NEW YORK STATE | Office of Children and Family Services

CONNECTIONS Tip Sheet

National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) Reporting Requirements

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 is for foster care workers who are responsible for completing the following requirements in CONNECTIONS:

- Reporting Tribal Membership/Affiliation
- Reporting Educational Level of a Foster Child
- Reporting Independent Living Services Needed in a Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP) or Plan Amendment
- Reporting Juvenile Delinquency History

Note: All NYTD data elements must be entered while the Family Services Stage (FSS) or Foster and/or Adoptive Home Development (FAD) is open.

Reporting Tribal Membership/Affiliation

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 biological parents, this data should be recorded as early in the child's placement as possible on the **Addit.** (Additional) **Detail** tab on the *Person List* window in the Family Services Stage (FSS). For foster parents, this information is recorded on the **Addit. Detail** tab on the *Person List* window in the FAD stage.

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.

For step-by-step instructions on how to report tribal membership, continue to the next page of this Tip Sheet.

Step-by-Step: Reporting Tribal Membership

1 With the applicable stage (FSS or FAD) selected on your workload, click the **Person List** link in the **NAVIGATION PANE**.
The Person List window displays.

2 Select the person in the Person List.
*The **Person Info Detail** sub-tab displays.*

3 Select the **Addit. Detail** tab.
*The **Addit. Detail** tab displays.*

4 In the **Addit. Detail** tab, scroll down to the **Tribal Membership** section. The following three questions display:

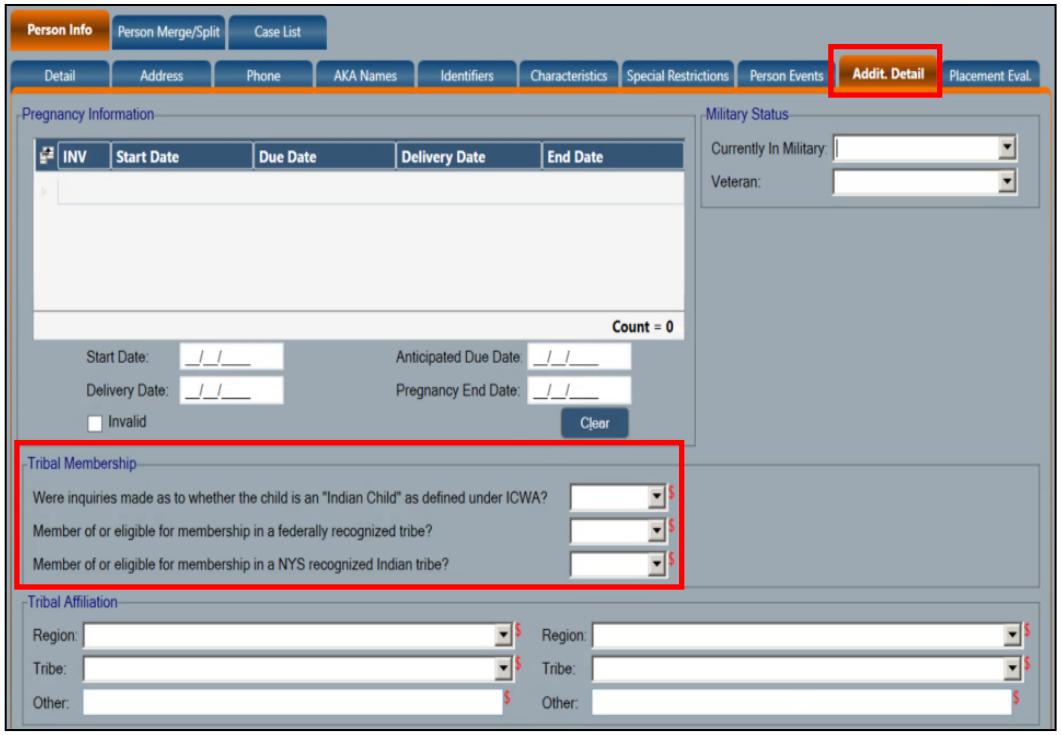
- Were inquiries made as to whether the child is an "Indian Child" as defined under ICWA (Indian Child Welfare Act)? Drop-down selections: "Yes" or "No"
- Member of or eligible for membership in a federally recognized tribe? Drop-down selections: "No," "Yes," "Pending," or "Unknown"
- Member of or eligible for membership in a NYS (New York State) recognized Indian tribe? Drop-down selections: "No," "Yes," "Pending," or "Unknown"

