

# ALUMNI VOICES

**In Case You Aren't Already Aware,  
May Is The Month For Foster Care!!**

May Issue | 2022



**"You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think." - Christopher Robin**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### YAB Peer Mentoring Program

We have officially certified Peer Mentors! Let's give a shout-out to our Cohort 1 mentors for their dedication and commitment to the program!! Our Peer Mentors are preparing to assist mentees across the 26 foster care agencies in NYC!

### Alumni Voices

Are you interested in building a career in the medical field? Hosted and facilitated by one of our very own Alumni, Seong H., we invite you to join us on May 18th, 5-6pm, to learn the medical field and how to navigate low and high entry-level careers!

Meeting ID: 539 362 9531  
No password needed!

### 2022 Youth Advisory Board

Spring is finally here and we are ready to enjoy it! The YAB team is hoping to see you in person soon! Let's start getting ready for outdoor events and activities!! Be on the lookout for in-person events, which are coming to you soon!

Follow the YAB team on IG for more info:  
[@yabnewyorkersforchildren](https://www.instagram.com/yabnewyorkersforchildren)

# ADVICE COLUMN

There are many stigmas associated with foster youth. We are often stereotyped as delinquents, troublemakers, rude, aggressive, violent, uneducated, and so much more.

First things first: all foster youth don't act out. Let's get that out the way. But for those who do, people should be more empathetic to their struggles. Imagine experiencing abuse or neglect for several years before someone realizes you need help. Or imagine loving your family, but because they are struggling or ill, you're forcibly removed from your home and placed with strangers. Add on top of that, for some, being separated from siblings that you never see again or only see much later in life. I think that's enough to stress anyone out. Instead of writing foster youth off as "bad seeds," people—especially ACS/social workers and foster parents—should make an effort to connect with us. We need guidance. We need love. We need to feel like more than a number in the system. We need to feel seen and heard and know that we matter. It would make a world of difference; I've seen it firsthand.

The foster care system is a "system." Those who work in it say that they "care." And maybe they do. But taken all together, they're still a system. If a foster kid is lucky enough to get a good team behind them, foster care might be beneficial. But if they get the short end of the stick, with workers and foster parents who don't truly care about them, they can end up somewhere they don't want to be.

There are many things about the foster care system that need to change. Workers need to listen to foster youth and understand them, include them in decisions affecting them, work with them instead of "treating" them, ask them what they need instead of telling them, give them the resources they deserve, stand up for them, stand by them, and never give up on them. I think it's time we find a way to put the care in foster care.

Then maybe we'd all have a shot. We're not stupid. We have struggled. We try. We try HARD. Imagine what we could do if we had the proper guidance and solid support. Foster youth have done amazing things. We've gotten Bachelor's Degrees. Some have gone on to earn Master's and PhDs. Some famous foster kids include Tiffany Haddish, Ice-T, and Richard Pryor, to name a few. We have so much potential. But it takes a caring person to cultivate that potential and help the youth self-actualize.

It can be easy to internalize all the stigmas and stereotypes associated with being in foster care. But understand that you are beautiful, powerful, intelligent, talented, and worthy. Being currently or formerly in foster care does not take those qualities away from you. I'm rooting for all of us.

# RESOURCE CENTER



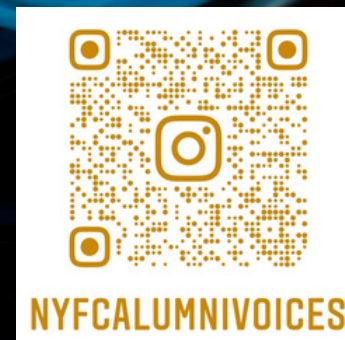
As the summer is slowly approaching, we know that parents are preparing to search for summer day camps! If you have little one in grades K-8, the DOE Summer Rising Application is now open!

Summer Rising is a DOE day camp dedicated to fun activities, trips and learning for your child during the summer! Hours vary by site, so be sure to seek out your options. This application and program is at no cost to parents.

Be sure to apply as soon as possible!

Here is the link to the application:  
<https://www.nycenet.edu/surveys/summerrising>

Follow us on IG!



Have any feedback for the Alumni Voices Newsletter or NYFC?  
[NYFCAlumniVoices@NewYorkersForChildren.org](mailto:NYFCAlumniVoices@NewYorkersForChildren.org)