

TRANSITION: TEAMS IN ACTION



The Newsletter of the Youth Transition Action Teams Initiative

Volume 3 January/February 2006

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FOSTER YOUTH INITIATIVES FEATURED AT CALIFORNIA WORKFORCE ASSOCIATION YOUTH CONFERENCE

For the sixth year, New Ways to Work co-sponsored the CWA Youth Conference, held in Garden Grove, California January 17-19th. For those who have not yet experienced it, the Youth Conference draws on the work of organizations and people throughout the country, presenting new and better ways to help youth craft career and life paths with meaning and dignity. Conference participants are dedicated and passionate, eager to learn and full of life; the youth and adults share and learn together as peers and colleagues.

In an effort to help strengthen the relationships between Youth Transition Action Teams and local workforce agencies, New Ways encouraged Youth Transition Action Team Site Leaders and their team members to attend the conference. In addition to special trainings and workshops hosted by New Ways, YTAT members had opportunities to share and learn about strategies for supporting foster youth, as well as other exciting opportunities to build strategies for developing and supporting comprehensive youth-transition systems. To read more about the trainings and suggested topics for future YTAT trainings, see the related article on page 3 of this issue.

At this year's Youth Conference, strategies for supporting foster youth were a clear focus - through presentations, workshops, and the active involvement of foster youth. In several workshops, workforce development, social service, and educational agencies shared their strategies for assisting foster youth with transitions. Dan Radojevic, San Diego Workforce Partnership and Employment Services Coordinator, YES Program at San Pasqual Academy, and one of the presenters, said "I got a lot of feedback [on the work we are doing] and really enjoyed [the conference]."

The conference ended with several powerful and articulate speeches by young people who attended, many of whom were former foster youth. They demonstrated the power of using their voices (a theme of the conference) by challenging and encouraging adults to improve the systems of support and services that have an impact on their lives. The following brief descriptions highlight some of the presentations that focused on strategies for supporting foster youth. (*continued on page 2*)

FINAL VOTE ON FEDERAL BUDGET – FEBRUARY 1ST

On February 1, the U.S. House of Representatives is scheduled to make the final vote on the federal budget bill passed by the Senate.

Paper on Impacts of Proposed Cuts to Foster Care Funding

This paper from the Center for Law and Social Policy, called "Congressional Cuts to Foster Care Funding Would Jeopardize Children Living with Grandparents and Other Relatives," examines provisions of the budget bill that would affect foster care. The budget bill would decrease federally funded foster care services by at least \$343 million over five years, and \$835 million over ten years. It also contains child welfare provisions that would discourage states from placing abused and neglected children with relatives, impede state efforts to reunify children with their parents, and make it more difficult to provide critical services to children and families. www.clasp.org/publications/senate_budget_and_foster_care.pdf

(Source: CLASP mailing – Paper by Casey Trupin and Vicki Turetsky).

(continued from page 1)

Keynote Speech by Judge Robert B. Hutson

The Honorable Judge Robert B. Hutson, Presiding Judge, Orange County Juvenile Court, spoke about his work in the court. Among Judge Hutson's efforts to support foster youth is a miscellaneous court order he signed allowing specified agencies within Orange County to share information about youth for whom they are providing services. To read more about the court orders, see "Orange County WIB and Social Services Agency Collaboration Enhances Access to Employment Development Services for Foster Youth" in the ON THE GROUND section on page 5 of this issue. To view the court order, visit <http://www.newwaystowork.org/documents/ytatdocuments/FYMiscOrder.pdf>. (PDF 667 kb).

The following three workshops provided information about innovative approaches to providing multiple services to youth in foster care.

Creating Pathways for Foster Youth to Work and Learn

California School-Age Consortium (CalSAC) representatives made a presentation on the key activities and stakeholders that CalSAC used to assist after-school programs to connect with local workforce systems and independent living centers. Specific topics included creating learning communities to help foster youth increase job retention and find career pathways; the key role of part-time work during training; key steps to use in initiating relationships with local workforce systems; and ways to combine funding to help build quality staff. Participants outlined a plan of action that included the identification of stakeholders, activities, and the development of a timeline to foster this type of collaboration in a community. To learn more about California School-Age Consortium, visit www.calsac.org or contact Rebecca Goldberg, Lead Outreach Coordinator, CalSAC rgoldberg@calsac.org; Aaron Jiron, Development Director,

CalSAC ajiron@calsac.org; or Sue Edwards, College Instructor, Los Medanos College www.losmedanos.net/.