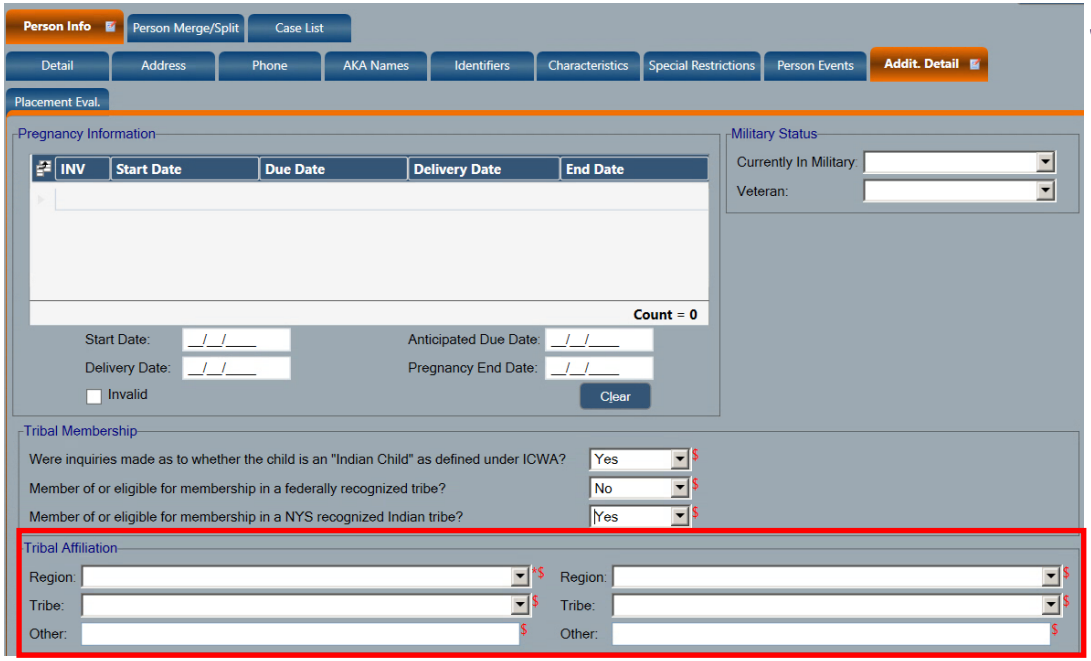
5 Using the drop-down menu, select an answer to the question, "Were inquiries made as to whether the child is an "Indian Child" as defined under ICWA?"

6 Using the drop-down menu, select an answer to the question, "Member of or eligible for membership in a federally recognized tribe?"
*If the selection is "Yes," in the **Tribal Affiliation** section, the **Region** field is required.*

7 Using the drop-down menu, select an answer to the question, "Member of or eligible for membership in a NYS recognized Indian tribe?"
*If the selection is "Yes," in the **Tribal Affiliation** section, the **Region** field is required.*

8 If "No" was selected for all three questions, click the **Save** or **Save & Close** button located on the bottom right of the window. If "Yes" was selected, complete the **Tribal Affiliation** section.





Step-by-Step: Reporting Tribal Affiliation

1. If you answer "Yes" to either the second or third Tribal Membership questions (or both), make a selection from the left **Region** drop-down menu. **Note:** An asterisk will display next to the **Region** drop-down menu.
   *The **Tribe** field is required.*
2. Click the **Tribe** drop-down menu on the left and make a selection.
   *The **Save & Close** and **Save** buttons enable.*
3. Click the **Save** or **Save & Close** button located on the bottom right of the window.

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

If the specific region or tribe you need to enter is not listed from the **Region** and **Tribe** drop-down menus, then select "Other" and manually enter the region or tribe in the leftmost **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.

For more information about reporting tribal membership or reporting tribal affiliation, please speak with your supervisor or Staff Development Coordinator about attending the following CONNECTIONS training courses:

- *CONNECTIONS Case Management for Child Welfare Workers* or *Case Management in CONNECTIONS for the Child Welfare Foundations Program*
- *CONNECTIONS: Maintaining Person and Home Information in a Foster and/or Adoptive Home Development (FAD) Stage (WebEx)*
- *NYC Integrated Core CONNECTIONS Training (Satterwhite)*
- *Preventive Case Management in CONNECTIONS for NYC*
- *Updating Person Demographic Information in CONNECTIONS (Webex)*

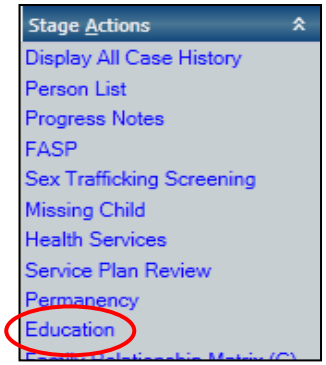
Reporting Educational Level of a Foster Child

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).

For children in foster care at the start of the school year, their education information should be recorded by October 1 each year. For children placed during the school year, information should be recorded as soon as possible. A new entry needs to be recorded for a child who transfers schools within the same school year.

