



FOSTER YOUTH INTERNSHIP PROGRAM®

Empower Your Voice, Shape Policy, and Build Your Future

WHO CAN APPLY

Current and former foster youth who are:

- College Students [*min. 4 semesters*] or vocational school equivalent
- Graduate Students
- Recent Graduates

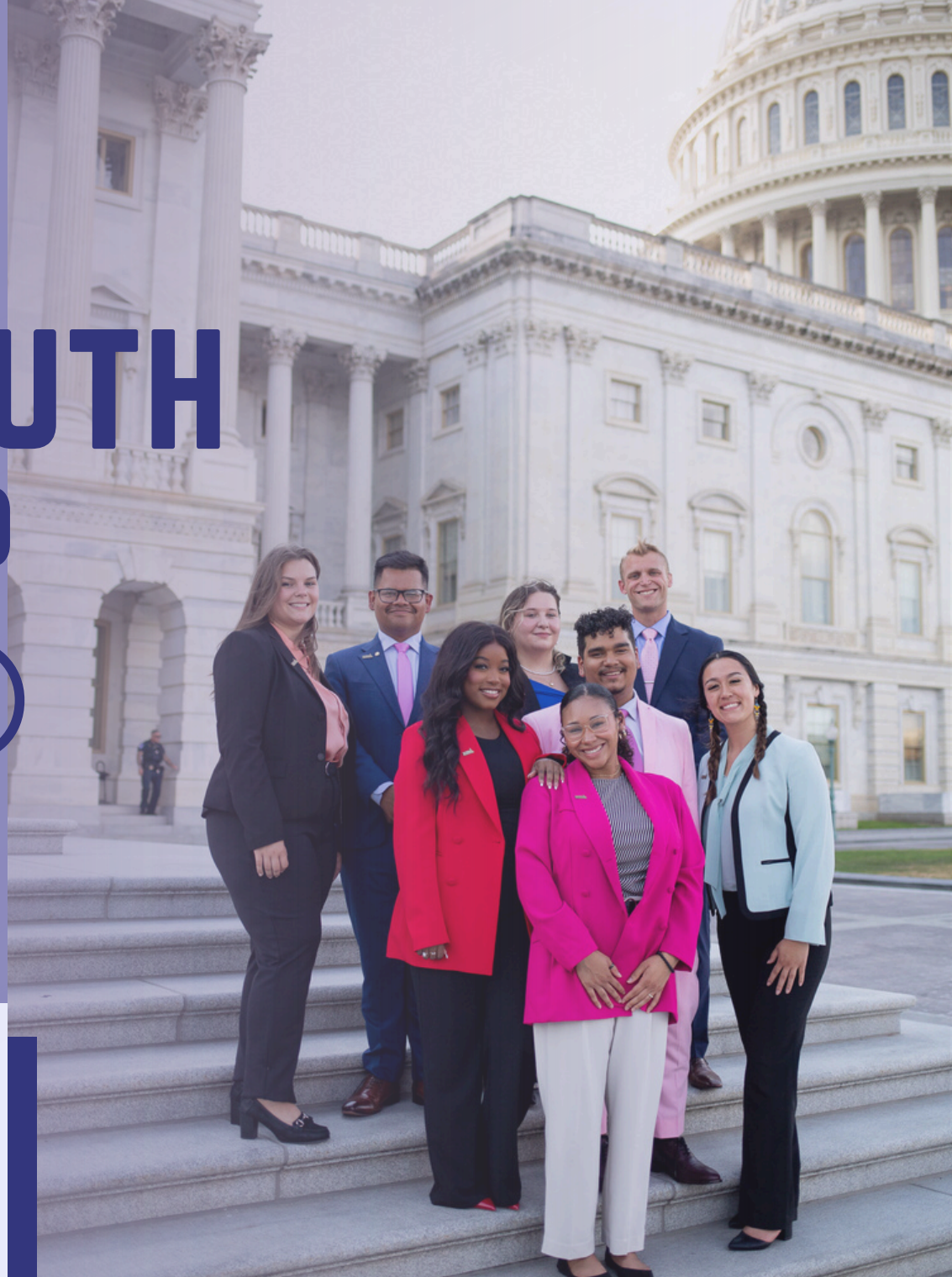
ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute's (CCAI) Foster Youth Internship (FYI) Program® is a competitive national internship in Washington, D.C. for students and recent graduates with lived experience in foster care who are interested in federal policy and advocacy. Participants research and write a federal child welfare policy report and are placed in the Washington, D.C. legislative offices of Members of the U.S. Congress.