Empowering Foster Youth

The Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program and the Imperial County Social Services Independent Living Program described their partnership. Working collaboratively, the two entities have been able to provide customized services that meet the needs and interests of foster youth. With the support of the community, this program now offers paid work experience, career exploration, transitional housing services, Section B assistance, academic counseling, vocational counseling, life skills training, leadership development, vocational training, employability skills training, links to post-secondary schools and to a car-purchase program. Former foster youth also discussed their experiences in foster care and gave recommendations to service providers. For more information, contact Luis Torres, Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program ltorres@icoe.k12.ca.us.

Youth Transition Action Teams: Leveraging Community Resources to Ensure Successful Transitions for Foster Youth

Panelists from Youth Transition Action Teams (YTAT) around the state shared information about the YTAT initiative with conference attendees. These representatives from YTAT explained that the initiative focuses on bringing together the resources of the workforce, education, and child welfare systems to better prepare adolescents who are current or former foster youth to achieve economic, educational, and employment success as they transition into the adult world. The panelists presented ways their teams are bringing together and leveraging the approaches, strategies, and resources of multiple efforts concerned with the issue of successful foster youth transition. For more information, contact Chandra Larsen, Initiatives Coordinator, New Ways to Work, at clarsen@newwaystowork.org.

REVISED CALIFORNIA REGULATIONS STRENGTHEN CONNECTION BETWEEN CHILD WELFARE SERVICES AND WIA PROGRAMS

Recent revisions to the California Department of Social Services Manual (Divisions 30 and 31) have strengthened the connection between Child Welfare Services and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) services. Bob Malmberg, Program Manager, Orange County Emancipation Services/ILP and Foster Care Investigations Program, says, "The case workers and probation officers can make or break the process. There are several sections that require social workers to work closely with WIA providers."

The new regulations expressly require social workers to inform youth creating their Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP) about WIA services as well as to collaborate with

WIA service providers to help youth achieve their TILP goals related to employment.

The updated regulations, finalized in November 2005, spell out this requirement in several locations. DIV 30 & 31 of the regulations were instituted in November.

First, they require county designees working with youth who are developing and pursuing goals described in a Supportive Transition Emancipation Program/Transitional Housing Program STEP/THP-Plus TILP to provide information regarding WIA employment and training services (as well as

(Continued on page 11)

OFF AND RUNNING

Latest News on the Youth Transition Action Teams Initiative

Youth Transition Action Teams Site Leaders Attend CWA Youth Conference, Take Part in Training, and Plan for 2006

YTAT Network and Capacity-Building Activities Launched

The sixth annual California Workforce Association Youth Conference provided an opportunity to launch the Youth Transition Action Teams (YTAT) Initiative's network and capacity-building activities for YTAT site leaders from around the state. The goals for the meetings and training were for site leaders to strategize building the capacity of local teams, experience rich peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and provide critical feedback about the needs of local communities for the planning of technical support activities for the coming year. The site leaders, prospective site leaders, and representatives from Casey Family Programs - a sponsor of YTAT - had opportunities to meet one another, share highlights of their work, receive an overview of the new YTAT frameworks and tools, take part in a training in the use of those tools, and give input on content for YTAT Network activities for the coming year.

At the January 18 training, Steve Trippe, New Ways to Work President and Executive Director, and Chandra Larsen, Initiatives Coordinator for New Ways, gave an overview of the draft *YTAT Guidebook*, which includes a historical context for YTAT as well as the YTAT frameworks and tools and instructions for using them. They also demonstrated the use of the wall-sized frameworks so participants could incorporate

them into their local team's activities. In addition, participants were introduced to the self-assessments that complement each of the YTAT frameworks, which provide a user-friendly method for assessing and identifying priorities. Chandra reviewed the next steps for the YTAT Network, including the upcoming YTAT Institute and other activities as well as opportunities for technical assistance. The group discussed the next YTAT Site Leaders and YTAT Evaluation Work Group conference calls, and the site representatives offered suggestions for content call and training topics.

Suggested Topics for Future Content Calls and Trainings

The following training topics were suggested by participants in the training:

- One-Stops for foster youth
- Creative funding strategies
- Workforce for foster youth
- Chaffee
- Activities for younger youth
- Youth recruitment and youth involvement on decision-making bodies
- Data and evaluation (addressed through workgroups)

A survey is being planned to gather ideas from more YTAT team members. For more information, contact Chandra Larsen at New Ways to Work clarsen@newwaystowork.org.

New Ways to Work Awarded Grant for Youth Transition Action Team Initiative by Jewish Community Foundation

New Ways to Work has been awarded a \$10,000 General Community Grant by the Jewish Community Foundation for the Youth Transition Action Initiative (YTAT). The Jewish Community Foundation grant will help support the Los Angeles County YTAT efforts.

