

Independent Living Instructors and Social Workers: This Page Is for You

Use *Represent* in IL Classes

This issue's IL section starts on page 4. It focuses on the emotional side of aging out. Future issues will focus on other important skills, like how to find and keep a job, an apartment and take care of your health and hygiene.

Following is a plan for how to use this issue's stories in your independent living class.

Topic: Identifying a support network

Goal: Help teens identify who they can turn to for help and support after they leave care

Total time of all discussions and activities:
1 hour

What you'll need: Construction paper, pens, stapler

Read Story: 15 minutes

• **Tell teens:** "We're going to read a story about a young woman who left care to live on her own. Every time the writer talks about a person who helped or supported her in some way, we'll stop reading and we'll write their name on the board."

• Read "Phoenix Rising" on p. 4 out loud

Discussion: 15 minutes

• **Tell group:** "On a piece of paper, list all the situations you think you might need help with. List all the people you can ask for help in different situations."

• **Ask group and discuss:** What are some situations you think you might need help with? (List these on the board.) Who do you think you could turn to for help in each situation? What do you think you could ask them for? What do you think you could not ask them for? (Make sure you use yourself as an example of someone they can ask for help on some things, but probably not everything.)

Activity: 15 minutes

- Pass out pens and construction paper.
- Have group make their own personal "little black books" of people they can count on for the various situations listed on the board.

Closing Discussion: 10 minutes

- **Ask group:** How can you get closer to the people that you know? How can you find more people to be part of your support network?
- End with the idea that being independence includes having the support and help of other people. Part of preparing for independence requires building a support network of people who teens can turn to as they forge a life outside the foster care system.

For more activities, go to:

www.youthcomm.org/Teachers/TeacherResources.htm

