



Apr 15, 2025

# WYAC Monthly Meeting

Attachments  WYAC Monthly Meeting

Meeting records  Recording

Attendance: Szabre, Nate, Jayse, Jaimey, Luke, Erica, Molly, Sam, Angelica, Liz, NJ, Kandice, Tamara, Deb, Nicole N. Nicole G., Brian

## Summary

The WYAC meeting addressed website accessibility, director's meeting updates, a judge's resource list completion, and the elimination of formal WYAC cabinet titles. Significant discussion focused on the F-SS09T form for independent and transitional living plans, emphasizing youth participation and addressing caseworker follow-up and financial literacy training; the conference in Casper (June 20-22) registration deadline was extended to May 2nd, and next steps include promoting the conference, improving caseworker training, and potentially developing a WYAC financial literacy course.

## Details

- **Meeting Attendance and Communication:** Initial difficulties were encountered in getting meeting links to all attendees. One WYAC member mentioned having trouble receiving the invitation via email, prompting a discussion about the distribution method and email addresses. Several attendees joined remotely from various locations, including Glenrock, Laramie, Cheyenne and Casper.
- **Meeting Minutes Approval:** Szabre made a motion to approve the previous month's meeting minutes, pending a second from a WYAC member. Nate later provided the second, allowing approval to proceed. Szabre noted they hadn't yet uploaded the minutes to the website, intending to do so that week.

- **WYAC Website Resources:** Deb presented the WYAC website (wyac.net), highlighting its user-friendly design and accessibility. The website contains information about the organization, upcoming events, meeting links, and meeting minutes, serving as a central resource for all members. Deb stressed the website's utility for those who may not receive email invitations.
- **Director's Meeting Update:** Szabre reported on the director's meeting update. Director Schmidt would like to continue to have in-person meetings to provide updates as the director expressed a desire to support WYAC. The update covered the conference, judge's resource list, and education on the DFS foster care system.
- **Judge's Resource List Update:** Nate and Brian described their progress on creating a judge's resource list using Canva. They collaborated with Wyoming 211 to refine a lengthy county-by-county list, ultimately reducing it to 156 entries focused on youth-relevant resources. The list will be reviewed by district managers and supervisors before distribution.
- **WYAC Cabinet Structure:** The group discussed the WYAC cabinet structure, deciding to eliminate formal titles (president, vice president, etc.) to foster inclusivity and partnership. They confirmed the continued involvement of key members and the work being done by everyone.
- **In-Person Conference Details:** Szabre and Brian provided details about the upcoming in-person conference in Casper, Wyoming, at Casper College. The event will take place from June 20th to 22nd and will feature various activities, guest speakers, and team-building exercises. They discussed logistical aspects, including the dorm accommodations, transportation, meals, and planned activities.
  - 74 dormitory rooms are reserved for the conference
    - Each room has two beds and bathroom facilities
      - There is no need to share rooms unless desired
    - Personal bedding will need to be brought by attendees
      - Blanket, pillow, Twin sheets if desired
      - Toiletry items needed (Shampoo, soap, toothpaste/brush, deodorant, lotion)

- Bath towel - bath mat if desired
    - If you are unable to bring these items, please contact Brian by June 6th
  - No televisions in the rooms
  - Access to televisions on either side of the dormitories
  - Two kitchens available on either side of the dormitories
  - Meeting facilities are up a hill away from the dormitories
    - Brian will have a passenger van to transport those that may need a ride
    - Personal vehicles can be driven up to the parking lot by meeting facility
- **Conference Registration and Attendees:** The deadline for conference registration was initially Friday April 18th, but was extended to May 2nd due to low registrations at the time of the meeting. They discussed the need to promote the event more effectively and to ensure that necessary accommodations are made for all attendees. Various groups of attendees are invited including foster youth, foster parents, DFS staff, and other relevant individuals.
  - [WYAC In-Person Conference Registration Application](#)
- **Independent and Transitional Living Plan (F-SS09T):** Brian introduced the F-SS09T form used for independent and transitional living plans for youth in foster care. They discussed the form's purpose, target age range (14-20), and the importance of completing it at least six months prior to a youth aging out of the system. Several attendees confirmed familiarity with the form.
  - [F-SS09T Form - PDF](#) (Example)
- **Transitional Living Plan Review:** Brian reviewed the transitional living plan, emphasizing youth participation in its development. They stressed the importance of goal setting and identifying a support team to guide the youth's transition to adulthood. The plan addresses various aspects of adult life, including finances, transportation, and health. Brian also advised youth on getting vehicle inspections before purchasing used cars.

