

Added Chance Employment Program

The Added Chance Career Center gives job readiness and preparation to over 250 youth in Illinois foster care and places nearly 150 in employment each year



Dedicated to the simple proposition that employment programs should help participants find real jobs for their participants, ACP has been designed and developed over the past 18 years to work specifically and exclusively with youth in DCFS care, helping them find unsubsidized employment and develop employment seeking skills necessary for life after emancipation.

Added Chance is a fast-paced, program that functions much like an adult employment, or outplacement, agency for youth in DCFS care, where:

- Participants are enrolled with a one-half day orientation.
- Followed by immediate and ongoing one-on-one services with professional employment counselors to prepare a resume, fill out job applications, develop interviewing skills and discuss specific employment needs.
- Participants are then referred to employers who are currently hiring in the retail, hospitality, foodservice, logistics, security, clerical, maintenance and customer service fields throughout the program year.
- Participants may receive multiple placements, and up placement at Added Chance throughout their tenure with DCFS.

Who should come to Added Chance?

- Youth in DCFS care and youth in substitute care aged 16-20 who (along with their caseworker/ caregiver) feel they are ready to seek employment in the private sector.
- All referred, eligible participants are accepted and no one is turned away.

Participants are referred to the program by their caseworker, caregiver or POS worker, with an Added Chance referral obtained by calling 773 342-4243.

Why Added Chance?

The Added Chance program works exclusively with youth in DCFS care. Youth in DCFS care are a unique population and Added Chance is designed and dedicated to working exclusively with them with an eye towards their eventual emancipation.

The focus at Added Chance is on extensive one-on-one, counseling and job referral assistance on a regular and as-needed basis throughout the program year and beyond. Utilizing the techniques of professional employment agencies, Added Chance achieves maximum results with a minimum of classroom time. After a short classroom-style orientation Added Chance provides highly individualized, one-on-one, hands-on services with professional employment counselors and job developers that address specific participant employment deficiencies and needs. Services continue throughout the program year and can be extended throughout the participant's tenure with DCFS. Because ACP does not ask for a heavy time commitment participants can continue in school, participate in other programs, or continue with current employment.



Alternative
Schools Network
Creating Futures
Every Day

Added Chance strives to place participants in real, unsubsidized jobs, with a genuine paycheck from an employer, with taxes and social security withheld—jobs that will enhance their future employability. Added Chance has placed thousands of older youth in DCFS care in these positions.

Added Chance focuses on work history, resumes and job applications.

Most participants enter the program without a resume or one that is seriously flawed. Few can adequately fill out a job application. Further, youth in DCFS care frequently have complex and confusing work and educational backgrounds that need to be sifted through and organized into effective resumes and successful job applications. In this, Added Chance, working extensively, one on one, with participants is adept at helping young people to discover hidden work history, volunteer work, extracurricular activities, skills and education that often go unreported on resumes and in job interviews. There is a tremendous feeling of accomplishment and empowerment, not to mention some relief, on the part of the participants after these issues have been addressed.

Added Chance helps older youth in DCFS care organize and prepare to enter the world of work. This is an important time in the life of any young person, but it is a crucial time for youth in DCFS care in particular as they approach emancipation. In this, it is essential that they develop some work history, resumes, and interviewing skills employers will look for when considering them for future employment—these are essential skills that can help create a solid foundation for life after emancipation.