Step-by-Step: Reporting Educational Level of a Foster Child

1 From the **My Workload** tab, select the FSS stage and click the **Education** link in the **NAVIGATION PANE**.
*The **Education** window displays.*



2 Select the child from the **Child List** grid.
*The **History Grid** displays.*

3 Click the **New** button.
School information fields enable below.

4 Select the **Not Enrolled In School** checkbox if the child is not enrolled in school.
*The **School** and **School Contact Person** sections disable. Proceed to step 9. If the child is enrolled in school, proceed to step 5.*

5 Record the school in the **School** field.
*An asterisk displays next to the **Street** field indicating it is required once you enter text in the **School** field.*

6 In the **Address** section, record the address information.
*Once a street is recorded in the **Address** section, the asterisk will be removed. The **Validate** button enables.*

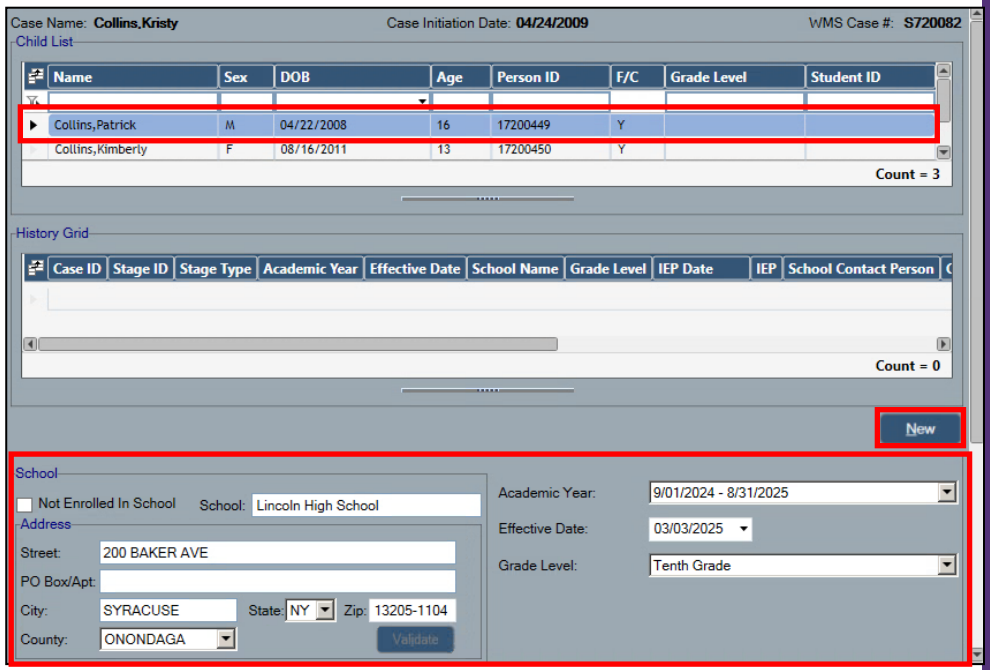
7 Click the **Validate** button.
The Address Validation window message displays.

8 Click the **Accept** button to accept the validated address, if appropriate.

9 In the **Academic Year** field, click the drop-down arrow to select the applicable academic year.

10 Click the drop-down arrow in the **Effective Date** field and select the effective date.

11 Click the drop-down arrow in the **Grade Level** field and select the grade level.



For NYTD reporting purposes:

- You MUST 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 display and be required.
- If the grade chosen is "College part time" or "College full time," an answer to the **At least 1 semester Completed** (**Yes**/**No** radio buttons) question will display and be required.

Step-by-Step: Reporting Educational Level of a Foster Child (Continued)

12 In the **School Contact Person** section, click in the **First Name** field and record the first name of the school contact.

13 Click in the **Last Name** field and record the last name of the school contact.

14 Click in the **Phone** field and record the contact person's phone number.

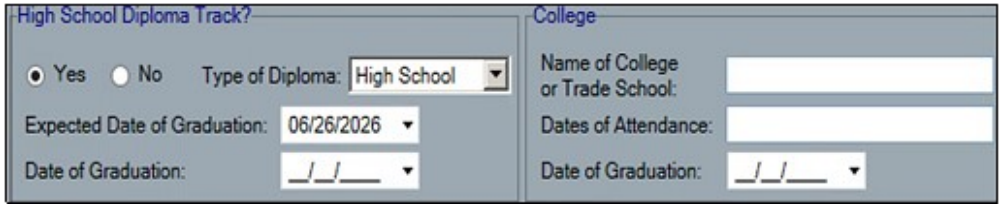
15 Click in the **Title** field and record the title of the school contact person.

