

Gov. Rick Snyder Signs Bill Raising Michigan Foster Care Age To 21



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New legislation signed into law by Gov. Rick Snyder Tuesday raises the age of children participating in state foster care programs from 18 to 21. That means foster families would continue to receive state compensation for hosting a child.

Once the new law passes a review, Michigan would receive matching funds from the federal government to help pay for the extended benefits under the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008.

"Few young people can make their way in the world unassisted at age 18," said Maura Corrigan, director of the Michigan Department of Human Services, in a press release. "This legislation recognizes the reality of that and provides the kind of assistance that can keep foster care youths on the right track to independence."

A regional study by the University of Chicago's Chapin Hall Research Center showed nearly 40 percent of former foster care children [had been homeless or without a permanent residence since exiting foster care](#).

The study found that extending foster services increased post-secondary educational achievement for recipients and [saved states money in the long run](#).

"The state is taking an important step forward to help the young people that we as a society have taken out of their parents' care and placed in the state's care succeed," Jack Kresnak, director of the advocacy group Michigan's Children, [told Michigan Radio](#). "This will help many, many more young people succeed."

Nearly 800 foster care children turn 18 every year in Michigan, according to the governor's office.

The Department of Human Services has recently come under attack [for violating foster care policies](#) because of moves to privatize Michigan's foster system.