



**Office of Children's Services
Independent Living Program**

Request for Chafee Independent Living Program Funds

In order to provide Chafee funding for youth in tribal custody, the Office of Children's Services (OCS) is asking that tribal organizations share information with the Regional Independent Living Specialists (RILS). This will allow the RILS to enter the information into ORCA, the database used by OCS for payment. Youth must be in Tribal custody and out-of-home placement on or after their 16th birthday; and not yet reached the age of 21. This includes youth who, after attaining 16 years of age, left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption. This requirement was developed because Chafee funding for Alaska is relatively small and is allocated to the states based on child population.

Independent Living Funds

Two different funds exist for Chafee funding. Independent Living funds can be used for youth currently in custody and alumni of the foster care system. The funds are used to aid youth in their transition from foster care to adulthood. Although there is some flexibility for these funds, OCS has tried to focus the spending on education, employment, extra-curricular activities, and cultural events. For youth who do not leave custody until their eighteenth birthday, funding is also available to assist in the cost of housing.

Education and Training Vouchers

Education and Training Vouchers are available to assist youth in obtaining post-secondary education. ETF funds can be used for college or approved vocational training, but cannot exceed \$5,000 per calendar year. To obtain these funds, a youth or alumni must have either a high school diploma or a GED.