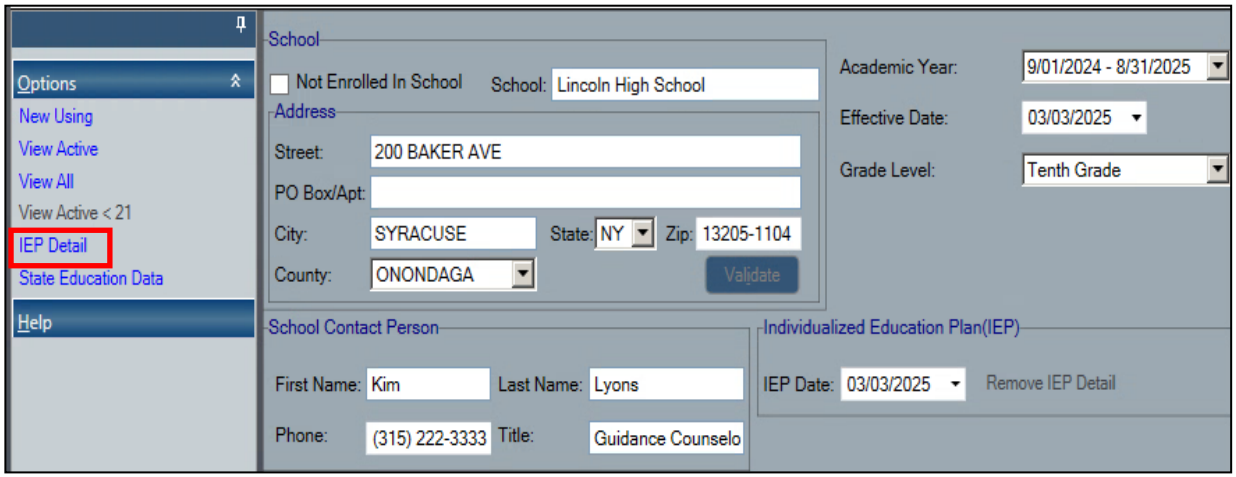
16 In the **Individualized Education Plan(IEP)** section, click the drop-down arrow in the **IEP Date** field and record the date of the IEP, if applicable. *If a date is recorded, the **IEP Detail** link will enable in the **NAVIGATION PANE**. Refer to page 6, Step-by-Step: Recording IEP Detail Information.*

17 In the **High School Diploma Track?** section, click the **Yes** or **No** radio button to indicate if the child plans to graduate from high school. *If "Yes" is selected the Type of Diploma field prefills with "High School." The Type of Diploma drop-down arrow can be selected to change the response to "GED (General Educational Development)."*
*If "Yes" is selected, the **Expected Date of Graduation** field is enabled. The fields in the **High School Diploma Track?** section are only enabled if the child is between the ages of 13 and 21.*

18 If "Yes" was selected, click the drop-down arrow in the **Expected Date of Graduation** field and record the expected date of graduation.

19 If "No" was selected and the child is in college or trade school, complete the **College** section.





Step-by-Step: Reporting Educational Level of a Foster Child (Continued)

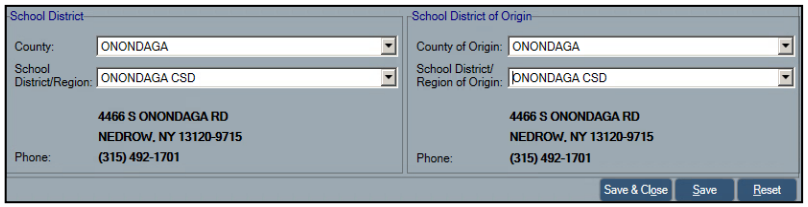
20 In the **School District** section, click the **County** field drop-down arrow to select the school district's county.
*The **School District/Region** field enables.*

21 Click the **School District/Region** drop-down arrow and select the school district/region.
*The School District/Region's address and phone number display under the **School District/Region** field.*

22 In the **School District of Origin** section, click the **County of Origin** drop-down arrow to select the county of origin.
*The **School District/Region of Origin** field enables.*

23 Click the **School District/Region of Origin** drop-down arrow to select the school district/region of origin.
*The School District/Region of Origin's address and phone number display under the **School District/Region of Origin** field.*

