



Take Advantage of the Summer

There's lots to celebrate! School is out. We are slowly coming out of this pandemic -- one vaccine at a time. And it's a great time to get out of the house and back on the road!

For older youth who may have some extra time, the summer provides an opportunity to apply and participate in the ***Keys to Independence*** program.

The first step is for participating youth and young adults to complete the 4-hour drug and alcohol course. This can be done online from home. The second step is the permit exam, which can also be taken online from home, as long as the teen is under age 18.

To get started, ***[click here](#)***.

K2I is Headed Your Way

This summer and fall, your K2I team is hitting the road -- offering workshops throughout the state of Florida. Our team is ready and willing to travel to your community. We will facilitate a computer lab style workshop in any office or other location with the space to host a group of teens.

Through these facilitated workshops, interested youth in each area are able to get their questions answered, and to complete any of the steps necessary to get their permit, including: application, 4-hour course, and/or permit exam. If your CBC or the host location doesn't have a computer lab, we will even provide the laptops!

This can really help expedite the process, as our K2I staff can directly approve applications, disperse codes for online courses, and answer any questions. To set up a workshop in your area, contact Ash Connors at ***ash.connors@embracefamilies.org***.

In addition to workshops, the K2I team is also available to share information

about the program to interested caregivers, case managers and youth at your CBC or other location in your community. Presentations are available in person or via Zoom, whichever you prefer.

Free Drive Time... on a Simulator

For youth who have already taken the behind the wheel course - or just want some extra time practicing before they get their license – we’ve found a great resource local to Central Florida!



The Melrose Center in the Orange County Library system offers a driving simulator (pictured). Beginning drivers can practice for up to two hours a day at no cost; and \$5 for any additional time per day. [Click here](#) for more information.

Summertime is a great time to get our youth and young adults enrolled in a driver’s education course or behind the wheel lessons. This education is required to be completed if the youth/young adult plans to have us assist with insurance in the future.

Note: Let us know if you discover that a driving simulator is available in your public library too. We’d love to add this information to the resources page on the K2I website.

Introducing Cars for Kids

Separate from Keys to Independence, but equally valuable, is a program called **Cars for Kids** that is managed by Embrace Families and serves youth in foster care located in the Central Florida counties of Orange, Osceola, and Seminole. The goal of Cars for Kids is to help underwrite loans to help kids in care purchase a car at affordable rates; and to transfer donated cars, when possible, to youth who can afford to maintain a vehicle.

In 2021, we are working to expand the Cars for Kids concept to additional Florida counties by creating partnerships and teaching opportunities between other lead agencies. Brevard County provides a great example of how this can be done. Now in it’s second year, Brevard Family Partnership’s *Road to Autonomy* provides car loans and donated cars to youth who are or who have been in care.

If you are interested in working with us to create a similar program within your county – providing a way for more youth to have access to the privilege of owning a car -- please contact ash.connors@embracefamilies.org.

[Visit Our Website](#)



**Keys to Independence | 4001 Pelee Street, Orlando, FL 32817 | www.keystoindependencefl.org
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Sponsored by Embrace Families and the State of Florida, Department of Children and Families