

All-Star Success Guide

Navigating Seaside During the Summer

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to FosterClub! It's a pleasure to have you join our amazing national network of youth and adult advocates. We created this success manual to help you navigate your way through the internship.

Not long ago, we were in your shoes, new to Seaside and about to start our internships. We initially had some reservations about what this internship would entail. We even questioned whether we were capable of moving to another state on our own and staying in a house with ten people. Little did we know it would turn out to be an experience that would potentially shape who we are and who we would become. With this guide, we hope to pass along some skills and techniques we acquired during our time as All-Star interns, and share how the internship propelled us as we continued on our journeys.

We've divided this guide into five areas:

- Welcome to small town Oregon
- Conflict Management and Boundaries
- Transportation and Changing Plans
- Opportunities
- Finding Lifelong Friends

SUCCESS TIP #1: WELCOME TO SMALL TOWN OREGON

When living in a place you are not accustomed to, it's always best to get out and explore the area around you. Doing so allows you to meet neighbors and possibly locals that can advise you on places to shop or eat. You can also check the appendix for our list of restaurants we liked. We would highly recommend going to Zingers Homemade Ice Cream and getting a scoop of their ice cream with hot fudge.

Logistically, getting around Seaside can also pose some obstacles. We recommend planning ahead if you want to travel anywhere that you can't walk to. You can ask your L2s for a ride in the All-Star van but they have the right to say no. Remember that they may have errands to run or might want time by themselves to unwind. If the van is not an option, look into taking the bus. Check out the appendix for more information about using the bus. If you want to go to Portland, there is an Amtrak bus that you can take.

Again, check the appendix for more info! Uber is another option for transportation in addition to the Couch bus and All-Star van.

We advise that you all commit to being interactive, exploring the endless shorelines of Seaside and being innovative with what you do to occupy your time. Seaside may seem like a small town but it has much to offer. Suggest and vote on some activities to do together as a group that allow you to explore the town. Bike riding, swimming, camping, hiking, running, and going to see a movies are great ways to get up and keep moving. Bicycles are even available to rent in Seaside, so you don't have to worry about bringing your own. It's just finding out what you and your fellow All-Stars enjoy doing.

Given that Seaside is such a long trip from big cities such as Portland, it's also important that you travel in pairs when you venture out into the cities. Weekends give you the time and flexibility to travel and kick back. We want you to explore and learn new things but to do so with safety and caution. So travel with a fellow All-Star, just for extra support. Trust us, there's nothing worse than missing the last Greyhound bus from Portland to Seaside and being stranded for the night alone. Here at FosterClub we value your safety and well-being on all levels. So we would like to encourage you to establish an emergency action plan with fellow All-Stars if you plan to travel into the city to explore. Doing so will allow for others to become aware of your current status and it also extends the line of communication among individuals, with the potential to promote a safer environment among housemates. It's important to hold yourselves accountable and look after one another while on trips and at home. Remember you're a team so it's important to communicate with your teammates and ensure you are all on the same playing field.

You can follow this three-step action plan to prepare for traveling outside of Seaside:

Step One. Discuss with housemates and Level 2 leadership prior to departure the details of the trip location, dates or times of travel, and the contact information of the individual(s) going on the trip. This is important because it allows All-Stars and FosterClub staff who aren't traveling with you to know the plan and call to check in on your safety if needed.

Step Two. Have emergency funds set aside for reasons out of your control. If you are traveling and miss a bus, you might have to purchase another ticket or even rent a hotel room overnight. It's good to have emergency funds set aside, just in case you run into difficult situations. So when you are on the road always remember to have an emergency stash.

Step Three. Pack a traveler's kit with extra clothes, cell phone/charger, a book, and some light snacks. It's important that you leave prepared for anything the world might throw at you. Having these items can make the biggest difference when you find yourself in a pickle.

We encourage this three step emergency planning before you travel into the city. Nonetheless, we understand that sometimes things can happen that are out of your control. If something like this occurs, we encourage you to contact the FosterClub office in addition to your Level 2 members to give the latest update on your whereabouts and safety. We can't emphasize that enough. Seek safe public spaces to call for help and or inquire at the nearest hotel. Usually hotels and libraries will allow you to sit in a lobby area and use a phone. Be sure to call the FosterClub main office and then call others to ensure that someone receives your message.

SUCCESS TIP #2: CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND BOUNDARIES

Have you ever seen the reality show "The Real World"? Well living in the house with fellow All-Stars is similar to this experience. You have a house filled with folks from different backgrounds and experiences. Although you all represent different states, you all have one thing in common and that's the fact that you're "All-Stars." You have been selected to represent the thousands of youth who enter foster care each year. During your time as All-Stars you will have to set standards and stick together.