OPPORTUNITIES

This internship is a unique leadership development and mentoring program for individuals who have experienced foster care that provides:

- Professional Experience in Federal Policy, Legislative Affairs, and Advocacy
- Leadership and Public Speaking Skills
- Mentorship and Career Development
- Impact on U.S. Foster Care Policy
- Empowerment and Personal Growth
- Networking



2026 Application Opens:
AUGUST 15, 2025

www.ccainstitute.org

info@ccainstitute.org

202-544-8500



February 22 - May 25, 2026

Remote four-month preparatory onboarding

May 25 - July 10, 2026

Seven weeks in Washington, D.C.

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The 2026 Foster Youth Internship Program® includes both a (1) **remote four-month preparatory onboarding process** (predominantly independent curriculum, approx. 10-15 hrs/mo. or 30-45 hours total) and an (2) **in-person, full-time internship in Washington, D.C.** for seven weeks. The participant **MUST** be available for and commit to the entirety of the program (both the remote preparatory and in-person) to qualify.

ABOUT THE FYI PROGRAM

The Foster Youth Internship (FYI) Program® began in 2003 as an effort to raise awareness to federal policymakers about the needs and unique perspectives of individuals who have experienced the U.S. foster care system. CCAI works with congressional offices to secure a congressional internship for each participant. In addition, CCAI organizes an orientation, advocacy trainings, networking, and various other professional development opportunities. These combined experiences allow the participants to create a policy report that is presented to U.S. Congress, Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, and released to policymakers and advocates across the country. As a result of the program, federal policymakers learn firsthand the experiences of youth in foster care and go on to use their new knowledge to inspire legislative change to federal child welfare policy. Participants benefit both personally and professionally, gaining experience and skills that will bolster their careers for years to come.

This is an immersive seven-week, educational, and civic experience in Washington, D.C. with a comprehensive onboarding to ensure participants are well-prepared for effective advocacy and leadership development in the nation's capital. Participants are not considered employees of CCAI nor their congressional office. CCAI provides a monthly stipend during the remote preparatory onboarding (February 2 - May 22) and weekly stipend while in Washington, D.C. (May 25 - July 10), and covers major expenses, such as housing in Washington, D.C., transportation to/from Washington, D.C., and public transportation to/from the congressional office internship. Participants are responsible for some smaller expenses. Interns are required to live in dormitory-style housing assigned by CCAI for the duration of the program and to adhere to the guidance of their FYI Mentor, an alumnus/alumna of the FYI Program.

CONGRESSIONAL INTERNSHIP

Each congressional office placement differs. CCAI does not guarantee that the intern will be assigned projects that are related to child welfare. Office responsibilities will likely include:

- Open, sort, and deliver mail
- Answer phones, greet constituents, run errands, deliver priority letters, and acquire signatures
- Copy, file, fax, data entry, and work on small legislative projects
- Work directly with congressional staff to research issues and compose constituent correspondence
- Attend committee hearings, sit in on meetings, attend press conferences, and take notes
- Provide constituent services and give tours of the U.S. Capitol
- Attend and assist with congressional briefings and meetings, including various events organized by CCAI

POLICY REPORT

By applying to and later agreeing to be a part of the FYI Program, you are agreeing to be fully engaged in the intensive congressional policy report writing process of the program. This involves selecting a topic in a timely manner, performing in-depth research, working closely with an advisor, writing, and extensively editing the report. The process involves, but is not limited to, adhering to all report deadlines set forth by CCAI; attendance at and full participation in all mandatory CCAI meetings and briefings; being respectful toward other interns, advisors and the CCAI staff; being open to new ideas and suggestions; and completion of the report and entire internship program.