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*dissertation topic: Independence, youth, intellectual disability, foster family.*

*In this paper, I described the process of independence for youth with mild and moderate intellectual disabilities. My research dealt with the plans, assumptions and expectations of young people from foster care who are beginning an independent life, I compared the readiness for independent living with young people with intellectual norms. My goal was to determine young people's expectations regarding their education, professional future, living situation and personal relationships. I wanted to find out how much self-confidence young people with intellectual disabilities have and how real it is. I tried to find out what difficulties young people with intellectual disabilities have to deal with, how their self-image changes in dealing with everyday life situations, and what support they need in the transition to independent living. To what extent can the plans of young people entering adulthood be realized, what influences the decision to leave or remain in foster care? How has the assessment of independence changed over the three years of observation, and what decisions are more likely to be made by young people as they get older? I analyzed three periods in the lives of young people: before turning eighteen, one year after coming of age and two years after coming of age. A total of 76 young people were surveyed, with an equal percentage of healthy and disabled youth. The study showed that the adoptive family plays a huge role in the lives of mentally handicapped children. Most of the children surveyed, regardless of the degree of intellectual disability, prefer to be in a foster family and indeed stay there, as it gives them a sense of security, stability and support. This decision is not influenced by the gender of the child or the number of abnormalities in the biological family. The most important factor is the length of the children's stay in a foster family. Although young people value their level of independence, they prefer to stay in a foster family for as long as possible.*