New Ways to Work President and Executive Director, Steve Trippe, said, "We are looking forward to working with the Jewish Community Foundation and to providing services to ensure solid connections among the multiple agencies serving transition age foster youth." Other initiative partners include Casey Family Programs (initiative sponsor), California Department of Social Services, Walter S. Johnson Foundation,

Peninsula Community Foundation, and The San Francisco Foundation.

The Jewish Community Foundation, established in 1954, is the largest manager of charitable assets and the leader in planned giving solutions for Greater Los Angeles Jewish philanthropists. The Foundation currently manages assets of more than \$550 million and, according to the National Foundation Center, ranks among the ten largest Los Angeles foundations (based on assets). In 2004, The Foundation and its 1,000-plus donors distributed \$43 million in grants to more than 1,300 organizations whose programs span the range of philanthropy. To learn more about the Jewish Community Foundation, visit www.jewishfoundationla.org.

The San Francisco Foundation Is Supporting the San Francisco County Youth Transition Action Team

The San Francisco Foundation has announced that it will support the Youth Transition Action Team in San Francisco County. The Foundation will contribute \$35,000 to support the effort.

Ron Rowell, Program Officer, Social Justice for the San Francisco Foundation, wrote, "This effort is intended to support San Francisco County as they work to improve educational and employment outcomes for youth who are current residents of foster care."

The San Francisco Foundation, established in 1948, is now the nation's seventh largest community foundation, managing more than \$800 million in assets. The San Francisco Foundation addresses community needs by supporting innovative ideas and strengthening existing nonprofit organizations that lack sufficient resources or infrastructure. As a regional community foundation serving San Francisco, Marin, Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Mateo counties, it focuses in the areas of community health, education, arts and culture, neighborhood and community development, the environment, and social justice. To learn more about the San Francisco Foundation, visit www.sff.org/.

Youth Transition Action Team Progress Report, Highlights Sheet Now Available

New Ways to Work has issued a progress report for the Youth Transition Action Team Initiative highlighting the developments and accomplishments of the first 18 months of the initiative. It has also prepared a highlights sheet that presents this information in a condensed form. Major milestones include the establishment of Teams in eleven counties; the development of workplans and the implementation of pilot projects in ten of those counties; the creation of initiative frameworks describing the *Functions of Transition Action Teams*, the *Stages of Systems Development*, and the *Elements of a Comprehensive Youth-*

Serving System; and the development of a formal relationship with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), including agreements on relationships between the YTAT initiative and the State Inter-agency Team. To access the Progress Report, visit www.newwaystowork.org/documents/ytatdocuments/ytatprogressreportjan2006.pdf (PDF 337 kb). To access the Highlights Sheet, visit <http://www.newwaystowork.org/documents/ytatdocuments/YouthTransitionActionTeamInitiativeHighlights.pdf> (PDF 64 kb).

Youth Transition Action Team 2006 Calendar

February

YTAT Evaluation Workgroup - Conference Call
Site Lead Meeting - Conference Call

April

YTAT Evaluation Workgroup - Conference Call

March

Network Content Conference Call
YTAT Regional Workshops

May or June

YTAT Team Institute

To download a PDF version of the calendar, visit [YTAT2006Calendar](http://www.newwaystowork.org/documents/ytatdocuments/YTAT2006Calendar12%2005.pdf) (PDF 56 kb).
(<http://www.newwaystowork.org/documents/ytatdocuments/YTAT2006Calendar12%2005.pdf>)

Note: New Ways staff are in the process of gathering more information from local Transition Action Teams regarding their training and support needs. Once this information has been collected, specific topics as well as dates and times will be determined, posted on the YTAT web site, and sent to everyone on the YTAT listserv.

To have your name added to the listserv, please contact Chandra Larsen at clarsen@newwaystowork.org.

ON THE GROUND

Innovative Approaches from Around the State

On January 4 & 5, 2006 *New Ways* convened a YATAT content conference call on Workforce Development for Foster Youth. Panelists from Orange County, Humboldt County, and the San Pasqual Academy of San Diego County shared highlights from their efforts to improve access to employment development services for foster youth. The three articles in this issue's **On the Ground** summarize those initiatives.

Orange County Workforce Investment Board and Social Services Agency Collaboration Enhances Access to Employment Development Services for Foster Youth

Staff from the Orange County Workforce Investment Board (OCWIB) and the Orange County Social Services Agency (OCSSA), Children and Family Services Division, have made serving foster youth a high priority. Recognizing the need to collaborate in order to help foster youth receive all the services and support they need, staff from the two agencies have built a long-standing relationship.

Representatives from the OCWIB participate in Social Services Agency meetings on a consistent, ongoing basis. In addition, the OCWIB staff ask for opportunities to inform not only the administration, but case workers as well regarding the services that the workforce development system can provide. (Note: The Orange County Workforce Investment Board is now housed under the parent organization known as Orange County Housing and Community Development Agency - Workforce Investment Board.)

