CONNECTIONS supports the collection of data for several federal systems including the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS), the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) and the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD). NYTD tracks independent living (IL) services planned for and provided to youth transitioning from foster care to self-sufficiency to assess each state's performance in operating their IL programs.

This tip sheet, targeted for foster care workers, addresses how the following data elements should be entered in CONNECTIONS:

- *Tribal membership/eligibility for membership*
- *Educational level*
- *Information on independent living skills services*
- *Juvenile Delinquency History*

Note: All NYTD data elements must be entered while the Family Services Stage (FSS) is open.

Reporting Tribal Membership/Eligibility

NYTD requires that tribal membership or eligibility for tribal membership be reported for (1) all children in foster care, (2) their biological parents and (3) foster parents. For children and bio parents, this data should be recorded as early in the child's placement as possible on the **Addit. Detail** tab on the **Person List** window in the Family Services Stage (FSS). For foster parents, this information is recorded in the FAD stage.

As of January, 2019, it is no longer necessary to enter tribal affiliation information in the Identifiers tab.

If it is unknown whether a person is a member/eligible to be a member of a tribe, caseworkers should assume for the purpose of reporting this data that they are not. If it is later learned that the person is a member or is eligible for membership in a federally recognized or NYS recognized tribe, the data in CONNECTIONS should be promptly updated.

Step-by-Step: Reporting Tribal Member/Eligibility

1. With the stage selected on your workload, click the **Person List** link in the navigation pane.

2. Select the person in the Person List.

3. Select the **Addit. Detail** tab.
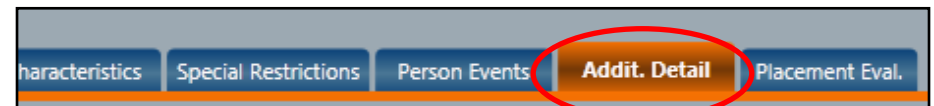
4. Using the dropdown menu, select an answer to the question, "Member of or eligible for membership in a federally recognized tribe?"

5. Using the dropdown menu, select an answer to the question, "Member of or eligible for membership in a NYS recognized Indian tribe?"

6. If either is answered as "Yes", use the dropdown menu to select the **Region** and **Tribe**.

7. If the specific tribe is not listed, it may be manually entered in the **Other** field.

    If the person is a member of or eligible for membership in more than one tribe, information may be entered for a second Region and Tribe in the fields to the right.

8. Click the **Save** or **Save & Close** button.

If additional information about tribal membership or eligibility is learned later on, the Tribal Affiliation fields may be updated and saved as needed.

Reporting Educational Level of a Foster Child

OCFS policy requires education information to be reported for each child in Foster Care, up to age 21, and recommends it be recorded for children placed in the direct custody of a relative or other suitable person under Article 10 of the Family Court Act.

Education information is entered on the **Education** window in the Family Services Stage (FSS).

⚠️ ***Education information should be entered by October 1st of each academic year and updated as needed.***

Step-by-Step: Reporting Education Information (required for all Foster Children)

1. With the FSS stage selected on your workload, click the **Education** link in the navigation pane.

2. Select the child from the Child List grid.
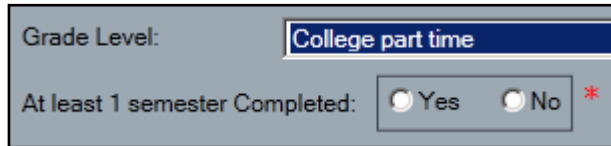

3. Click the **New** button to add a new record.

    School information fields open below.

4. Complete the required fields and click the **Save** or **Save & Close** button.

For NYTD reporting purposes:

*   You <u>MUST</u> choose a grade level (not "Ungraded" or "Unknown"). If the child is in an ungraded program, choose the closest grade applicable.

*   If the grade chosen is "Equivalency Diploma" or "Left high school - no diploma", the **Last Grade Completed** field will also be required.

*   If the grade chosen is "College part time" or "College full

time", an answer to the **At least 1 semester Completed** question will be required.

Grade Level: College part time

At least 1 semester Completed: ○ Yes ○ No *

The Education window is intended to provide a historical summary for each child in care. **When a child transfers between schools within the same academic year, each school should be recorded as a separate (new) entry.**

Step-by-Step: Modifying Education Information

1. With the FSS stage selected on your workload, click the **Education** link in the navigation pane.

2. Select the record you wish to modify from the History Grid.

   The school information fields display.

3. Update fields as needed.

4. Click the **Save** or **Save & Close** button.

Note: Additional information on completing the Education window can be found in the FSS Modernization Phase 2 - Education Module Quick Start Guide (June 2015), located on the Implementation page of the CONNECTIONS website at: http://ocfs.ny.gov/connect/imp/

Reporting Services Needed in a FASP or Plan Amendment

Both NYTD and NCANDS require the collection of data on services offered, planned, provided and/or completed for youth in care. NYTD specifically tracks independent living services for youth who are between ages 14 and 21.

