



INDEPENDENT YOUTH at the University of Northern Colorado

What does it mean to be an Independent Youth (IY)?

There are several reasons that a student could be classified as Independent Youth. Classification of dependency status begins with completion of the FAFSA and is determined by the Department of Education and verified by the Office of Financial Aid. Students may be independent youth if it has been determined that they fall into one of the following categories:

- They have or will have children who will receive more than half of their support from them.
- Student has dependents, other than children or spouse, that receive half of their support from the student.
- At any time since the age of 13, the student's parents were deceased, they were in foster care, or they were a dependent or ward of the court.
- Student is an emancipated minor or someone other than their parents/stepparents has legal guardianship of them, such as their grandparents.
- Student was determined as unaccompanied youth who was homeless or were self-supporting and at risk of being homeless.
- Students can also receive independent status through an appeals process in situations involving unusual circumstances. Some examples of such circumstances include the following:
 - Student has an abusive family environment (e.g. sexual, physical, or mental abuse)
 - Abandonment by parents
 - Incarceration of both parents

*An Office of the U.S. Department of Education (November 2017) Federal Student Aid
FinAid Page (2018). Dependency Overrides*

What happens after a student is classified as IY?

Once a student is classified as IY, they are automatically placed into the **Soar** program to receive academic support throughout their entire time at the University of Northern Colorado. There is NOT an application process for students to enter the program.

IY ACADEMIC STATISTICS

According to the Colorado Department of Education (2018), in 2017 students in foster care had a high school graduation rate of 33.6% in four years compared to the state average of 79%.

A study completed by the U.S. Department of Education (2011) found that 72% of foster youth enrolled in a two- or four-year college DID NOT receive their degree or certificate within six years.

The National Conference of State Legislatures (2013) stated that 40% of teen mothers finish high school nationally. Fewer than 2% finish college by age 30.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, at least 32,000 college students were homeless in 2017.



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Soar Program

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OFFICE OF FINANCIAL AID

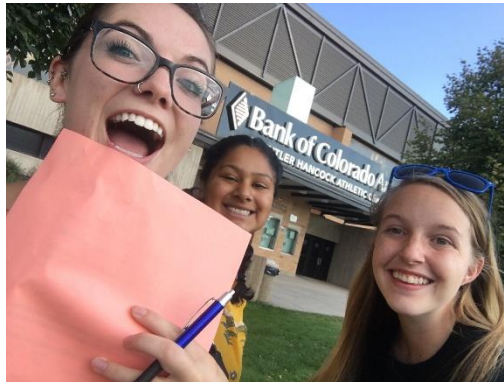
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Soar provides proactive academic coaching to students in the Bears First Program, Denver Scholarship Foundation, and Independent Youth Program as well as provides individual academic advising to exploring students or students considering a major change. Soar provides students with academic and personal support in an inclusive environment by teaching them the skills necessary to make self-motivated academic decisions

Program Services for IY Students:

- Assistance with navigating the college experience
- Provide students with UNC policy and major information
- Assist in goal setting and personal development
- Foster decision-making skills
- Support and challenge students
- Connect students to relevant campus resources
- Regular contact throughout the semester
- Guidance through the process of comparing and contrasting majors.
- Program provides an inclusive environment

CITATION INDEX

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