OCWIB and OCSSA staff worked together to secure a miscellaneous court order that allows five agencies to share information. The agencies include the OCSSA; Orange County Probation Department; Orange County Housing and Community Services Department; Workforce Investment Board; City of Santa Ana, Workforce Investment Board; and City of Anaheim, Workforce Investment Board. The court order permits them to share "all relevant information and recordings including, but not limited to, Transitional Independent Living Plans, Vocational Assessments, WIA contract progress reports, and outcome reports among the members of multi-disciplinary services teams."



The court order was issued in April of 2005, in anticipation of the finalizing of the order to include referrals to WIA services in each TILP. Bob Malmberg of OCSSA had a previous working relationship with Presiding Juvenile Court Judge Robert Hutson, which helped keep the process moving. To view the court order, visit

<http://www.newwaystowork.org/documents/ytatdocuments/FYMiscOrder.pdf>. (PDF 667 kb).

The WIB and SSA staff also developed a Service Referral Form (SRF) in order to share information about how youth they were both serving were progressing. Referring agencies attach any assessments or relevant information; receiving agencies submit a status report to the referring agency within 30 to 45 days. The SRF helps alleviate the need for youth to fill out the same forms more than once, and it strengthens the support that agencies are able to provide since they have a means to work together to ensure a youth is getting the support he or she needs and is progressing towards a successful transition. To access the form, visit

www.newwaystowork.org/documents/ytatdocuments/OSCServiceReferralForm.doc. For more information, contact Mercedes Julian at Mercedes.Julian@csa.ocgov.com or Bob Malmberg at Bob.Malmberg@ssa.ocgov.com. To visit the Orange County WIB Youth services web site, go to <http://www.ocwib.org/Youth.aspx>. To visit the Orange County Social Services Agency – Children and Family Services web site, go to http://www.ssa.ocgov.com/Agency_Services/Children_and_Family_Services/default.asp.

Humboldt County Youth Transition Action Team Building Connections to Strengthen Employment Development Opportunities and Support for Foster Youth

Workforce development members of the Humboldt County Transition Action Team (TAT) saw limitations to the employment development services they were able to offer foster youth. Humboldt County is currently providing employment preparation services for all youth through WIA (and other programs) in strategically located high schools. Youth over 18 are also served through adult One-Stop centers. According to Steve Hughes, Humboldt TAT member and Program Coordinator for Employment and Training at the Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services, the “Youth Program Operators do an excellent job, and we all want to maximize services to our youth population.”

The Humboldt TAT is focusing on increasing member involvement and participation. One strategy the TAT site leaders are using is to recruit members from beyond the County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Even though the DHHS is organized as a super agency, which facilitates information sharing and relationship building across all departments, TAT Site Leaders Joe Davey, Humboldt

County Employment and Training Operations Manager, and Beverly Morgan Lewis, Director, Social Services Branch, have been bringing members from other segments of the community onto the team. Hughes notes, “We’re trying to collaborate with anyone who is interested. Letting everyone know is important.”

Even though the Humboldt TAT is in its early stages, members are starting to see changes. “YTAT is bringing a lot more people [together] who should be there. We’re starting to see alignment of all the agencies,” says Davey. “With YTAT, we’re seeing a shift in focus [in employment preparation services]. We’re hoping to see an enhancement in employment services over the next year,” adds Hughes. Davey points out that while progress is being made, it will take time. “We have to let the thing grow naturally.”

For more information, please contact Joe Davey at JDavey@co.humboldt.ca.us or Steve Hughes at SHughes@co.humboldt.ca.us.

San Pasqual Academy Offers Comprehensive Support Services to Foster Youth

San Diego County and City have a history of strong support for youth workforce development activities and for supporting foster youth. At a conference in the late 1990s, foster youth explained that the lack of stable foster homes made it hard to get a consistent education. They had to keep changing schools. Employment preparation was also a challenge because it was difficult to access job training and work opportunities.

Responding to the issues identified by the youth, leaders in San Diego recognized the need to provide alternative, stable housing and the opportunity to attend the same school consistently. They decided to create a residential school that also offered other needed support services. San Diego County Board of Supervisors and the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court system led the effort. The County set aside funds from multiple private and public sources by involving four hundred stakeholders. A 238-acre former private school was purchased. The four components of care - housing, education, work readiness, and child welfare - were incorporated and multiple funding streams were channeled.