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



Step-by-Step: Recording IEP Detail Information

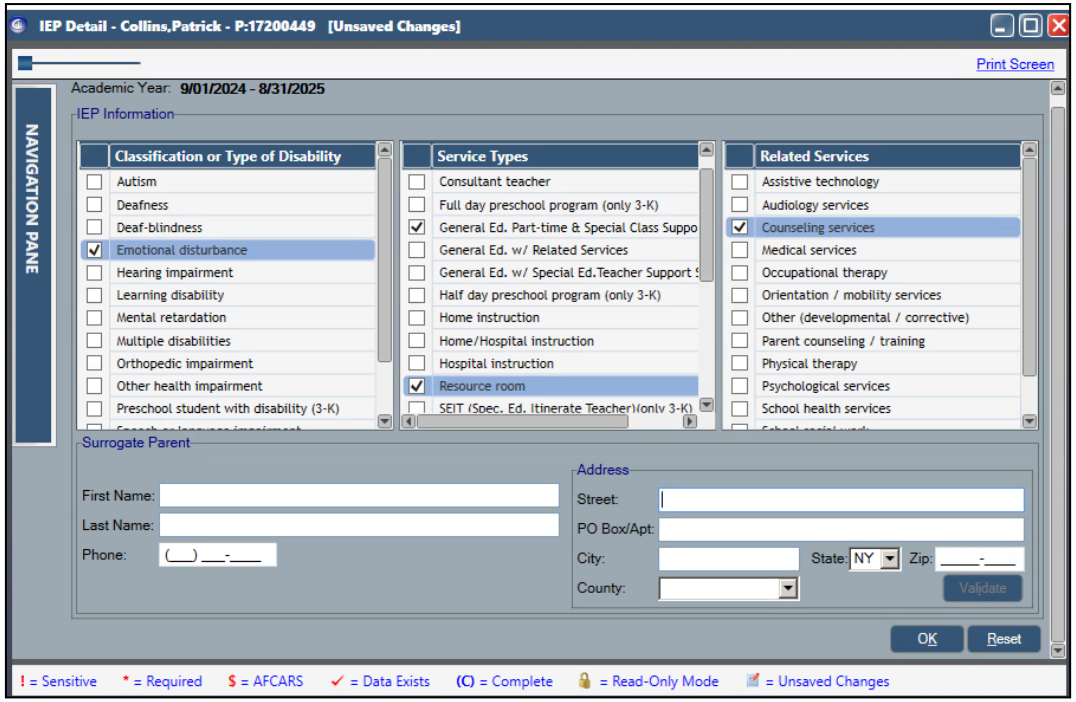
The *IEP Detail* window supports the recording and maintaining of basic information pulled from a child's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

1 In the *Education* window, click the **IEP Detail** link in the **NAVIGATION PANE**.
The IEP Detail window displays.

2 In the **Classification or Type of Disability** grid, select the applicable classification or type of disability. Select all that are applicable; more than one can be selected.

3 In the **Service Types** grid, select the applicable service type(s).

4 In the **Related Services** grid, select the applicable related service(s).



Step-by-Step: Recording IEP Detail Information (Continued)

5 If applicable, in the **Surrogate Parent** section, click in the **First Name** field and record the first name of the surrogate. Refer to the content box to the right for a definition of a surrogate parent.

6 Click in the **Last Name** field and record the last name of the surrogate parent.

7 Click in the **Phone** field and record the phone number of the surrogate parent.

8 In the **Address** section, click in the **Street** field and record the street of the surrogate parent.
*The **Validate** button enables.*

9 Click in the **City** field and record the city of the surrogate parent.

10 Click the **Validate** button.
The Address Validation window message displays.

11 Click the **Accept** button to accept the validated address, if appropriate.

12 Click the **OK** button.
*The Education Detail window displays. A checkmark displays next to the **IEP Detail** link in the **NAVIGATION PANE**. The following message displays in the IEP section: "Remove IEP Detail." Selecting the **Remove IEP Detail** link clears selections recorded on the IEP Detail window.*

For more information about recording education information, please speak with your supervisor or Staff Development Coordinator about attending *Recording Education in CONNECTIONS (HSLC web)*.

A surrogate parent is a person appointed to act in the place of parents or guardians when:

- a student's parents or guardians are not known, or
- after reasonable efforts, the Board of Education cannot discover the whereabouts of a parent, or
- the student is an unaccompanied homeless youth, or
- the student is a ward of the state and does not have a parent who meets the definition in Section 200.1, Subdivision ii, of the New York State Education Department (NYSED) regulations, or
- the rights of the parent to make educational decisions have been subrogated by a judge in accordance with state law.

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.** Multiple entries may exist for a child in the same year.

Step-by-Step: Modifying Education Information

1 On the **My Workload** tab, select the FSS stage and click the **Education** link in the **NAVIGATION PANE**.
The Education window displays.

2 Select the child from the **Child List** grid.
*The **History Grid** displays.*

3 Select the record you wish to modify from the **History Grid**.
The school information fields display.

4 Update fields as needed. Modifying education information will not create a new entry.

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

Reporting Independent Living Services Needed in a Family Assessment and Service Plan (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 (in the **Service Choice** section under the **Services** drop-down menu) 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

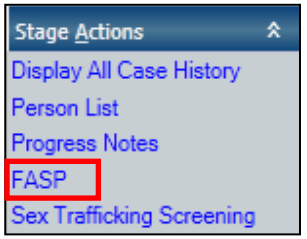
Caseworkers should report the offering or provision of any of the independent living services that apply to a child as soon as is practical - either in the next due FASP or in a Plan Amendment.

As the status of already-offered services changes (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"*** indicates that services are provided directly by a district. Services provided by an agency are ***"Provided Purchased."***

Step-by-Step: Reporting Independent Living Services

1 On the **My Workload** tab, select the FSS stage and click the **FASP** link in the **NAVIGATION PANE**.
The Family Assessment and Service Plan window displays.



2 In the **FASP Tree**, select the **Service Plan** node.
The Service Plan window displays.

If the FASP or Plan Amendment is not launched, refer to the *CONNECTIONS Tip Sheet: The Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP)* available on the CONNECTIONS Internet and intranet.

