



## FOSTER YOUTH ISSUE BRIEF

# Foster Youth Legal Issues and Legislation

April 2006

## Why is this important?

Current and former foster youth rely upon state and federal laws to provide a workable framework of supports for their well being and successful transition into adulthood. Over the last several years, in keeping with the tremendous attention focused on improving state and local foster care systems, advocates—and foster youth themselves—have supported a variety of bills designed to address specific needs of youth in care as well as those emancipated from care. Since 2000, more than thirty-five bills have been passed in California to support systems reform the child welfare system, and these legislative efforts continue. Current and former foster youth are developing and promoting additional legislative agendas (through organizations such as California Youth Connection) to further address their needs. It's critical, therefore, that adults who work on behalf of these young people have a working knowledge of the proposed and passed legislation.

Supporting beneficial legislation is only part of the task. Unfortunately, foster youth and the people who serve them report that implementation of the laws has not yet happened in many cases. As a result, community leaders who are committed to ensuring the successful transitions of foster youth need also to educate their colleagues—and the broader community—in order to help ensure that the systemic changes specific pieces of legislation are intended to effect actually come into being and benefit the young people they are designed to serve.

This *Foster Youth Issue Brief* has been developed to assist people involved in California system improvement efforts focused on transition supports for current and former foster youth. It has been produced as a service of the Youth Transition Action Teams Initiative (YTAT). Designed to support counties statewide in meeting their systems improvement objectives, YTAT is a local and statewide effort focused on bringing together the resources of the workforce, education, philanthropic, social service, and child welfare systems to better prepare current and former foster youth to achieve economic, educational, and employment success as they transition into adulthood. Participating counties expressed interest in learning more about the legislation affecting foster youth throughout the state. To respond to this need, New Ways to Work hosted a conference call to discuss legal issues and legislation affecting foster youth. This *Foster Youth Issue Brief* highlights information shared during the March 2006 conference call. The conversation was facilitated by Steve Trippe, Executive Director of New Ways to Work, and featured three panelists: Miriam Aroni Krinsky, Executive Director of the Children's Law Center of Los Angeles (CLCLA); Kathy Dresslar, Staff to California Assemblyman Mark Leno (D–San Francisco); and Jennifer Troia, Equal Justice Works Fellow at the Youth Law Center in San Francisco.

## Key Legal Issues Facing Foster Youth

According to Miriam Krinsky, "It is critical to listen to youth themselves first when preparing to work on issues legislatively." The CLCLA regularly seeks out the perspectives of youth and in particular works with the California Youth Connection, the advocacy organization by and for transitioning and emancipated foster youth that prepares a California legislative or implementation agenda every year. Drawing upon feedback from youth, the panelists cited several topics that they've found are the most critical to improving the lives of foster youth within and emancipating from foster care: **Connections, Normalcy, Housing, and Education**. The following sections provide a summary of the discussions and a brief introduction to the corresponding bills as they relate to each of these areas.

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## CRITICAL LEGISLATION #1: CONNECTIONS

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All young people need to have someone with whom they are connected. According to Kathy Dresslar, “Studies have shown that emancipated youth who have succeeded in school and in careers generally can point to at least one person who really cared about them.” The goal, therefore, for service providers and child welfare workers who support youth emancipating from foster care, is to ensure that youth are connected to somebody when they emancipate, someone they can call and who can be an anchor through their transition.

*“Independent living hinges on a concept that you can live independently—I don’t believe that’s true—you have to have connections in this world.”*

-Kathy Dresslar

The focus on sustaining kin relationships has been propelled by youth expressing their need to be connected to family and siblings, which they see as life-long relationships. “In kin care you have established relationships,” said Dresslar. By supporting kin care and positive relationships with siblings and members of a youth’s extended family, child welfare workers, and service providers are promoting sustainable connections for youth.

Dresslar went on to explain that “Establishing kin care [AB 1193] is one of the most important pieces of legislation that has passed. One third of foster youth are in kin care, and we are excited about this year making sure that the legal supports are there.” Several other bills support sibling and kin connections for foster youth (see side bar). AB 579 mandates that notice be provided to foster youth about the status of their siblings’ legal proceedings. AB 2196 ensures that if youth are adopted, they have the right to be informed about their siblings’ placements.

