

TRANSITION: TEAMS IN ACTION



The Newsletter of the Youth Transition Action Teams Initiative

Volume 2 October 2005

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YTAT SITES

Youth Transition Action Teams are convening or will convene soon in the following counties:

Alameda
Colusa
Glenn
Humboldt
Los Angeles
Placer
Sacramento
San Diego
San Luis Obispo
San Mateo
Tehama
Ventura

COMPARING TRANSITION OUTCOMES: 19-YEAR-OLD YOUTH NEVER IN CARE, OUT OF CARE, AND STILL IN CARE

A group of Chapin Hall researchers have concluded that the youth they are studying - 603 19-year-old youth transitioning out of foster care - are generally faring worse than others who are not in the child welfare system. They discovered differences in success rates in nearly every domain measured, including education, employment and earnings, health and health care, and parenting. Despite these challenges, many youth in the study described their relationships with family members as strong, and they perceived the level of social support they were receiving to be good.

The study also focused on a comparison of the youth who left foster care at age 18 with those who remained in foster care past their 18th birthday. (All but two of those still in care lived in Illinois where the courts allow youth to remain in care until their 21st birthday.) The out-of-care youth generally were exhibiting poorer outcomes than those who were still in care, particularly in the areas of education and health. To read more about outcomes in education, independent living services, employment and earnings, disconnection, health and health care, parenting, and involvement with the criminal justice system as well as a look at positive outcomes and the researchers' conclusions and suggestions, please [click here](#). (<http://www.nww.org/documents/ytatdocuments/transitionsept05/comparingtransitionoutcomes.pdf>)

In the Chapin Hall report, called "Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of former Foster Youth: Outcomes at Age 19," (Midwest Study) the researchers suggest that extending foster care past age 18 may support youth in making successful transitions to adulthood. While they say it is still too early in their analyses to ascertain why extended care may assist transitioning youth, they hypothesize that access to stable housing may make it easier for youth to cope with other responsibilities and that working with child welfare services professionals may also increase their access to needed services and supports. To access the Midwest Study report, please [click here](#). (http://www.chapinhall.org/article_abstract.aspx?ar=1355&L2=61&L3=130)

The researcher's suggestion to extend support to youth beyond age 18 is in keeping with the idea that it currently takes longer for young adults to attain a family-sustaining career and therefore to be ready to take on the full spectrum of adult responsibilities. It also parallels a study of young adults between the ages of 18 and 34 who have not been in the child welfare system; the National Poverty Center study, reported in "Material Assistance Received from Families During the Transition to Adulthood," (2004) shows that young adults from families with low as well as middle and high incomes receive financial and other support from their parents and/or extended family members throughout that entire 17-year period. The report on material assistance is available for downloading at the [National Poverty Center](#) website. (http://www.npc.umich.edu/publications/policy_briefs/brief3/index.shtml)

PHILADELPHIA ESTABLISHES LIAISON FOR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, QUESTIONING FOSTER YOUTH

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth in foster care face challenges that their heterosexual peers do not. They may end up in the child welfare system because of their orientation, may experience misunderstanding in their foster care placements as well as at school, in the workplace, or their neighborhoods. In addition, they may be at greater risk than other youth in foster care for assault and other health-threatening situations.

The City of Philadelphia's Department of Human Services has developed a Liaison position to address the dangers facing

LGBTQ youth in their city's foster care system. The Liaison will serve in a variety of ways: maintain contact with the LGBTQ communities, offer consultation and assistance to case workers and service providers, assess and improve training on sexual orientation and gender identity, and review policies and protocols.

To read more about the new Liaison position, visit www.nww.org/documents/ytatdocuments/transitionsept05/lgbtqliaison.pdf or contact Ted Qually, Communications Director, at ted.qually@phila.gov or (215) 683-6012.

FOSTER YOUTH IDENTIFY CHALLENGES, PROPOSE POLICY SOLUTIONS

The California Youth Connection (CYC) held their Annual Policy and Leadership Conference on August 13 – 15. CYC is a California foster youth advocacy organization whose members are youth either in foster care or who have emancipated from care. The Policy Conference provides an opportunity for CYC members statewide to gather specifically to discuss current issues in foster care, and to propose policy solutions to address those issues.



This year's conference focused on four issues critical to the lives of foster youth: Family; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Foster Youth Issues; Higher Education; and Post Emancipation Services. The participants identified challenges in each of these areas and made recommendations for policy changes to address those challenges. To read about specific challenges and recommendations, please [click here](#).