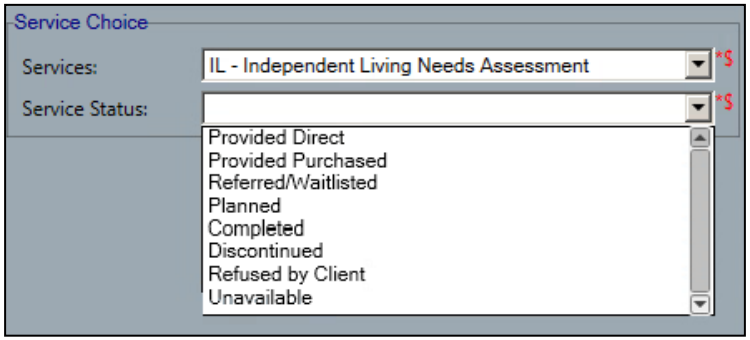
3 On the *Service Plan* window, click the **Services Needed** link in the **NAVIGATION PANE**.
The Services Needed window displays.

Step-by-Step: Reporting Independent Living Services (Continued)

4 Select the applicable tracked child(ren) needing services in the **Services Needed** grid.

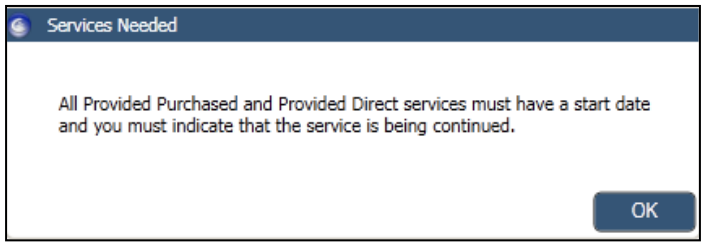
5 In the **Service Choice** section, click the **Services** drop-down arrow and select the applicable independent living service. Refer to page 8 for the list of available independent living services.

6 Click the **Service Status** drop-down arrow and select the applicable status from the menu.

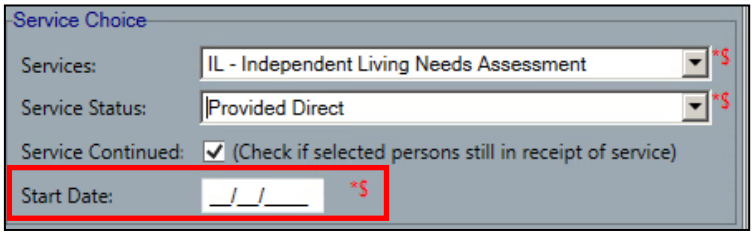


7 Select the **Service Continued** checkbox.
For districts which require completion of this window, all provided direct and provided purchased services must indicate that service is being continued with the exception of Case Management Services for tracked children.

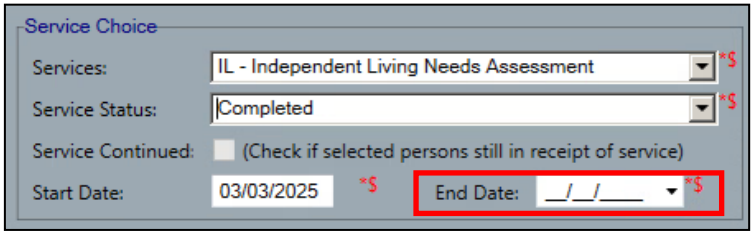
For districts which require completion of this window (refer to page 10 [step 13] for more information), a pop-up message will display if any of the services do not have a start date or if the **Service Continued** checkbox is not selected.



8 In the **Start Date** field, record the start date for the independent living service. A start date may be back-dated to reflect the actual start of the service.
*The **Add** button enables.*



When the **Service Status** is changed to "Completed" or "Discontinued," the **End Date** field is required. If a start date has not been previously entered, the **Start Date** field will also be required. **Note:** The **Services Continued** checkbox will be deselected and will be not be modifiable.



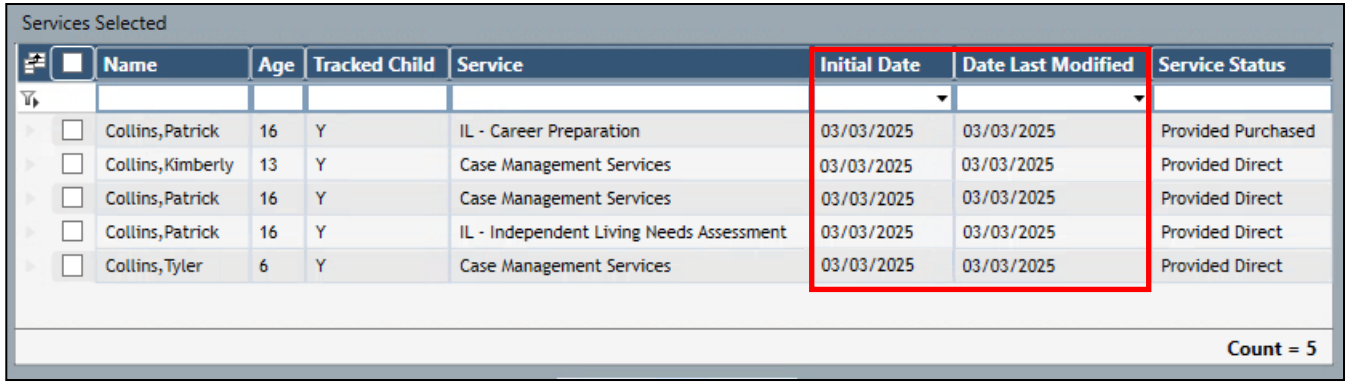
If a service is offered but refused, or if a needed service is unavailable, it is important to document this by selecting the service in the **Services** field and choosing the status of "Refused by Client" or "Unavailable," as appropriate.