San Pasqual Academy opened in 2001 with four major partners involved in the operation of the Academy: New Alternatives, Inc. manages the residential component; the San Diego County Office of Education oversees the high school; the San Diego Workforce Partnership (the San Diego WIB) manages the work-readiness component called the YES Program; and the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency manages child welfare services. Each of the

partners came to the Academy with its own system, so collaboration and coordination were crucial. According to Dan Radojevic, Employment Services Coordinator for the YES Program at San Pasqual Academy, “We had to have a common language, [so] we got together and created a Memorandum of Understanding of all the roles and responsibilities of the partners on the campus. [We also hold] a lot of meetings using similar tools for assessment and determining needs of students on campus. So we all work together.”

The Academy has been in operation for 4 years. Currently there are 130 students. In addition to educational services, youth enrolled at San Pasqual have access to One-Stop services. “We’ve almost made it a de facto One-stop,” Radojevic says.

“San Pasqual Academy provides foster youth with stability, a home, education, and a chance to be safe and prepare for the future,” Radojevic points out. It also gives youth in foster care an option; they now can choose between San Pasqual and another placement. This situation creates a stronger buy-in from the youth who opt to go to the Academy. “It changes how caseworkers work with foster youth and how the youth see things,” adds Radojevic.

Currently, an additional 20 youth are enrolled in the
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CYC CORNER

News from the California Youth Connection (CYC)

Day at the Capitol:

Foster Youth Are a Powerful Force at the State Capitol

By Jennifer Rodriguez, CYC Legislative and Policy Coordinator

Skeptics who doubt the ability of foster youth to participate in foster care reform efforts need only look at the California Youth Connection's impact on foster care policy to realize how critical and powerful foster youth involvement in policy making is. For eighteen years, California foster youth have been shaping and driving efforts to improve foster care services through participating in the California Youth Connection (CYC), a non-profit foster youth advocacy and youth leadership organization. One of the most important events for both the youth who are members of CYC and policy makers concerned with foster care issues is CYC's annual Day at the Capitol conference.

The goal of Day at the Capitol is to train and organize foster youth to educate legislators about priority issues for change and to create the opportunity for foster youth to offer their own recommendations for change. Youth members of the Sacramento chapter organize the logistics of the conference so that over 100 current and former foster youth from across the state can come together at the Capitol for three days. CYC provides pre-conference leadership training to youth facilitators where youth learn a curriculum designed to provide their peers with a deeper understanding of CYC's legislative issues and the legislative process as well as to build excitement and confidence. These youth facilitators become the leaders of the conference by running workshops to prepare members to conduct effective visits with legislators, to utilize the media as an advocacy tool, and to frame policy issues. On the final day of the conference, foster youth conduct visits with all 120 legislative offices to meet with legislators and staff and share their experiences and ideas for change.

CYC members are focusing on higher education support for foster youth and the need to offer services to former foster youth past the age of 21. This year is a particularly exciting year, since there is increased focus on foster care emancipation issues with the formation of the [Assembly Select Committee on Foster Care](#) (<http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a47/press/a472005013.htm>), chaired by [Assembly Member Karen Bass](#).

(<http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a47/>). On the final day of the conference, CYC holds a rally on the west steps of the Capitol, where youth speak and present awards to legislators, policy makers and those who have particularly supported their advocacy efforts. This is always an inspirational, powerful event, and they invite everyone in the community to come to the rally to support CYC and foster youth's efforts.

Last year, foster youth focused their legislative visits on educating legislators about the importance of involving foster youth in permanency efforts and the need to extend foster care for youth who have not graduated high school. As a result of these efforts, CYC introduced two bills which were signed into law by the Governor in October. AB 1412 (Leno, Chapter 640, Statutes of 2005) requires social workers to ask all foster youth about who is important to them and take action to maintain these relationships, and gives youth the right to participate in the development of their permanency case plan after the age of 12. AB 1633 (Evans, Chapter 641, Statutes of 2005) allows foster youth working on a high school equivalency to stay in foster care until the age of 19. As these bills came in front of legislators throughout the year, they were moved to take action as they recalled youth sharing their experiences of leaving care without any family relationships and their struggles to graduate high school while trying to achieve self-sufficiency.



On behalf of current and former foster youth throughout California, we hope to see you at our 2006 Day at the Capitol rally! The rally is a great place to see foster youth empowerment in action and to honor the tremendous impact of foster youth advocacy. The rally will take place on Monday, January 30th from 12-1 on the West Steps of the Capitol. CYC has issued a press release describing the Day at the Capitol events. To read the press release, visit www.newwaystowork.org/documents/ytatdocuments/cycpressrelease.pdf (PDF 17kb). If you are interested in attending or would like more information on the rally, please contact Kristal at (415) 442-5060 or kristal@calyouthconn.org.