(<http://www.nww.org/documents/ytatdocuments/transitionsept05/fosteryouthidchallenges.pdf>)

PLANNING FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT IS CURRENTLY UNDERWAY

Counties around California are currently developing service plans under the Community Program Planning component of Mental Health Services Act. The MHSA, passed by California voters in November 2004, provides an ongoing source of funding for counties to extend and even to reinvent their systems of care for those citizens in need of mental health services. The Act specifically names transition age youth in the foster care system as one of the populations to be served by monies from the bill. It also expressly identifies integrated delivery of services as one of the five criteria that each county plan is to incorporate.

The Community Program Planning component provides a structure and process whereby counties can develop a plan, using MHSA Community Services and Supports funds.

Counties are to submit their proposals to their Board of Supervisors by their October meeting.

The Community Program Planning convenings represent a significant opportunity for Youth Transition Action Teams to take part in this major rethinking and expansion of mental health services for youth in foster care who are experiencing severe mental illness.

Trainings and public meetings on the MHSA as well as resource materials are available, and are listed on page 3 of this newsletter. In addition, the California Institute for Mental Health (CIMH) will be hosting a conference and a summit later this fall, also listed on page 3.

(Planning for Implementation is continued on page 3)

(Planning for Implementation, continued from page 2)

MHSA Information Is Available from the California Alliance of Child and Family Services

The California Alliance of Child and Family Services has created a document with information about MHSA, called *Everything You Wanted to Know about the MHSA, and Then Some* that answers a wide range of questions. To access the document, [click here](#).
(<http://www.nww.org/documents/ytatdocuments/transitionsept05/mhsaeverythingcacfs.pdf>)

MHSA Trainings Offered by the California Institute for Mental Health (CIMH)

The training, “Laying the Cornerstones of Transformation: Wellness, Recovery, Resilience, Cultural Competence, Housing, and Employment,” will focus on moving from planning to implementation. It will be offered in the following locations:

MHSA Regional Trainings Round II – Small Counties

October 6 - 7, 2005 (*Sacramento, CA*)
To register, visit www.cimh.org/training/login.cfm?conferenceid=81.

MHSA Regional Trainings Round II – Southern Counties

October 27 - 28, 2005 (*Glendale, CA*)
To register, visit www.cimh.org/training/login.cfm?conferenceid=83.

MHSA Regional Trainings Round II – Bay Area / Central Valley Counties

November 9 - 10, 2005 (*San Mateo, CA*)
To register, visit www.cimh.org/training/login.cfm?conferenceid=84.

For more information, please visit the CIMH website: www.cimh.org/training/conferences.cfm.

MHSA Public Meetings Sponsored by the California Department of Mental Health

The Department of Mental Health invites the public to participate in stakeholder meetings and in the Mental Health Services Act Oversight Committee (MHSAOC) meetings. The Department recommends visiting their website to access updated schedules and other new information. To visit their web site, go to www.dmh.ca.gov.

Stakeholder Meetings

Stakeholders are invited to share their comments and suggestions. Registration is required and may be done online. The cutoff time for online registration is 11:00 AM on the day prior to the meeting. To register online, [click here](#). (<http://www.cce.csus.edu/cts/cdmh/registration.cfm>). To view the stakeholder input process guidelines, [click here](#). (<http://www.dmh.ca.gov/MHSA/docs/DMH%20Stakeholder%20Input%20Process.pdf>).

The activities of the past few months have been primarily related to implementation of the Community Services and Support Three-Year Program and Expenditure Plan Requirements. The purpose of the October 25th and 26th Stakeholders Meetings will be to provide updates on this process. The date and location of the two upcoming meetings are listed below:

Stakeholders Meeting – North

October 25, 2005 (*Location to be determined*)
To register online, visit www.cce.csus.edu/cts/cdmh/registration.cfm.

Stakeholders Meeting – South

October 26, 2005 (*Los Angeles Airport, CA*)
To register online, visit www.cce.csus.edu/cts/cdmh/registration.cfm.

PLEASE NOTE: The Education and Training conference call scheduled for October 5 and Workgroup meeting scheduled for October 14 have been canceled and will be rescheduled once the draft Education and Training materials have been created.

Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Committee Meetings

The public is encouraged to take part in the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Committee (MHSAOC) Meetings. The next public hearing will be held after the Stakeholders Meeting – South (see listing above). Details will be provided on the [Oversight and Accountability Committee website](#) (<http://www.dmh.ca.gov/MHSAOC/default.asp>).

Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Committee Public Hearing

October 26, 2005 (*Los Angeles Airport, CA*)
For more information, visit the [Oversight and Accountability Committee website](#) (<http://www.dmh.ca.gov/MHSAOC/default.asp>).

OFF AND RUNNING

Latest News on the YTAT Initiative

Teams' Corner

News from YTATs around the State

The Youth Transition Action Teams submitted the following updates about the activities in their communities:

Alameda County

Two planning discussions have resulted in an agreement to engage in YTAT as a way to continue the interagency work begun between county and city representatives, coalitions of service providers, and individual service providers, as well as to seek deeper collaboration.

Colusa County

Colusa County recognizes the fact that very few resources are available for youth in their community. With this in mind, the YTAT team will focus on community engagement with youth in foster care and will provide access to Job Corps, post secondary education, and employment for all youth as they transition from the child welfare system.

Glenn County

The YTAT has held two facilitated meetings to date, and is scheduled to host their first solo meeting on September 21. The TAT has narrowed its focus to emphasize the role of mentoring in Glenn County and to support Resource Family recruitment. The TAT consists of members from law enforcement, education, health services, human services, workforce investment, Tribal TANF, community college, ILP, former foster youth, and probation among others.

Humboldt County

Humboldt is in the beginning phases of assembling its YTAT. Representatives of Child Welfare Services, Workforce Investment Board, and others are planning next steps. The group agreed that Humboldt's integrated services approach positions them well for transforming the way they work with youth. Youth are active participants on the team.

YOUTH SPEAK

Amir Edwards, Emancipated Foster Youth Member of Placer County's Youth Transition Action Team

"Let's stop nodding our heads and all get on the same page. We need to make something happen and make a change for the better so that youth in care and youth who emancipate from the foster care system don't feel like a child who has been left by the wayside."

Los Angeles City and County

The Los Angeles team and key non-profit organizations have taken several significant steps towards comprehensive and coordinated youth transition policy. Youth officials from three Workforce Boards have joined ILP coordinators, probation, education, and housing leaders in two discussions about present and future joint and collaborative actions through the YTAT. Representatives from the Foothill Workforce Investment Board and Community Build -- collaborators on the DOL-funded demonstration program for foster youth transition -- have joined the TAT. The group as a whole has agreed to focus some of its efforts towards assuring the successful implementation of this initiative as a way to learn lessons for the larger system.

Placer County

Placer held its launch site visit on August 29. Representatives from child welfare, ILP, and the foster youth community were in full agreement that the AYOS model for connecting systems will support successful outcomes for transition age foster youth in Placer County.

San Diego County

San Diego is taking significant steps to integrate the work and focus of the YTAT into the existing ILS Tiger Team. This workgroup has been in operation for several years. The ILS Tiger Team's purpose is to provide oversight to the coordination and development of a more cohesive and effective system of services that will guide and assist foster youth to make a transition from the dependency system to lives as productive and successful citizens. This team is chaired by the Presiding Juvenile Court Judge, with representation from key leadership from Health and Human Services Agency - Children's Services; the Commission for Children, Youth and Families; County Counsel; and Casey Family Programs. By integrating the YTAT framework, they expect that the work of the Tiger Team will be enriched and strengthened by bringing forth additional representation from other entities such as the Workforce Partnership as well as youth/alumni and other service providers.

(Teams' Corner continued on page 5)

(Teams' Corner continued from page 4)

San Luis Obispo (SLO) County

SLO has created a Transition Action Team comprised of community leaders who are committed to creating solutions that address youth access to programs/services and successful transitions into adulthood. They are working collaboratively to maximize current community programs and services and to identify opportunities for growth. They have made it a priority to engaging youth in the development of a sustainable safety net for all youth within the county. Their third site visit will take place on September 13 to define their community plan further and put it into action.

San Mateo County

In San Mateo County, the Youth Transition Action Team initiative is supporting the implementation of Fostering the Future as the partnership seeks to catalyze more effective and comprehensive ways for the county's youth - serving governmental and nonprofit agencies to interact with each other and work together.

Fostering the Future, sponsored by the Peninsula Community Foundation's Center for Venture Philanthropy, plans to effect this change while also investing directly in improving outcomes for young people who are either living in foster or kin care in Redwood City or East Palo Alto, or those who have "aged out" of the foster care system in the last two years.

