



# Connecting Foster Youth to Summer Employment

**Content Conference Call**

**April 1, 2009**



**New Ways to Work  
and the  
California Child Welfare Co-Investment  
Partnership**

# Housekeeping

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- A facilitated Q & A will occur after the presentation. Questions should be submitted via the “chat” screen in the lower left hand corner of your screen
- If you are not accessing the web feature of this conference call you can send your questions to Heidi Peyser, [hpeyser@newwaystowork.org](mailto:hpeyser@newwaystowork.org) . You can also access the PowerPoint presentation by going to the New Ways to Work website at [www.newwaystowork.org](http://www.newwaystowork.org)
- If you have any trouble with your phone or internet access on this call please contact Heidi Peyser 707-824-4000 x 31 or [hpeyser@newwaystowork.org](mailto:hpeyser@newwaystowork.org)



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## Our Presenters

- **Barbara Halsey**, Director, California Workforce Investment Board
- **Karen Fies**, Director, County of Sonoma Human Services Department, Employment and Training Division
- **Lisa Salazar**, Director, Los Angeles County Youth Opportunity System, Community Development Department
- **Steve Hughes**, Humboldt County Program Coordinator / Disability Program Navigator, Department of Health and Human Services Social Services Branch, Employment Training Division
- **Steve Trippe**, Executive Director, New Ways to Work



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# American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

- Provides 1.2 billion dollars to support youth workforce programs under the Workforce Investment Act, including summer employment for youth
- Creates a great opportunity for every current or former foster youth that wants and needs a job this summer to have one



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# From the State's Perspective

**Barbara Halsey, Director, California Workforce  
Investment Board**

WIA Youth Programs  
under the  
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act



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# When Summer Programs were Vibrant

- Historically, through federal workforce programs such as CETA and JTPA, youth workforce funding included year round job training opportunities for economically disadvantaged youth that included summer employment programs
- The authorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in 1998 shifted the focus of youth programming to year-round while funding reductions over the years resulted in a steady decline or elimination of a discreet, subsidized summer jobs program for youth around the country



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# When Summer Programs were Vibrant

- Programs ran for six to eight weeks
- Combined subsidized work experience with basic skills and the development of work readiness skills
- Youth were placed at individual worksites in the public or non-profit sectors or on environmental work crews for 20 to 30 hours per week



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# What Will California's Program Look Like This Summer

1. Dollars will flow through the state to local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs)
2. Local Youth Councils and WIBs will determine:
  - Priority populations for participation
  - Local program design
  - Selection of sub-contractors to deliver the program
  - Balance between allocations to summer and year round programming



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# What Will California's Program Look Like This Summer

3. Eligibility criteria will be consistent with existing WIA youth programs with the exception that the upper age limit will be **extended to age 24 for youth served with Recovery Act funds**. Youth are eligible based on the following criteria:

- Are 14-24 years of age
- Are low-income as determined by state and federal guidelines
- Have at least one barrier (i.e. deficient in basic literacy skills, school drop out , unemployed or underemployed homeless, runaway, foster child, pregnant or parenting, offender, potential school dropout)



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# What Will California's Program Look Like This Summer

4. Local areas must spend a minimum of 30 percent of their funds on out-of-school youth. Out-of-school youth are defined as:
  - Eligible youth, who are drop-outs, or those who have received secondary school diplomas (or the equivalent) but are basic skills deficient, unemployed, or under-employed
5. Placements may include a combination of public sector, private sector, and non-profit summer employment opportunities



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## Examples of Local Practice

- **Steve Hughes, Humboldt County, Step-Up! Program**
- **Lisa Salazar, Los Angeles County, Summer Jobs and Foster Youth Summer Jobs *Plus* Programs**
- **Karen Fies, Sonoma County Youth Summer Jobs Program and Summer Youth Ecology Corp**



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# What you can do to make sure foster youth get connected

1. **Connect with your local Youth Council, Workforce Investment Board, and WIA service providers.**
  - Let them know you are ready to help, and are already working with a group of young people that would benefit from the experience



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# What you can do to make sure foster youth get connected

## 2. Make sure youth have the required eligibility documentation.

- You can streamline the process by ensuring that the youth you refer have the necessary documents in hand prior to enrolling in the program. Local WIA Areas determine income eligibility documentation requirements

Right to Work documentation includes:

- A passport (which proves both identity and U.S. citizenship), or
- A birth certificate or driver's license AND a social security **card**
- Non-citizens must also provide right to work (green card)
- Other documentation that demonstrates specific barriers to success may be requested by the local area



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# What you can do to make sure foster youth get connected

## 3. Prepare youth for employment

- Spend some time developing work maturity skills
- Develop a plan for dealing with barriers such as transportation
- Help youth identify the types of opportunities they are interested in most by conducting career interest assessments
- Encourage young people to think about how the summer work experience can contribute to their career and educational goals



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# What you can do to make sure foster youth get connected

## 4. Identify possible worksite placements for youth

- You can help lay the groundwork by:
  - Identifying potential positive worksite experiences with local partners
  - Informing your local WIB and service providers that you have some potential worksite leads to follow up on
  - Hosting a youth in your organization



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# Resources

- New Ways is offering a helpline. If you need assistance in contacting your local Workforce Investment Board, call us at (707) 824-4000 , ext 27 or email Lisa Elliott at [l Elliott@newwaystowork.org](mailto:l Elliott@newwaystowork.org)
- Visit the California Workforce Association's website for a directory of County Workforce Investment Boards at <http://www.calworkforce.org/LWIADir.html>
- You may also search the California Workforce Investment Board's website at <http://www.calwia.org/lwia/index.cfm>



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