RESOURCE ROUNDUP

Publications & Materials

Transition-Age Youth Resource Guide for California

The California Mental Health Directors' Association – Transitional Age Youth (TAY) Committee has released a resource guide for working with Transition Age Youth in California. The guide is directed toward the full range of human service providers, from mental health directors to line staff.

www.cmhda.org/tayRG.html

Youth Program Quality Assessment

The meeting report, called *Youth Program Quality Assessment and Improvement: Celebrating Progress and Surfacing Challenges*, from the Forum for Youth Investment (FYI) reviews a new youth program assessment from High/Scope Foundation. It summarizes presentations made at the May 19, 2005 meeting convened by FYI.

www.forumfyi.org/Files/ProgramQualityMtgRpt.pdf

School Mental Health Services in the United States 2002 – 2003

This report from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration describes the first national survey of mental health services in a representative sample of the approximately 83,000 public elementary, middle, and high schools. Topics include types of mental health problems common in school settings, services available, numbers and qualifications of school mental health services staff, provision for mental health services delivery - including partnerships with community-based providers, and funding sources.

www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/media/ken/pdf/SMA05-4068/SMA05-4068.pdf

Well-Being as an Outcome for Child Welfare System

A new book from Chapin Hall, entitled *Beyond Common Sense: Child Welfare, Child Well-Being, and the Evidence for Policy Reform*, examines child well-being as an outcome established to manage the child welfare system. The authors conclude that the concept, though intuitively appealing, can be challenging to use as a guide for policy.

www.chapinhall.org/article_abstract.aspx?ar=1408&L2=61&L3=129

Handbook for Child Welfare

Child Welfare for the 21st Century: A Handbook of Practices, Policies, and Programs, brings together the writings of more than 75 academics, policymakers, and practitioners in the field of child welfare. The handbook addresses safety, permanency, and well-being of children and the impact of current child welfare practice. It is available from Columbia Univ. Press.

www.columbia.edu/cu/cup/catalog/data/023113/0231130724.HTM

Report from the White House Conference on Youth

This report, called *Helping America's Youth*, presents all of the formal remarks made at the October 27, 2005 conference sponsored by First Lady Laura Bush.

www.helpingyouthconference.org/conference-remarks.pdf

Research on Transition to Adulthood for Vulnerable Populations

On Your Own Without a Net: The Transition to Adulthood for Vulnerable Populations, prepared in conjunction with the MacArthur Research Network on Transitions to Adulthood, documents the major challenges facing young people leaving the juvenile justice, foster care, special education, mental health, and disability services systems. It also identifies ways to improve outcomes for these young people.

www.press.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/hfs.cgi/00/158258.ctl

Budget Bill's Impact on Family Support Programs

The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) has compiled a list of resources that analyze the budget reconciliation bill's impact on TANF and

child care; child support; child welfare; Medicaid; and student loans. www.clasp.org/NewsFlash/Reconcil/

National League of Cities Platform for Strengthening Families

The National League of Cities recently released a new platform, called *A City Platform on Strengthening Families and Improving Outcomes for Children and Youth*, that recommends various ways in which mayors, council members, and senior city administrators can improve outcomes for children, youth, and families.

www.nlc.org/content/Files/TYEFPlatform05.pdf (PDF)

NEW CONNECTIONS Timely Sources of Information

Chafee Assessment

www.chafee.org

Helping America's Youth web site

www.helpingamericasyouth.gov/default.htm

National Foster Parent Association

www.nfpainc.org/ref/nfcc.cfm?page=5

Foster Youth Net

www.fosteryouth.net/forums/howPost.aspx?PostID=28

Bust'n Out

www.fosteryouth.net/Home_Page/Home_Page.asp

UPCOMING CONFERENCES & EVENTS

California Youth Connection (CYC) Day at the Capitol Rally

January 30, 2006 1 – 2 pm PST (Sacramento, CA)

In this annual event, CYC members raise awareness of foster care issues. This year, CYC members will focus on higher education support for foster youth and the need to offer services to former foster youth past the age of 21. To attend or to receive more information, please contact Kristal at (415)442-5060 or kristal@calyouthconn.org. To read press release, visit www.newwaystowork.org/documents/ytatdocuments/cycpressrelease.pdf (PDF 17kb).

National Network for Youth Symposium

February 5 – 8, 2006 (Washington, DC)

Symposium 2006 will provide opportunities to reflect on the accomplishments of the past 31 years of the Network members' services and programming for youth as well as focus on the future of the youth-services profession.

www.nn4youth.org/site/PageServer?pagename=meetings_symposium

Thursday's Child Monthly Forum for February: Vulnerable Youth and the Transition to Adulthood

February 9, 2006 (Washington, DC)

Cosponsored by Chapin Hall and the Urban Institute, This event will feature four panelists who will discuss the types of policies and programs that will best assist vulnerable youth, including foster youth, in becoming successful adults. They will examine the crucial role of education and employment. To register, visit www.acteva.com/booking.cfm?bevaid=103180.