The following values (with the "IL" prefix) are available in the Services Needed window as part of a FASP or Plan Amendment:

- IL – Independent living needs assessment
- IL – Academic support
- IL – Post-secondary educational support
- IL – Career preparation
- IL – Employment programs or vocational training
- IL – Budget and financial management
- IL – Housing education and home management training
- IL – Health education and risk prevention
- IL – Family Support/Healthy Marriage Education
- IL – Mentoring
- IL – Supervised independent living
- IL – Room and board financial assistance
- IL – Education financial assistance
- IL – Other financial assistance

Caseworkers should report the offering or provision of any of the independent living services listed above that apply to a child as soon as practical - either in the next due FASP or in a Plan Amendment.

As the status of already offered services change (e.g., from Planned to Provided Direct) or as new services are offered, provided, or completed, these changes should be reflected in subsequent FASPs or Plan Amendments.
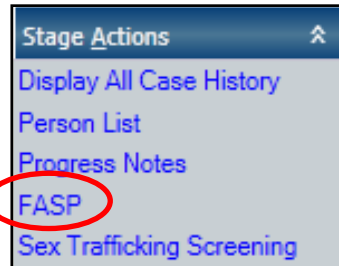
The status, *"Provided Direct"* means services provided directly by a district.

Services provided by an agency are *"Provided Purchased".*

Step-by-Step: Reporting Independent Living Services

1. With the FSS stage selected on your workload, click the **FASP** link in the navigation pane.

   Stage Actions
   Display All Case History
   Person List
   Progress Notes
   FASP
   Sex Trafficking Screening

2. Launch the FASP or Plan Amendment, if not already launched.
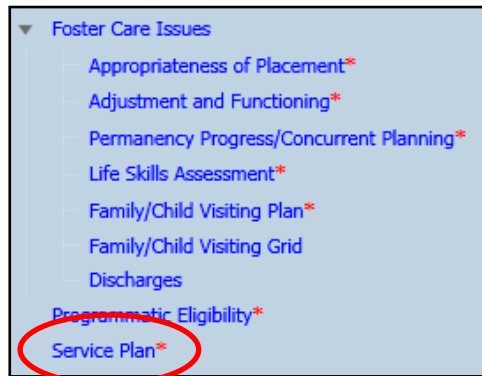
3. On the FASP tree, select **Service Plan**.

   ▼ Foster Care Issues
   Appropriateness of Placement*
   Adjustment and Functioning*
   Permanency Progress/Concurrent Planning*
   Life Skills Assessment*
   Family/Child Visiting Plan*
   Family/Child Visiting Grid
   Discharges
   Programmatic Eligibility*
   Service Plan*

   Options
   View All
   Family Involvement
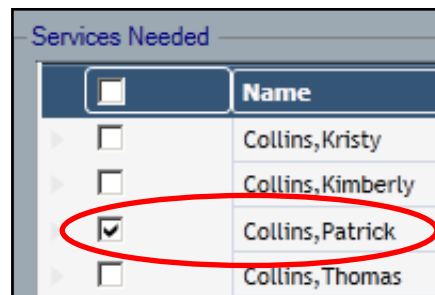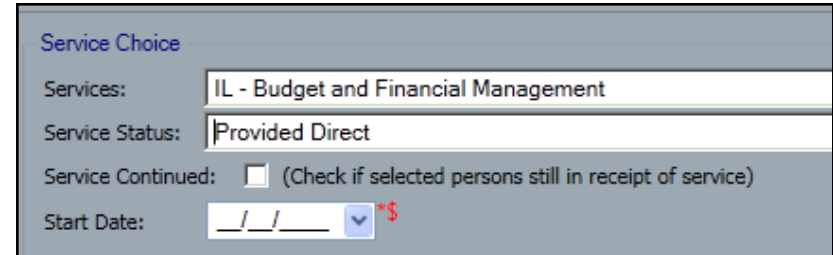   Services Needed
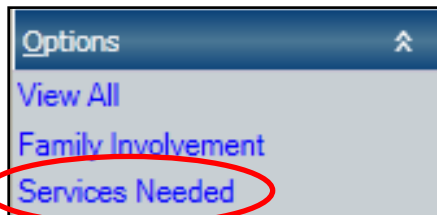
4. On the *Service Plan* window, click the **Services Needed** link in the navigation pane.

5. Select the family member(s) needing a particular service by checking their checkbox(es).

   Services Needed
	Name
☐	Collins,Kristy
☐	Collins,Kimberly
☑	Collins,Patrick
☐	Collins,Thomas

6. In the Service Choice fields, select a **Service** and a **Service Status**.

   Service Choice
   Services: IL - Budget and Financial Management
   Service Status: Provided Direct
   Service Continued: ☐ (Check if selected persons still in receipt of service)
   Start Date: __/__/____ ▾ *$

7. If the service selected has a status of *Provided Direct*, or *Provided Purchased*, a **Start Date** is also required. A start date may be back-dated to reflect the actual start of the service, but cannot be entered as a future date.

   Note: When the Service Status is changed to *Completed* or *Discontinued*, an **End Date** is required. If a Start Date has not been previously entered, that will also be required.

8. If a service is being continued from one FASP or Plan Amendment to the next, check the **Services Continued** checkbox.

