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Using Technology to Enable Foster Youth to a Successful Launch into Independent Living

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Foster Care Background

In the State of Nebraska, foster youth emancipate from the foster care system and launch into independent living when they turn 19. In advance of this transition, a number of tasks have to be completed in order to prepare the youth in the best possible way. If this preparation is omitted or not successful, transitioning foster youth often face substantial problems when first living on their own.

In this study, we are examining, how *trust propensity* and *computer self-efficacy* influence Task-Technology Fit in the context of a foster youth information portal.

Task-Technology Fit

Task-Technology Fit [2] is a model developed to describe and predict how the relationship between a task and the technology used to complete it fit together and influence each other. The model explains how the combination of task and technology characteristics impact individual performance, a relationship previously assumed to be inherently true. Task-Technology fit on the other hand posits that information technology will only affect an individual's performance if the technology supports the task sufficiently.

Trust Propensity

Trust Propensity is a construct describing an individual's general perception of the trustworthiness of others [3]. It was initially developed by Mayer et al. [4] and adapted by Lee & Turban [3].

Since the information to be stored in the foster youth information portal is likely to be personal and private, it is proposed that a higher amount of *trust propensity* leads to a higher willingness to use the portal and thus to a higher perceived Task-Technology Fit.

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Computer Self-Efficacy

Computer Self-Efficacy is a construct describing an individual's perception of their capability to use a computer [1]. Rather than looking at past experiences, this construct is concerned with future potential [1].

Strong et al. [5] have already performed a study suggesting a strong influence of *computer self-efficacy* on Task-Technology Fit.

Survey

A survey with instruments taken from the Task-Technology Fit model, the *trust propensity* construct, and the *computer self-efficacy* construct has been developed and administered to students of social work, as representatives of case workers working with foster youth.

More than 30 replies have been collected. Statistical analysis is pending.

References

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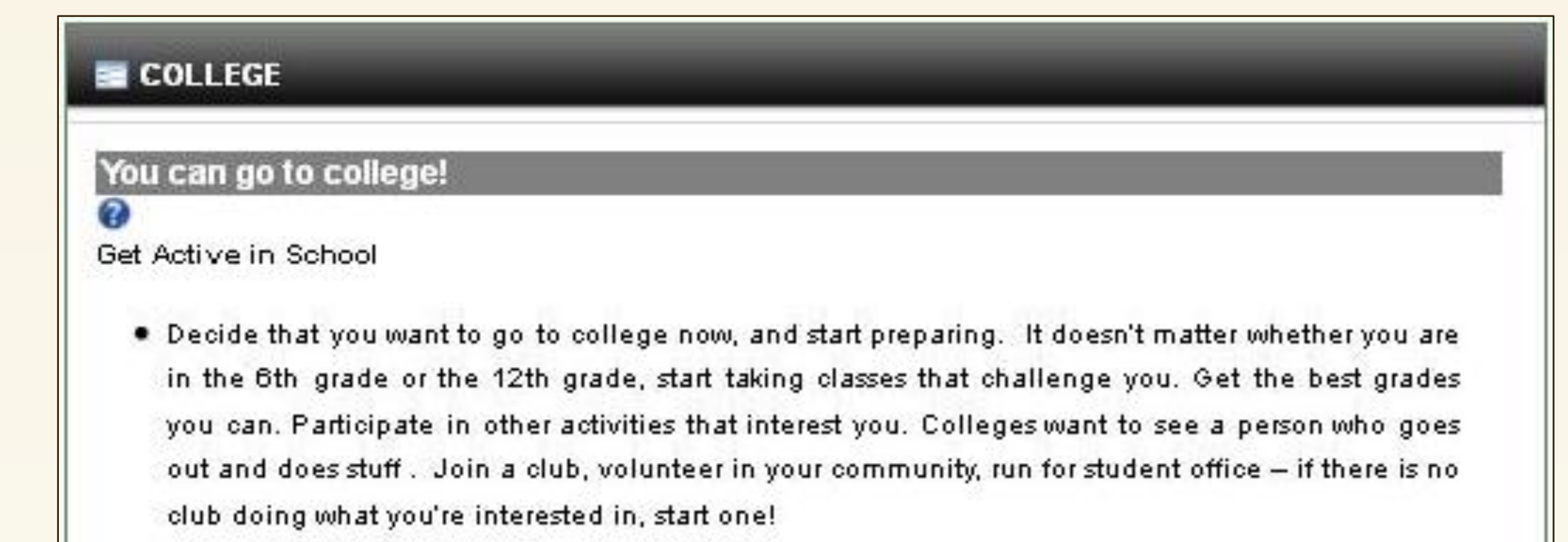
LIFT Capabilities

Document Vault

The document vault can be used to store documents and information securely. Youths and case workers can create a number of vaults independently and decide whether they want to share the contents.

Resources

A Wiki-like information resource collection is available to foster youths. These resources provide them with information on how to complete their assigned tasks and where to find additional information.

Checklists

Checklists can be used by the case workers to guide the youths towards completing all tasks necessary before aging out. Case workers can track completion of the tasks assigned to the youths.