9 Click the **Add** button located on the bottom right of the window.
*The service is added to the **Services Selected** grid.*

Note: Repeat Steps 4 - 9 to add additional services.

Step-by-Step: Reporting Independent Living Services (Continued)

The **Initial Date** column, 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.



Services Selected

Name	Age	Tracked Child	Service	Initial Date	Date Last Modified	Service Status
Collins,Patrick	16	Y	IL - Career Preparation	03/03/2025	03/03/2025	Provided Purchased
Collins,Kimberly	13	Y	Case Management Services	03/03/2025	03/03/2025	Provided Direct
Collins,Patrick	16	Y	Case Management Services	03/03/2025	03/03/2025	Provided Direct
Collins,Patrick	16	Y	IL - Independent Living Needs Assessment	03/03/2025	03/03/2025	Provided Direct
Collins,Tyler	6	Y	Case Management Services	03/03/2025	03/03/2025	Provided Direct

Count = 5

10 Click the **Save** button.

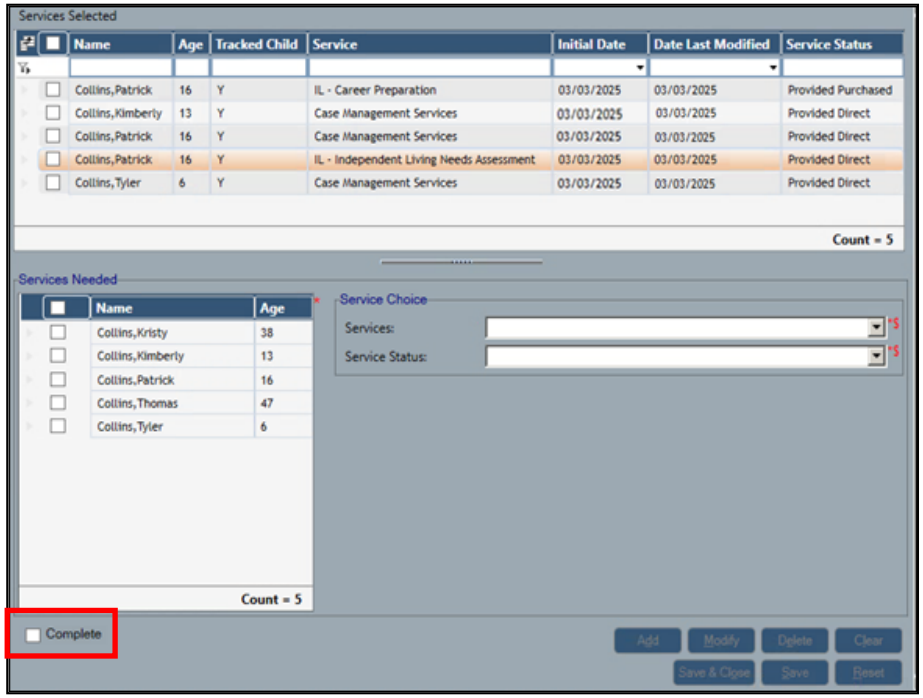
11 Repeat for each service to be planned for or provided to each tracked child receiving independent living services.

12 Click the **Save** button after each addition.

13 Select the **Complete** checkbox (located on the left below the **Services Needed** grid) to acknowledge the window is complete.

If the district requires completion of the *Services Needed* window, then you must record any appropriate services for all tracked children and then select the **Complete** checkbox. Consult your supervisor if you have questions about whether completing the *Services Needed* window is required.

If the district does not require completion of the *Services Needed* window, you may record services, however "Independent Living Skills" must be recorded for all children age 14 or older as part of the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) requirements. In any case, if any information is recorded on the *Services Needed* window, the **Complete** checkbox must be selected.