One of the most rewarding parts of your internship is living with people that have different backgrounds, ethnicities and identities. However, this can also create some challenges. You or someone in your group may struggle with living with people who are different. If you are finding it hard to accept someone because of their background, identity or race, get to know them beyond that one descriptor. People can't be reduced to just one identity—whether it be White, Black, Latinx, gay, bisexual, transgender, disabled or foster youth. Have open conversations in the house about race, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, etc and about the way social structures and systems are set up to marginalize certain identities while privileging others. Create a culture in the house where conversations are on the table from the start, and where folks agree that racism, homophobia, transphobia and ableism are not acceptable and will be addressed if they come up.

Additionally, try to find common ground that you share with that individual. You may be surprised to find that you have the same favorite TV shows, like the same musicians or have similar goals in life. If you don't feel included in the All-Star group, try to talk one-

on-one with someone from your group or one of your L2s. You can also reach out to a staff member of FosterClub.

We have five specific recommendations below that can make your time in Seaside more fun and successful.

Know Thyself (and Others). One challenge you may encounter when living with so many people is dealing with triggers. Since we've had traumatic events in our past, there may be certain sounds, smells, words, and nonverbal and verbal cues that trigger past memories. It is important to realize that triggers are highly individualized. You may not realize that you are triggering someone. For instance, if you jokingly sneak up behind someone and surprise him or her, that could be very triggering. For others, this may not have any impact at all. If you notice that someone's mood or behavior changes suddenly this may be an indication that they have been triggered. If this happens, apologize and make an effort not to repeat the behavior that led to the issue. If you notice that someone has triggered someone else, jump in and try to deescalate the situation. Avoiding being triggered can be difficult so we would recommend trying to identify your triggers. This will help you realize when you are being triggered. You can also talk to people you trust about the triggers and have them step in, if needed, to deescalate a situation.

Sign Your Name Here. Agreements between housemates can help reduce conflict when living in a large group house. We recommend calling a house meeting and constructing a "contract" that everyone in the house agree on at the beginning of your internship. After finalizing, submit this to FosterClub staff and Level 2 members. Set up a system that allows one another to be held accountable for when someone deviates from the contract. You want to ensure that grace is given when mistakes are made but also that responsibility is taken for those same mistakes. You can also use a reward system. Establish some incentives for those who uphold the contract and structures for addressing conflict when the contract is not upheld.

Breaking Bread. Food can sometimes cause confusion and even conflict when living with a lot of people. Since food can be expensive, we found it helpful during our internships to develop a house bank. Each All-Star allocated \$6 dollars to the jar during a pay period. With the funds, the house voted on inexpensive meals that provided enough food to share during the week and helped save All-Stars' funds. Having a house bank ensures that individuals have a meal regardless of their personal finances. You're more than welcome to

purchase your own food but participating in the house bank in addition to purchasing your own food allows you all to establish kinship family relations. It also provides a safety net in case you run into hard times.

Pillow Fight! Room choice is another topic that can cause confusion or trigger some of the other interns. Often times, we've found that room choice is based on who arrives at the All-Star house first. We would recommend that room choice be delayed until you can meet together to discuss room assignments and bathroom access. One thing to think about is that some people may not feel comfortable walking past a member of a different gender to access the restroom or having someone of a different gender walk past them. If you find yourself having to walk through another gender's room please seek permission and acknowledgement from those in the room before you enter to ensure privacy and respect is maintained. It is important to make sure that everyone feels comfortable with where they are staying in the house. Agreements about bathroom access should be discussed and agreed upon during the first week of transition into the FosterClub house. This will help foster respect and a sense of safety among members of the group.

Take Your Time. Last but not least, it is important to create boundaries for self-reflection and personal growth. After a long day of work and training, everyone should be entitled to some personal space to debrief and reflect. We suggest that you all allow yourselves enough space and time to debrief and resolve any challenges. Given that you are around one another a majority of the time, sometimes you just need a small break to walk and take a breath to remain positive and in good spirits. We would suggest having a three-minute cool off period or self-reflective period after work or even after presentations. Allowing this time can help de-stress and de-escalate.

SURVIVAL TIP #3: TRANSPORTATION AND CHANGING PLANS

Plans can often change at FosterClub. This can sometimes be frustrating if you like control and order. But it's important to realize that this is often the nature of planning events and conferences. FosterClub also tries to respond to opportunities as they arise, which may mean changing plans.

We suggest first accepting that plans may change. Keep in mind the reason you are here. Be empathetic and understanding. It's not the FosterClub staff members' faults. They are often adjusting to the new schedule just like you are.

If you are having a particularly tough time dealing with adjustments, you might try meditating. This may seem silly and you may be hesitant to try it, but it does help calm your nerves. You could also try sharing your frustration with a fellow All-Star who may have some strategies to remedy any anxiety or frustration associated with last minute changes. Suggest these strategies to other All-Stars experiencing the same feelings. At the end of the day, though, make sure to remain professional. Don't let it get in the way of performing your best.