### Important Legislation Supporting Connections

#### **AB 408 Check for Important People and Prudent Parent (Chapter 813, Statutes of 2003)<sup>1</sup>**

AB 408 is focused on identifying and supporting permanent connections and maintaining foster youth normalcy and involvement in extracurricular activities. (For more on the prudent parent elements, see Critical Legislation # 2: Normalcy, page 3.) Among a variety of requirements, AB 408 addresses the connection issue by requiring social workers to ask youth to identify people with whom they feel close and to make sure that information is included in their plan.

#### **AB 2196 Post Adoption Contact with Siblings (Chapter 1072, Statutes of 1997)<sup>2</sup>**

AB 2196 requires the social worker to include a discussion of sibling visitation and contact in a child’s case plan when a child is going to be adopted. The bill also authorizes the court to include in an adoption order provisions that will facilitate sibling contact as long as the adoptive parents do not object.

#### **AB 579 Dependent Children: Notice to Siblings (Chapter 558, Statutes of 2003)<sup>1, 3</sup>**

AB 579 requires that a social worker, probation officer, or court clerk provide hearing notices to a youth’s siblings who are 10 years old or older.

#### **SB 591 Willingness of Caregiver to Provide Legal Permanency (Chapter 812, Statutes of 2003)<sup>1</sup>**

SB 591 requires that the study or evaluation—and the information received in evidence by the court—include the willingness of the caregiver to provide legal permanency for the child if reunification is unsuccessful.

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## CRITICAL LEGISLATION #2: NORMALCY

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One of the most challenging issues for foster youth is having some modicum of normalcy—being able to do things other young people their age get to do. “Youth say it’s important to them to be able to participate in ‘normal’ youth activities,” notes Krinsky. “For example, they want to be able to go on field trips or to the prom without having everyone involved be fingerprinted.”

AB 408 addresses this need by mandating that all youth in foster care have access to developmentally appropriate extra curricular and social activities, and by requiring all caregivers to use the same standards that parents use when determining whether an activity is appropriate for a young person—not more rigid standards.

### Important Legislation Supporting Normalcy

#### **AB 408 Prudent Parent and Check for Important People (Chapter 813, Statutes of 2003)<sup>1</sup>**

AB 408 requires caregivers to use a prudent parent standard to determine whether to grant permission for the child to participate in any particular activity. It mandates that all children in foster care have access to age- and developmentally appropriate extra curricular, enrichment, and social activities. (For more on the Check for Important People elements, see Critical Legislation # 1: Connections, page 2.)

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## CRITICAL LEGISLATION #3: HOUSING

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Another critical issue faced by foster youth is finding quality housing as they emancipate from the foster care system. The abrupt change from having virtually all aspects of their lives directed by adults to having nearly nothing supplied creates many challenges for youth leaving foster care. Youth report that when they have access to safe housing—and accompanying transition support services—during the first years after emancipation, they can more easily focus on continuing their education and establishing their career.

Several bills address the need to support successful transitions to adulthood by providing housing—and access to other needed supports—during the transition and emancipation years. AB 824 increases the age of eligibility and housing accessibility for emancipated foster youth up to the age of 24. SB 436 supports housing for parenting foster youth and their children. SB 436 supported “ending the presumption that parenting foster teens can’t parent well,” noted Krinsky.

### Important Legislation Supporting Housing

#### **AB 1198 Transitional Housing Program (Chapter 799, Statutes of 1993)<sup>2</sup>**

AB 1198 creates the “in-care” transitional housing option for foster youth 17 years of age or older and in their last year of high school. Youth live in apartments or houses with close monitoring and supervision from the county or from a private agency. This affords youth the opportunity to practice living on their own while social worker services are still available to them.

#### **AB 824 AFDC-FC benefits: Transitional Housing (Chapter 636, Statutes of 2005)<sup>3</sup>**

AB 824 stabilizes housing needs for youth exiting the foster care program by offering transitional assistance up to age 24.

#### **SB 436 Foster Care: Transitional Housing (Chapter 629, Statutes of 2005)**

SB 436 provides a safety net for pregnant and parenting foster teens and increases the amount of housing available for them.

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## CRITICAL LEGISLATION #4: EDUCATION

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Education is a critical issue for youth in foster care as it is for all young people. A Casey National Alumni Study (2003) of youth who had emancipated from foster care shows that education, for the participants in that study, was the single most important factor in positive transition outcomes. Furthermore, according to a 2003 study of 262 youth in foster care in St. Louis County, MO, conducted by the George Warren Brown (GWB) School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis, 70% of the youth had a desire to attend college.