Child Welfare League of America National Conference

February 27-March 1, 2006 (Washington, DC)

This conference, titled *Children 2006: Securing Brighter Futures*, will focus on bringing that vision into focus on the practical level. It will also provide a showcase for best-practice models, a springboard for more responsive public policy, and a catalyst for local and national collaborations. To register, email register@cwla.org. For more information, visit

www.cwla.org/conferences/ShowConference.asp?CONF=NATIONAL&YEAR=2006

Web Conference: "Keeping Kids in the Child Welfare System after 18."

March 1, 2006 10:00 am PST

Recent research conducted by Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago suggests that youth who are permitted to remain in care and continue to receive services past their eighteenth birthdays fare much better than those who leave the child welfare system at eighteen. This web seminar – the first in a series of monthly conferences - will present an overview of the new research and provide state lawmakers, policy-makers, advocates, and others with an opportunity to learn about the experiences of states that allow youth to remain in foster care past their eighteenth birthdays. For more information, please visit www.about.chapinhall.org/ncsl/.

National Youth Employment Coalition Members Forum and Retreat 2006

March 23 – 25, 2006 (Austin, TX)

This member-driven, member-focused meeting provides attendees with opportunities to learn about topics that address needs and trends in the field. For more information, visit www.nyec.org/forum/.

National Foster Parent Association (NFPA) Education Conference

May 1-5, 2006 (San Antonio, TX)

The 36th annual NFPA National Education Conference is designed to provide high quality training for beginning and experienced foster parents, social workers, supervisors, administrators, and professionals in related disciplines. The National Conference offers an opportunity for networking among foster parents and professionals across the nation and most important ... to have fun! For more information and to register, visit www.nfpainc.org/training/conference.cfm?page=4.

CAPITOL STEPS

News about Federal Budget & Legislation and Recently Passed California Foster Care Legislation

Federal Budget & Legislation

FY 2006 Budget

During the week of December 18, the House and Senate narrowly approved a budget reconciliation bill (S. 1932, H.Rept. 109-362) that will cut nearly \$40 billion in spending, including \$6.9 billion from Medicaid, \$1.5 billion from child support enforcement, and \$600 million from foster care programs. However, the Senate struck three provisions from the bill, which will result in the House reexamining the legislation when it reconvenes later this month. The House is scheduled to vote on February 1. (Source: Child Welfare League of America)

Federal Youth Coordination Act

On November 15, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Federal Youth Coordination Act by a vote of 353-62. The Act establishes a Federal Youth Development Council that will improve communication among federal agencies serving youth, assess youths' needs, set goals for helping them, and expand effective programs. The Senate has yet to vote on the Act.

Workforce Investment Act

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) reauthorization is stalled. After an agreement to permit "100 percent transferability" between the WIA Dislocated Workers and WIA Adult funding streams, there was some hope that the Senate would pass its version of the WIA reauthorization. However, due to unresolved concerns over religious hiring provisions, there has been no movement on the bill. It may be taken up next year.

Recently Passed Foster Care Legislation in California

Governor Schwarzenegger signed the following bills into law on October 7, 2005:

Foster Care: Transitional Housing (SB 436)

SB 436 recognizes that parenting and pregnant foster youth risk being separated from their children. SB 436 provides a safety net and increases the amount of housing available for pregnant and parenting foster teens.

AFDC-FC: Pregnant and Parenting Foster Youth (SB 500)

Like SB 436, SB 500 recognizes that parenting and pregnant foster youth need help caring for their children. SB 500 keeps teenage mothers in foster care united with their babies by providing placement in a whole family foster home where teen parents develop the skills necessary to provide a safe, stable and permanent home for their children. In addition, this legislation allows for full foster care payment to be paid for both the teen parent and their child and provides an additional \$200 a month in support for the child.

NEWS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES California High School Exit Exam Exemption for Students with Disabilities

The Sacramento Bee reported on January 19, 2006 that "approximately 25,000 California high school students with disabilities in this year's graduating class likely will be exempt from passing the state's exit exam under an agreement announced Thursday by leaders of the Legislature, state Department of Education and the governor's education office." To link to their article, go to http://www.sacbee.com/content/news/projects/exit_exam/story/14090995p-14921015c.html.

Parental Rights (AB 519)

AB 519 addresses the fact that youth leaving foster care may want to maintain a legal connection to their family of origin or to another family. AB 519 allows foster youth to emancipate from the foster care system with the child's legal parentage intact and a connection to a family and therefore reinstates the child's right to inheritance, social security, and other survivor benefits.