SURVIVAL TIP #4: OPPORTUNITIES

It's important to keep an open mind when it comes to opportunities that FosterClub presents to you. There may be conferences and events that you really want to go to but are not selected for. That's okay. FosterClub usually chooses people that represent different experiences in care, work well together, or have not gotten a chance to go to an event before. So if you are not chosen for a particular speaking arrangement that does not mean that FosterClub does not recognize your skills and talent.

There may be other things that you are chosen for or given the opportunity to go to that you might not want to do. We recommend keeping an open mind. The events that have some of the greatest impact may be ones that you are not initially interested in or that you are hesitant to attend. Keep in mind that each opportunity offers the chance to expand your social and professional network by meeting other young people in child welfare, advocates, and decision-makers.

SURVIVAL TIP #5: FINDING LIFE LONG FRIENDS

Cultivating relationships is one of the best parts of your experience as an All-Star. You will get the chance to work beside and learn from some truly amazing people.

Get to know your fellow All-Stars. Some of you may make almost instantaneous connections with your new team. For others, though, it may take a while to feel like you belong. That's okay. Everyone forms friendships at their own pace. We recommend trying to get to know all of your fellow All-Stars. It can be tempting to just hang out with the people that you initially click well with. But you will be surprised by what you learn if you make the effort to approach someone that you don't know that well. Ask people to spend time one-on-one in addition to participating in group activities. We would also recommend having family meals together and going hiking or out to the beach together as ways to get to know one another.

Finding time to hang out with someone in a different setting other than the All-Star house or office can help you get to know each other better. People act differently in other environments, so go watch a movie together, go on a run, or walk around Seaside. If you are more of an introvert, approach someone you want to be friends with and invite them to go to lunch with you. Don't give up on the people that may seem standoffish at first. First impressions can be deceiving! Finding common ground can help you get to know other better. Maybe you both like to play sports, read books, play board games, etc. You can use these types of activities as icebreakers and they can facilitate the development of new friendships outside of the office. It's important to remember to keep an open mind and willingness to learn from others' experiences. This will set you apart and make you a great foster youth advocate.

Another part of cultivating relationships is getting to know the staff members at FosterClub. They are a caring group of people that want you to succeed. They are also great resources for advice and support. If you want to get to know them better, just talk to them. Come in early for work or stay a bit later and ask them how they are doing, what their career and education paths were that led them to FosterClub, or about their interests outside of their profession.

Relationships can continue to thrive long after your internship ends. Try to stay in touch with staff members and All-Stars after the summer. Make sure you get your fellow All-Stars' phone numbers so you can text. Skype and FaceTime are also great ways to stay in contact. It is not unusual for All-Stars to stay in touch and visit one another all over the country well after the internship is complete.

We don't always know or choose the moments or people in life that will change us. A lot of times, the things that make us uncomfortable or challenge us end up being the things that change who we are.

APPENDIX: FINDING YOUR WAY AROUND SEASIDE

Here are some specific businesses, services, and places that can help make your stay more comfortable:

PHARMACY

Right Aid

313 South Roosevelt Drive

Seaside, OR 97138

Phone: (503) 738-8422

Pharmacy Hours:

- Mon-Fri: 9:00am-9:00pm
- Saturday: 9:00am-6:00pm
- Sunday: 10:00am-6:00pm

GROCERIES

Safeway

Pharmacy Phone: 503-738-4706

Pharmacy Hours

- Mon-Fri 9:00 am-8:00 pm
- Sat 9:00 am-6:00 pm
- Sun 10:00 am-6:00 pm

URGENT CARE/HOSPITAL

Providence Seaside Hospital

Providence North Coast Clinic, 725 S Wahanna Rd, Seaside, OR 97138

Phone: (503) 717-7000

TRANSPORTATION

Amtrak

Amtrak has rides from Seaside (SSD) to Portland (PDX). The ride time is just 1 hour and 55 min. Check their website for more information. The ticket price is \$34.

Sunset Empire Transportation

To get around the Seaside area you can use this bus. Google the name to find the most up-to-date information about bus times and fares.

Pro tip: Use this bus to go to Cannon Beach. This beach is so beautiful and much nicer than the beach in Seaside.

THINGS TO DO

Seaside Cinema

1026 12th Ave, Seaside, OR 97138

This is around a 20 min. walk

Tri-City Spay & Neuter Thrift Shop

600 Broadway St # 6, Seaside, OR 97138

Phone: (503) 738-7040

Rag & Bone Thrift Shop

Phone: (503) 738-2182

1011 7th Ave, Seaside, OR 97138

PLACES TO EAT

Zingers Homemade Ice Cream

210 Broadway St.

Pro tip: get fudge on your ice cream.

Dundee's Bar and Grill

503-738-7006

414 Broadway St, Seaside, OR 97138-5810

Dundee's Bar and Grill has good doughnuts!

Osprey Café

2281 Beach Dr, Seaside, OR 97138-5117

Tsunai Sandwich Company

11 Roadway St, Seaside, OR 97138-5801