Several new bills establish procedures designed to support foster youth as they pursue their elementary and secondary education. AB 490 and AB 1858 aim to make significant improvements within public school procedures so that foster youth have a better chance to succeed in school by requiring that they not be forced to change schools unnecessarily, won't lose credits when transferring is necessary, and can immediately enroll and quickly receive records at a new school.

Other California bills—as well as the Federal Chaffee Grant Program—provide support for post-secondary education. (For more on the Chaffee Program, see page 5.) Jennifer Troia of the Youth Law Center discussed legislation that supports higher education readiness by offering services, supports, and grants to all foster youth. California bills include AB 2463, which establishes support services for foster youth throughout the California State University and California community college systems, and SB 1639, which also encourages state universities to distribute admissions and financial aid information to foster care agencies as well as to explore admissions-by-exemption options. (See side bar.)

### Important Legislation Supporting Education

#### **AB 490 Improving Foster Youth Education (Chapter 862, Statutes of 2003)<sup>2</sup>**

AB 490 improves public school procedures so that foster youth have a better chance to succeed in school by requiring that youth not change schools unnecessarily, enroll immediately and receive records quickly at a new school when a transfer is unavoidable, and they won't lose credits when they do transfer. The bill also mandates that each district designate a foster youth education liaison.

#### **AB 1858 Quality Non-Public Schools for Foster Youth (Chapter 914, Statutes of 2004)<sup>2</sup>**

AB 1858 sets standards and mandates oversight for group home schools. In addition, it requires the State Department of Education to ensure that the California School Information Services system meets the needs of foster care pupils and includes disaggregated data on them.

#### **AB 2463 Postsecondary Education: Outreach & Assistance for Emancipated Foster Youth (Chapter 1129, Statutes of 1996)**

AB 2463 provides outreach, access, and retention services for foster youth interested in attending a California State University or community college.

#### **SB 1639 Education WORKS! Cal WORKS Recipients: Education and Training (Chapter 668, Statutes of 2004)<sup>3</sup>**

SB 1639 supports foster youths' right to access information on higher education. SB 1639 encourages the California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California to provide admissions and financial aid information to foster care agencies. The bill also requests the Regents of the University of California and the Trustees of the California State University to explore the use of the admissions-by-exemption category to assist the transition of students in foster care into 4-year public universities. In addition, SB 1639 includes intensive English language immersion within California Community Colleges' vocational curricula for CalWORKS! recipients.

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## CRITICAL LEGISLATION #4: EDUCATION, continued

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### **Cool Tool: Education Rights Wallet Card for Foster Youth**

Casey Family Programs created a brief listing of educational rights for foster youth, printed on a card that can fit inside a wallet, so that young people can present the information in a pinch if their rights are not being met by school personnel. The card includes brief descriptions of the following rights under California law:

- School stability, including remaining in their original school when they enter foster care or move
- Partial or full credit for work completed at other schools
- Exemption from penalty for court-related absences
- Immediate enrollment (even without uniforms, health/education records)
- Transfer of records to a child's new school within 2 business days
- Access to students' records for county placement agencies
- Access to an educational liaison for every district and county office of education and access to their contact information

You can receive the cards free by contacting Alicia Carner, Administration Specialist of Casey Family Programs, by emailing her at [ACarner@casey.org](mailto:ACarner@casey.org) or contacting Ellen O'Neil, Project Coordinator for New Ways to Work at [oneil@newwaystowork.org](mailto:oneil@newwaystowork.org).

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## OTHER IMPORTANT ISSUES & LEGISLATION

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The panelists identified three other important issues and accompanying legislation: transition supports and the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, information sharing and court-issued miscellaneous orders, and transportation and the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Troia explained the tremendous impact that the **John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Act** has had on foster youth, including changing the Medicaid Act to extend categorical eligibility for Medi-Cal to foster youth up until age 21 and providing block grants for transitional services and educational vouchers for post-secondary institutions.

### **Federal Level—Chafee Foster Care Independence Act (H.R. 3443)**

The Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 offers important new help to young people transitioning from foster care. The Act can be an important catalyst in states and communities for broader reforms on behalf of the young people. President Clinton signed the Act into law (P.L. 106- 169) on December 14, 1999. Title I of the Act, which contains the most relevant provisions for young people transitioning from foster care, provides for the following services:

- Establishes the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (referred to hereafter as the Chafee Independence Program). The program was named in honor of the late Senator John H. Chafee of Rhode Island, one of the original Senate sponsors of the Act and a long time champion for children who have been abused and neglected
- Allows states to provide Medicaid coverage to young people between the ages of 18 and 21 who were in foster care on their 18th birthday
- Increases from \$1,000 to \$10,000 the assets that a young person in foster care can have and still maintain his or her eligibility for Title IV-E-funded foster care
- Requires states to ensure that foster parents are adequately prepared, both initially and on a continuing basis, to care for the children placed with them
- Authorizes additional funding for adoption incentive payments to the states to assist in finding permanent homes for children in foster care

Steve Trippe, President of New Ways to Work, noted that **information sharing** among child welfare, workforce, and education agencies to support continuity of services continues to be a challenge for some communities. Although the State Inter-Agency Team is beginning to discuss the issue of barriers with confidentiality laws, it is currently being addressed by individuals at the local level. One example of a community addressing this issue is a court order secured by the Orange County Workforce Investment Board (OCWIB) and the Orange County Social Services Agency (OCSSA), Children and Family Services Division. OCWIB and OCSSA staff worked together to secure the 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. For more information, see page 7.

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## OTHER IMPORTANT ISSUES & LEGISLATION, continued

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### **Orange County Court Order Permits Five Agencies to Share Information**

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 the Orange County Social Services Agency (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 [www.newwaystowork.org/documents/ytatdocuments/FYMiscOrder.pdf](http://www.newwaystowork.org/documents/ytatdocuments/FYMiscOrder.pdf).

The Orange County Workforce Investment Board and OCSSA 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](http://www.newwaystowork.org/documents/ytatdocuments/OSCSERVICEReferralForm.doc). For more information, see the article in the January 2006 issue of *Transition: Teams in Action* (the Newsletter for the Youth Transition Action Team Initiative) online at [www.nww.org/documents/ytatdocuments/transitionjan06.pdf](http://www.nww.org/documents/ytatdocuments/transitionjan06.pdf).

Another important issue was **transportation**: Who is responsible for providing transportation for young people who attend schools out of their district when they move? Dresslar explained that transportation responsibility is defined in McKinney-Vento, which relies on the federal statutes and which leaves the implementation decisions to individual counties. Dresslar shared that "some counties [have used] foster youth support dollars, some have used courts to identify responsibility, others have foster parents drive them, and sometimes social workers take them. We are hoping that in the implementation we would find some best practices and we could transfer them to other counties." Krinsky added, "If the child is covered under McKinney-Vento, it's the school's responsibility."

### **The McKinney-Vento Act—As Applied To Foster Youth & Transportation Regulations**

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as reauthorized by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, ensures educational rights and protections for homeless children. The Act's definition of "homeless children and youth" includes many youth in foster care. In addition to creating a variety of educational rights for "homeless children and youth," the Act includes some direction for communities in identifying responsibility of transportation for youth. The following information summarizes the responsibility of transportation for foster youth to their school of origin. This information was taken from information provided on the Children's Law Center of Los Angeles (CLCLA). For more specific information about McKinney-Vento and other educational laws affecting foster youth, see the CLCLA website at [www.clcla.org/train\\_educat.htm](http://www.clcla.org/train_educat.htm).

#### **Transportation to School of Origin**

- For unaccompanied youth, transportation to and from the school of origin must be provided at the liaison's request. (Section 722(g) (1) (J) (iii).)
- At a parent or guardian's request, homeless students must be provided with transportation to and from their school of origin. (Section 722(g) (1) (J) (iii).)
- If the student's temporary residence and the school of origin are in the same Local Education Agency (LEA), that LEA must provide transportation. (Section 722(g) (1) (J) (iii) (I).)

## Key Implementation Issues and Challenges

*"It's important that the legislation is made real – getting the counties and states to enforce them."*

- Jennifer Troia

One of the key issues raised was how to implement the laws once they are created. Troia pointed out that "it's important that the legislation is made real—[which means] getting the counties and states to enforce them and make sure they are having an impact for youth. For example, with the housing act, there have been budgeting problems with counties struggling to meet the match. And it is challenging to keep youth in care past the age of 21."

To illustrate the need to focus on implementation, Krinsky noted that the CYC has made implementation of existing legislation—not promotion of new bills—its focus for the year. "[Previously,] the California Youth Connection has presented a focus for new legislation to support foster youth," said Krinsky.

"This year they decided they didn't want to identify a particular issue, but instead focus on implementation. Too many wonderful laws have yet to be implemented. Why is it that so many bills have yet to be implemented? Guidance has been issued, but has not made its way into the field and lives of youth."