AFDC-FC benefits: Transitional Housing (AB 824)

AB 824 addresses the fact that as many as 40% of the youth emancipating from foster care end up homeless within the first year. AB 824 stabilizes housing needs for youth exiting the foster care program by offering transitional assistance up to age 24.

Permanency for All Foster Youth (AB 1412)

AB 1412 addresses the fact that a basic need of every foster youth is a consistent, secure, permanent relationship with at least one adult is often not being met. AB1412 was introduced in February 2005. It expands AB 408 by requiring social workers to ask foster youth in every type of placement about adult relationships that are important to them, take actions to support and maintain those relationships, and explore them as potential permanency options. Additionally, social workers will be required to allow youth to be involved in their case plan, particularly their permanency plan, immediately when youth enter foster care. Youth will also be involved in convening a team of adults that will focus on achieving and maintaining permanence. The goal is to have every youth in foster care connected to at least one caring adult on a permanent basis.

Governor's State of the State Address

On January 4, Governor Schwarzenegger made his State of the State address, which included significant increases in spending in education and other social services. For detailed descriptions about the Governor's plan, visit his website at www.governor.ca.gov/state/govsite/gov_h.html?display.jsp?sCatTitle=Speeches&sFilePath=/govsite/selected_speeches/20060105_StateoftheState.html.

Foster Children: Social Security Assistance: High School (AB 1633)

AB 1633 acknowledges that not all blind and disabled children in foster care who are eligible for Social Security survivorship-and supplemental-security-income benefits receive them because the State does not have a program in place to manage those benefits. AB 1633 requires the California Department of Social Services to convene a workgroup to develop best practice guidelines for county welfare departments to assist children residing in the state's or a county's custody who are eligible for social security benefits and supplemental security income benefits. AB 1633 also acknowledges that youth in foster care who are working on completing their high school degree but who will not finish before their 18th birthday are likely to find it very difficult to continue their education if they are forced to leave foster care at age 18. AB 1633 expands existing law to allow 18-year-old foster youth to remain in their foster home until age 19 while they are in the process of completing their high school equivalency certificate.

“San Pasqual Academy” Continued from page 6

Academy's transitional living program. “Graduation is one of the steps in facilitating their successful integration into the world and college,” says Radojevic.

In the four graduating classes, everyone who has made it to their senior year has graduated. In last year's class of 22 graduates, 16 went directly on to college. The other six enrolled in the Academy's transitional living program, which requires them to enroll in college and get a job within a certain time frame.

Support from all the partners has been critical to San Pasqual Academy's success. “We would not work if we didn't have the total buy-in of the governmental leaders and leadership in the various systems,” says Radojevic. The Academy is planning to increase its capacity so that it will serve 250 youth.

For more information, contact Margie Rosas, Youth Programs Manager, San Diego Workforce Partnership margier@workforce.org or Dan Radojevic, Employment Services Coordinator, YES Program at San Pasqual Academy, and San Diego Workforce Partnership dan@workforce.org. To visit the San Pasqual website, go to www.sanpasqualacademy.org/.

“Revised California Regulations” Continued from page 2

other sources of such services). This requirement appears in California Department of Social Services Section 30-918 .1 .11 (d).

Second, the regulations state that the social worker or probation officer

shall assist the youth to complete the emancipation preparation goals described in the TILP by collaborating with public and private agencies/persons including but not limited to schools, colleges, the Department of Education, Mental Health, ILP coordinators, care providers, the Student Aid Commission, Workforce Investment Act programs and services, the Employment Development Department and One-Stop Career Centers. (Section 31-236 (h)).

Third, the regulations invite provider participation in the development of individual TILPs. Section 31-525 .6 .65 now includes the following sentence: “Counties shall encourage providers to participate in the development of the TILP.” To access the portions of the regulations where these changes appear and to read other changes in these sections not directly related to WIA, visit www.newwaystowork.org/documents/ytatdocuments/WIA_Extracts.doc (Word document). To access the full text, visit www.newwaystowork.org/documents/ytatdocuments/Division%2030%20and%20Division%2030%20Regulations.doc (Word document). Our thanks to Bob Malmberg for supplying these documents.



ABOUT YOUTH TRANSITION ACTION TEAMS (YTAT)

The Youth Transition Action Team Initiative focuses on bringing together the resources of the workforce, education and child welfare systems to better prepare adolescents who are current or former foster youth to achieve economic, educational and employment success as they transition into the adult world.

Transition Action Teams are made up of leaders from the child welfare, education, workforce development and other local systems, working together to improve transition outcomes for youth touched by the child welfare system. Teams are also charged with assisting their county in achieving their child welfare system enhancement goals, particularly in the area of youth permanency.

For more information about the YTAT initiative, please contact Chandra Larsen at clarsen@newwaystowork.org.

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