Being a part of AMP has not only introduced Ashley to many more friends, but has also helped improve her skills. Attending AMP meetings and events has helped her become more comfortable talking in front of groups and has also allowed her to practice telling her story. Her favorite AMP event has been their Christmas party where they went roller skating. Ashley enjoyed this because it gave her a chance to hang out with the many friends she has made through AMP.

Ashley will graduate from high school next year and plans on continuing her education. She would like to attend Iowa Central Community College and someday work with a child care program.
What is AMP?

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 offers leadership opportunities, service learning projects, speaking opportunities, and educational/vocational assistance. Amp also provides the life skills youth need to become self-sufficient, independent adults.

WHO CAN COME?

Any youth between 13 and 21 can attend an AMP meeting if they have been placed out of the home at some point in their life. They could have been in foster care, relative care, residential, group home, or a shelter. If you have any questions, please contact your local facilitator.

GET INVOLVED

Whether you are able to offer an hour, afternoon, or perhaps a lifetime, AMP can benefit from your time, talents and treasures.

- Allow us to speak at your event: AMP youth have a compelling story to share, and would welcome the opportunity to speak at your next luncheon, meeting or event.
- Share a skill, talent or hobby: The majority of youth who reach adulthood while in foster care do not get the chance to develop critical life skills that enable others their age to succeed. Please consider sharing your skills and knowledge with our youth.
- Donate a service or product: Teens leaving foster care have the same needs as others their age, as they move toward living independently. Furnishings, linens, personal hygiene products, cleaning supplies, towels, kitchen supplies, etc. are welcomed by donors to help AMP youth succeed.
- Provide financial support: Visit ampiowa.org to make a secure online donation to AMP’s lead organization, YSS. You can also mail your contribution via check to: YSS 420 Kellogg Avenue, Ames, Iowa 50010. Please make your check out to YSS and note “AMP” in the memo line. To ensure your financial support is allocated to the AMP council of your choice, also include the location in the memo line.

The AMP Partnership of Iowa Foster Care Youth Councils is a collaboration of 10 organizations led by YSS. The Iowa Department of Human Services is the primary grant funder for AMP, with donations and local community support supplementing local youth AMP councils.

The Partnership includes: American Home Finding Association (Ottumwa Council), Children’s Square USA (Council Bluffs & Sioux City Councils), Foundation 2 (Cedar Rapids Council), Four Oaks (Waterloo Council), Francis Lauer, a YSS organization (Mason City Council), Youth Shelter Care of North Central Iowa (Fort Dodge Council), YSS (Ames, Marshalltown, & Davenport Councils), Iowa Homeless Youth Centers, a YSS organization (Des Moines Council), Hillcrest Family Services (Dubuque Council), and Young House Family Services (Burlington Council).

The partnership networks with other stakeholders, including but not limited to, the Iowa Aftercare Services Network, Juvenile Court Services, as well as both governmental and private agency service providers.

For more information contact: Achieving Maximum Potential (AMP)

YSS / 125 South 3rd Street / Ames, Iowa 50010 / P 515.233.2250 EXT. 4575

www.ampiowa.org

Facebook: Achieving Maximum Potential - AMP (Group)