### Training

One of the key solutions the panelists discussed was training youth service agency administrators and staff. Krinsky noted, "It's difficult to know through this vast sea of legislation [how] to implement the laws. And there are limited resources for reinforcing them." There are also ongoing challenges with simply educating appropriate people and their respective organizations about new laws and how to comply. Troia identified specific challenges related to implementing AB 490: "Social workers need to inform schools. Everyone needs to know they have responsibilities related to foster youth. There has been some progress, but we need more." Troia added that in order to address this challenge, there is a need to "create a broad collaborative group to create training materials with every act. "There are so many agencies involved in the process of supporting foster youth [that] we need the training materials to address multiple sectors, organizations, and institutions," she said.

### State Level Enforcement

Krinsky stated, "The bigger picture is at the state level." All three panelists attested to the challenges of not having enforcement at the state level, and the subsequent need for someone to guide and enforce implementation of these laws. Proposed legislation—AB 2216 Child Welfare Leadership and Accountability Act sponsored by Karen Bass—would address this lack of institutionalized enforcement. (See page 9.)

Another suggestion for addressing the implementation challenges is to write in time limits for implementation into all future legislation. Dresslar summed it up by saying, "There really isn't any [mandated] 'clock' or time frame from which this legislation needs to come about. In children's lives (especially foster youth) 3, 4, 5 years for [implementation] is too long in a young person's life."

### What People Can Do

The panelists discussed ideas and strategies that local leadership and individuals who work with foster youth can do to support enforcement of these laws:

- **Support legislation that puts state-level accountability in place.** The Little Hoover Commission is recommending a high-level collaborative body to break through barriers and enforce laws.
- **Educate your staff and cross-agency teams about the laws and new regulations** that support foster youth.

- **Be aware of what's happening legislatively** (especially in the education realm). The issues around confidentiality between education and child welfare are a struggle—make sure educational organizations understand the rights of foster youth.

## Pending legislation

- **AB 2489—Higher Education Bill:** Supports educational opportunities for foster youth, including vocational and post secondary education. (Mark Leno, D–San Francisco) More information about AB 2489 can be found at [www.aroundthecapitol.com/Bills/AB\\_2489](http://www.aroundthecapitol.com/Bills/AB_2489).
- **AB 2216—Child Welfare Leadership and Accountability Act:** Looks at implementation and enforcement issues. (Karen Bass, D–Los Angeles) More information about AB 2216 can be found at [www.aroundthecapitol.com/Bills/AB\\_2216](http://www.aroundthecapitol.com/Bills/AB_2216).

## End Notes

<sup>1</sup> State of California–Health and Human Services Department of Social Services *Foster Care Legislation Implementation Status Report*  
[www.newwaystowork.org/documents/ytatdocuments/ImplementationStatusReport.pdf](http://www.newwaystowork.org/documents/ytatdocuments/ImplementationStatusReport.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> California Youth Connection  
Legislation <http://www.calyouthconn.org/site/cyc/section.php?id=6>  
Past Legislative Accomplishments <http://www.calyouthconn.org/site/cyc/section.php?id=19>

<sup>3</sup> California Bill information accessed through [www.leginfo.ca.gov](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov)  
AB 1741 [www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/93-94/bill/asm/ab\\_1701-1750/ab\\_1741\\_bill\\_931011\\_chaptered](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/93-94/bill/asm/ab_1701-1750/ab_1741_bill_931011_chaptered)

## Panelist Information and Resources

### Panelists

#### **Miriam Aroni Krinsky, Executive Director, Children's Law Center of Los Angeles (CLCLA)**

Miriam Aroni Krinsky took the helm of the Children's Law Center of Los Angeles in June of 2001, and has worked to expand the organization's scope, involvement, and reputation. Her vision and energy have enabled CLC to extend its reach beyond that of a local legal services agency into a highly regarded statewide and national leader in foster care reform.

CLCLA is a nonprofit public interest legal organization that serves as court appointed counsel for over 20,000 of Los Angeles County's abused and neglected foster youth. The CLCLA staff includes over 100 lawyers and nearly 100 social workers who know all of the legal issues by virtue of the patterns that emerge from the thousands of cases in which they have been involved over the years. As a result, they also get involved in the legislative process, and they work with legislative staff members like Kathy Dresslar (see below) as well as with other advocacy groups like the Youth Law Center and California Youth Connection to develop and promote passage of bills and push for implementation. CLCLA has worked on a dozen state bills, and they are also currently involved with an initiative nationally called Home at Last, which seeks to improve legal process nationwide.