9. Click the **Add** button.
   The service is added to the Services Selected grid.

   Services Selected
	Name	Age	Tracked Child	Service
☐	Collins,Patrick	16	Y	IL - Academic Support
☐	Collins,Patrick	16	Y	IL - Career Preparation

   The **Initial Date**, which cannot be changed, is the date the service was first added in CONNECTIONS .

   Subsequent modifications will be reflected in the **Date Last Modified** column.

 | Initial Date | Date Last Modified |
   |---|---|
   | | |
   | 01/24/2019 | 01/24/2019 |
   | 01/24/2019 | 01/24/2019 |

10. Click the **Save** button.

11. Repeat for each service to be planned for or provided to each child receiving independent living services.
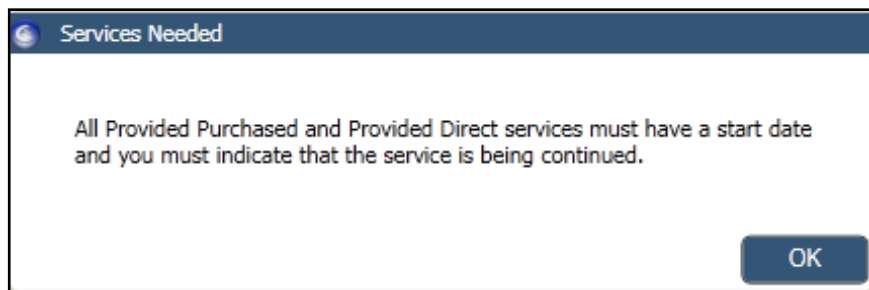
12. Click the **Save** button after each addition.

13. Click the **Complete** checkbox (located on the left below the Services Needed grid), if required.
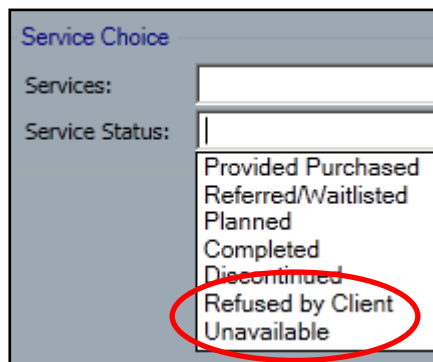
☐ Complete

The Services Needed window of a FASP or Plan Amendment is available to all districts, but some have made its completion system required. For those districts, the **Complete** checkbox must be checked to pass system edits.
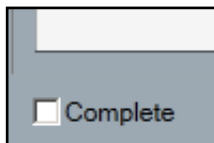
For districts which require completion of this window, a pop-up message will display if any of the services do not have a Start Date or the Service Continued checkbox is not selected.

Services Needed

All Provided Purchased and Provided Direct services must have a start date and you must indicate that the service is being continued.

OK

If a service is offered but refused, or if a needed service is unavailable, it is important to document this by selecting the service in the Services field and choosing the status of "Refused by Client" or "Unavailable", as appropriate.

Service Choice

Services:

Service Status:

Provided Purchased
Referred/Waitlisted
Planned
Completed
Discontinued
Refused by Client
Unavailable
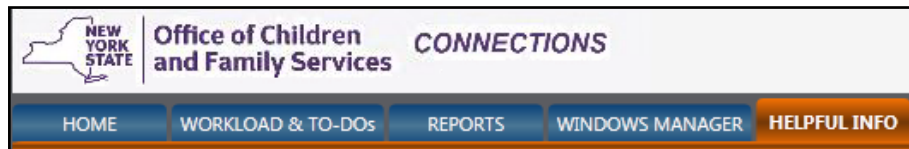
Reporting Juvenile Delinquency History

In January 2019, a new Child Strengths, Needs and Risks scale was added to the FASP to collect NYTD required information on a child's Juvenile Delinquency history. ***This new scale is required for children of any age.***

a. Youth never adjudicated a Juvenile Delinquent in any state

b. Youth ever adjudicated a Juvenile Delinquent in NYS

c. Youth ever adjudicated a Juvenile Delinquent in another state

d. Youth adjudicated a Juvenile Delinquent in both NYS and another state

As with other portions of the Strengths, Needs and Risks scales, this scale must be completed to pass system edits and submit the FASP for approval.

Resources

- CONNECTIONS Job Aids and Tip Sheets:
  http://ocfs.ny.gov/connect/jobaides/jobaides.asp
  Or see the Helpful Info tab within CONNECTIONS

NEW YORK STATE Office of Children and Family Services   CONNECTIONS

HOME   WORKLOAD & TO-DOs   REPORTS   WINDOWS MANAGER   **HELPFUL INFO**

- CONNECTIONS Regional Implementation Staff:
  http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/contact.asp
- CONNECTIONS Application Help Mailbox:
  ocfs.sm.conn_app@ocfs.ny.gov
  (NOTE: address contains an underline)

*A Helpdesk ticket is now required before sending requests to the Triage Unit. This can be acquired by emailing **FixIt@its.ny.gov**.*

ITS Enterprise Service Desk
1-844-891-1786