- The plan requires youth to identify a support team (family, friends, mentors, etc.), and caseworkers are to follow up monthly to monitor progress towards goals. Szabre raised concerns about inconsistent follow-up from caseworkers, prompting Brian to explain that yearly training is provided for caseworkers and independent living coordinators, and that the plan's completion is part of the case file review process.
  - **Life Skills Assessment:** Brian noted that a life skills assessment (Ansel Casey Life Skills Assessment) should be completed by all youth aged 14 and older, and its results would inform the development of the transitional living plan. Some participants reported having completed the assessment, while others had not.
  - **Youth Participation and Ownership:** Brian repeatedly highlighted the importance of youth participation in creating and owning their transitional living plan, ensuring that it reflects their needs and goals, and is not solely dictated by caseworkers.
  - **More information about the Transitional Living Plan but also suggestions for the WYAC conference:**
    - **Addressing Financial Literacy:** Szabre raised concerns about the lack of comprehensive financial literacy training, citing personal experiences of insufficient support from caseworkers. Brian acknowledged the issue and confirmed yearly training for caseworkers on this topic. They also mentioned a "share secure credit card" project as an example of a credit building initiative.
  - **Credit Building Suggestions:** Participants discussed the importance of including credit building in the transitional living plan and in the upcoming conference. Szabre suggested proactively providing youth with credit cards before they age out to build credit history, while Molly shared the importance of using credit cards regularly to avoid credit score drops. Liz noted that credit building is already included in the plan, although in small print.
  - **Additional Training Resources:** Szabre suggested offering a financial literacy course within the WYAC group, allowing peer-to-peer learning and addressing gaps in caseworker support. Several participants supported this idea, offering to share their skills and expertise. Molly and Erica

suggested using personal experiences with job searching and managing staff to educate others.

- **Mental Health Services and Nonprofit Initiative:** Szabre shared their plans to start a non-profit to expand mental health services in rural areas, proposing collaboration with WYAC to share resources and skills. NJ expressed support for this idea, particularly in relation to job skills training.
- **Health and Dental Insurance:** Molly highlighted the difficulty young adults face in obtaining health and dental insurance, and the need for more attention to this topic in the conference. Szabre mentioned a previous discussion about expanding dental insurance coverage for youth aging out of foster care, noting that the federal government had made some changes, but existing challenges remain. Further discussion focused on identifying and leveraging resources such as scholarships and community clinics.
- **Networking and Community Building:** Szabre emphasized the importance of networking and building relationships with professionals (such as dentists) to access services and support. They described instances where personal connections led to reduced costs or free services.
- **Conference Agenda and Feedback:** Deb suggested adding a question about suggestions for conference topics to the participant sign-up form to gather more input. Szabre suggested further incorporating topics like obtaining resources for stable jobs and career advancement at the conference.
- **Next Steps and Meeting Conclusion:** Brian summarized the meeting, reiterated the importance of youth input in shaping the conference, and announced the date and time of the next meeting. They also emphasized the positive direction of the group and its efforts to provide more support and education for youth transitioning into adulthood.
- **WYAC Meeting and Dorm Information** Brian announced the next WYAC meeting will be on May 20th from 6pm - 8pm and encouraged attendees to submit their applications and reach out to others to fill it in by the May 2nd deadline. They also stated that itineraries for the conference would be shared soon. They informed participants that they should bring blankets, pillows, and toiletries for the college dorm-style accommodations. Szabre added that the mattresses are uncomfortable, recommending participants bring a mattress pad for a more comfortable sleep.

## Suggested next steps

- ☐ Brian will place the conference application on the WYAC website and extend the registration deadline to May 2nd, sending additional emails to promote it.
- ☐ Sam, Molly, Erica and Jayse will register for the in-person conference by May 2nd.
- ☐ The group will consider offering a weekly workshop on financial literacy, with topics taught by group members proficient in those areas, such as credit building, budgeting, and avoiding predatory lenders.
- ☐ Molly and Erica will share their experiences with obtaining housing and vehicles at the in-person meeting, including challenges faced and lessons learned.
- ☐ Brian will modify the youth conference application to include a question about suggested topics and resend it weekly to encourage responses.
- ☐ Szabre will add information about resources for jobs and certifications that offer good pay and career advancement to the website.
- ☐ The group will add information about health and dental insurance, including resources and strategies for obtaining coverage and navigating the complexities of coverage for youth aging out of foster care, to the in-person conference agenda.
- ☐ Szabre will reach out to other nonprofits to collaborate on offering additional skills workshops at future WYAC meetings and the conference.

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