CLCLA maintains a list of legislation they have supported on their web site and several fact sheets to support a variety of realms for working with foster youth online at [www.clcla.org](http://www.clcla.org), which can be found on their What's New & CLC Sponsored Legislation pages.

#### **Kathy Dresslar, Staff to California Assemblyman Mark Leno (D–San Francisco)**

Kathy Dresslar has been working on foster care issues since the mid 1980s when she was with the Children's Advocacy Institute. Between 1989 and 1997, she served as Staff to Assemblyman Daryl Steinberg, focusing on foster care legislation. When Assemblyman Steinberg reached term limits, Dresslar

joined Assemblyman Leno's staff. He is particularly interested in foster care because the accountability statistics show that San Francisco is trailing behind other counties in serving foster youth. The reasons for the low performance can be attributed in part to the cost of housing and high reliance on kin care without providing support services to those relatives caring for youth who would otherwise be placed in foster care. As a result, Assemblyman Leno has been addressing kincare gaps, and he is sponsoring the CLCLA education bill. [democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a13/default.htm](http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a13/default.htm).

### **Jennifer Troia, Equal Justice Works Fellow, Youth Law Center (YLC)**

Jennifer Troia is working to improve the lives of the nearly 14,000 foster youth who are placed in group homes in California, through her project at the Youth Law Center (YLC) in San Francisco. The Youth Law Center acts to protect abused and at-risk children, focusing particularly on the problems facing youth in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. YLC investigates reports of abuse, provides legal consultation, conducts litigation and monitors compliance with the laws.

Troia's Fellowship project focuses on foster youth who are often cut off from their communities and given inadequate opportunities to learn, to form relationships, and to succeed in their lives. Jen's goal is to ensure that the legal rights of these youth are respected while they are in group care. She conducts educational trainings for foster youth, social workers, and others who have an impact on the child welfare system. She also advocates for individual youth and works to ensure that legislative changes are implemented. For more information about the Youth Law Center, go to [www.ylc.org](http://www.ylc.org).

### **Resources**

**The following links provide background information on enacted and pending California legislation:**

[Overview of Key California Foster Care Legislation](#) (PDF 101 kb)

[Child Welfare Services Legislation Implementation Update, 2001-2005](#) (PDF 41 kb)

[Assemblywoman Bass' Press Release on the 2006 proposed foster care legislation](#) (PDF 83 kb)

[2006 Proposed California Foster Care Bills](#) (PDF 132 kb)

**The following links are related to topics discussed on the call:**

[Children's Law Center of Los Angeles Foster Care Education Law](#)

[Children's Law Center of Los Angeles Foster Care State Law](#)

[Children's Law Center of Los Angeles Federal Law](#)

[Youth Law Center Publications](#)

[Miscellaneous Court Order to Allow Cross-Agency Sharing of Information](#) (PDF 667 kb)

[Service Referral Form—County of Orange One-Stop System/Youth Program](#)

[Orange County Workforce Investment Board Youth Providers](#)

[California Department of Social Services Regulations \(Division 30 & 31 related to WIA\)](#)

[California Independent Living Program Regulations—Full Text](#)

**The following resources provide additional information on California foster care legislation:**

*Understanding the Child Welfare System in California: A Primer for Service Providers and Policymakers*, Diane F. Reed and Kate Karpfow. California Center for Research on Women & Families, 2002.

National Conference of State Legislatures State Legislative Report

2001 [www.ncsl.org/programs/cyf/slr275.htm](http://www.ncsl.org/programs/cyf/slr275.htm) or [www.ncsl.org/programs/cyf/welfareleg2001.PDF](http://www.ncsl.org/programs/cyf/welfareleg2001.PDF)

2003 [www.ncsl.org/programs/cyf/cwlaws2003.htm](http://www.ncsl.org/programs/cyf/cwlaws2003.htm)

2004 [www.ncsl.org/print/cyf/cwlegislation04.pdf](http://www.ncsl.org/print/cyf/cwlegislation04.pdf)

California Department of Education Government Affairs Chaptered K-12 Educational Legislation, by year between 1998 and 2005 <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/lr/ga/>

California Adolescent Health Collaborative Analysis of 2000-2001 [www.co.mendocino.ca.us/ph/pdf/ANALYSIS.PDF](http://www.co.mendocino.ca.us/ph/pdf/ANALYSIS.PDF)

County Welfare Directors Association of California Chaptered and Vetoed Legislation by year between 1999 and 2004 [www.cwda.org/legislation\\_chaptered.cfm](http://www.cwda.org/legislation_chaptered.cfm)