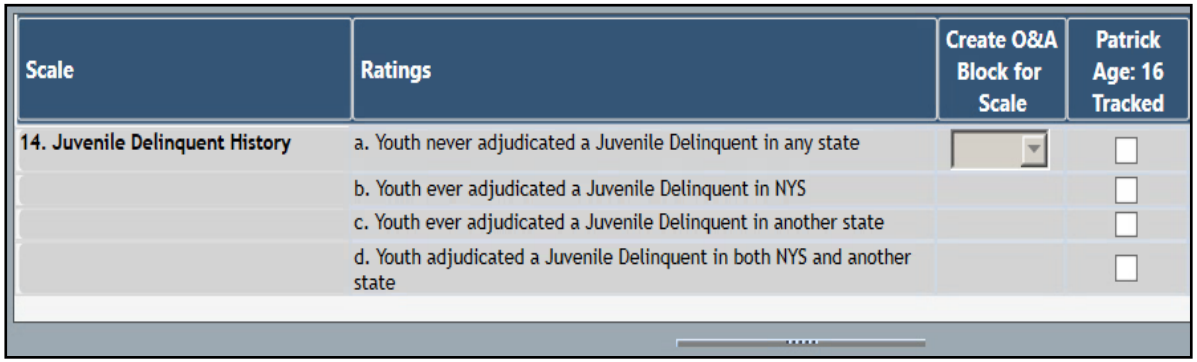


For more information about Reporting Services Needed in a FASP or Plan Amendment, please speak with your supervisor or Staff Development Coordinator about attending the following CONNECTIONS training courses:

- *CONNECTIONS Case Management for Child Welfare Workers* or *Case Management in CONNECTIONS for the Child Welfare Foundations Program*
- *NYC Integrated Core CONNECTIONS Training (Satterwhite)*
- *Preventive Case Management in CONNECTIONS for NYC*

Reporting Juvenile Delinquency History

The Child Strengths, Needs and Risks scale 14 in the FASP collects NYTD required information on a child's juvenile delinquency history. The Strengths, Needs and Risks scales are grouped into three sub-categories: Family, Parent/Caretaker, and Child scales. Scale responses help both the worker and the family determine areas of concern that they may need to target for change and areas of strength that help maintain family functioning. This information factors into the Assessment Analysis and helps to shape the Service Plan.



Scale	Ratings	Create O&A Block for Scale	Patrick Age: 16 Tracked
14. Juvenile Delinquent History	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		

Step-by-Step: Completing the Child Scales

1 On the **My Workload** tab, select the FSS stage and click the **FASP** link in the **NAVIGATION PANE**.
The Family Assessment and Service Plan window displays.

2 In the **FASP Tree**, select the **Child** sub-node.
The Child Strengths, Needs and Risks window displays.

3 Select the checkbox that corresponds to the rating for scales 1-14. *Each scale in the FASP presents four options. These options display descriptions of the status of the area being assessed, ranging from a strength/attribute (a) to an area of considerable need (d).*

4 Click the **Save & Close** or **Save** button located on the lower right of the window.

For more information about completing the Strengths, Needs and Risks scales in a FASP or Plan Amendment, please speak with your supervisor or Staff Development Coordinator about attending the following CONNECTIONS training courses:

- *CONNECTIONS Case Management for Child Welfare Workers* or *Case Management in CONNECTIONS for the Child Welfare Foundations Program*
- *NYC Integrated Core CONNECTIONS Training (Satterwhite)*
- *Preventive Case Management in CONNECTIONS for NYC*

Resources

CONNECTIONS Training Courses Referenced in this Tip Sheet

- *CONNECTIONS Case Management for Child Welfare Workers* and *Case Management in CONNECTIONS for the Child Welfare Foundations Program*
- *CONNECTIONS: Maintaining Person and Home Information in a Foster and/or Adoptive Home Development (FAD) Stage (WebEx)*
- *NYC Integrated Core CONNECTIONS Training (Satterwhite)*
- *Preventive Case Management in CONNECTIONS for NYC*
- *Recording Education in CONNECTIONS (HSLC web)*
- *Updating Person Demographic Information in CONNECTIONS (Webex)*

CONNECTIONS Resources

- **HELPFUL INFO tab in CONNECTIONS**
- **OCFS CONNECTIONS Internet Site**: https://ocfs.ny.gov/connect/
- **OCFS CONNECTIONS intranet Site**: https://intranet.ocfs.ny.gov/connect/
- **OCFS Data Warehouse**: https://ocfs.ny.gov/connect/data-warehouse/

CONNECTIONS Assistance

- **OCFS Regional Implementation Staff** (Contact first BEFORE putting in a ticket with the ITS Service Desk.)

  On the Internet: https://ocfs.ny.gov/connect/contact.php

  On the intranet: https://intranet.ocfs.ny.gov/connect/contact.php

- **ITS Service Desk**

  Phone: 1-844-891-1786

  Email: fixit@its.ny.gov

  Chat: https://chat.its.ny.gov

- **Application Help Mailbox**
  Note: You are required to contact the ITS Service Desk and receive a ticket number prior to contacting the Application Help Mailbox.

  Email: ocfs.sm.conn_app@ocfs.ny.gov

- **CONNECTIONS General Mailbox**: This address can be used to ask questions, make comments, and leave suggestions.

  Email: connectionsi@ocfs.ny.gov