Tehama County

Tehama County held the Youth Transition Action Team launch meeting in early June, followed by a goal-setting meeting in early August. The TAT has identified its first year goals and will meet in September to draft a timeline for the action plan. The Tehama County YTAT has committed to improving the quality of foster homes in their communities, which will encourage a more supportive system for youth in a variety of areas. They also are seeking to improve the number and quality of therapists available to foster youth.

Ventura County

The Ventura TAT met for the second time on August 9th to establish priorities, define YTAT role and composition, map related local initiatives, align the work of the YTAT with parallel efforts under way in the county, and to assess progress since the last meeting. The TAT is focused on aligning the efforts of Community Commission of Ventura County (high level Supervisor appointed policy body), the Transition Age Youth Workgroup (County Mental Health and MHSA implementation planning), the Youth Transition Advisory Committee (Child Welfare Services ILP Contract and the ITOP), the Youth Council (All Youth-One System adopters, sub-committee of the WIB), the Children's Oversight Committee, ITCC (Under the SELPA - Special ED Transitions, and BASIC (Basico). The YTAT initiative in Ventura is hosted by the local Youth Council under the auspices of the Workforce Investment Board.

Foothill WIB Receives US DOL Grant to Support Transition Age Youth

The Foothill WIB and community Build, Inc. recently received a DOL grant to provide access to services for 100 transitioning and former foster youth in Los Angeles County. Representatives from the Foothill Workforce Investment Board have joined the Los Angeles County Youth Transition Action Team. The Team has decided to make the implementation of the Foothill/DOL initiative a focus of its efforts. The Team views this project as not only valuable in itself but also an opportunity to learn lessons that can be applied to developing the larger system.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

To read more about the program, please visit www.doleta.gov/youth_services/Project_Briefings/CA-project-7-14-05.cfm.

According to California's Employment Development Department (EDD), the focus of the project is "to provide a single service access point in each of two service planning areas within Los Angeles County for 100 eligible current and former foster youth." A comprehensive approach is being adopted. The EDD says, "This model is built around a comprehensive employment strategy that draws upon the collective social services, education and workforce development resources within the community to establish a seamless service delivery model to ensure that foster youth or emancipated foster youth at risk of homelessness, ages 17-21, have the means as well as the motivation to become successful adults."

ON THE GROUND

Innovative Projects Serving Foster Youth

Fostering the Future: San Mateo YTAT and Center for Venture Philanthropy Collaborate on Innovative Initiative

In San Mateo County, the Youth Transition Action Team initiative is supporting the implementation of Fostering the Future as the partnership seeks to catalyze more effective and comprehensive ways for the county's youth-serving governmental and nonprofit agencies to interact with each other and work together. Fostering the Future, sponsored by the Peninsula Community Foundation's Center For Venture Philanthropy (CVP), plans to effect this change while also investing directly in improving outcomes for young people who are either living in foster or kin care in Redwood City or East Palo Alto, or those who have "aged out" of the foster care system in the last two years.

To read more about the Fostering the Future initiative and the Center For Venture Philanthropy's collaborative approach to helping foster care youth in San Mateo County, please [click here](http://www.nww.org/documents/ytatdocuments/transitionsept05/fosteringthefuture.pdf). (<http://www.nww.org/documents/ytatdocuments/transitionsept05/fosteringthefuture.pdf>)



San Luis Obispo County Uses Effective Information Sharing Model

San Luis Obispo County's size has historically allowed for close connections to county and private organizations and services. There is also a history of working with families and children at whatever level of need exists. About eight years ago, San Luis Obispo County (SLO) realized there was a need to share client information in order to be more effective, yet they also knew they were bound by the laws and regulations of confidentiality and must respect and honor the rights of their clients.

In 1997 San Luis Obispo County began to explore ways in which SLO could have community partners work more effectively in a collaborative and still ensure the confidentiality of individuals.

The agencies involved reached an agreement to develop a training curriculum for staff of both government and private agencies working in the human services field.



Case workers from the different agencies take the training, receive certification, and work together on Multidisciplinary Teams (MDT). Clients sign release forms authorizing the sharing of their information among members of their MDT.

This procedure has proven to be highly successful for San Luis Obispo County. It allows for organizations to quickly receive and assess information that previously would have taken multiple steps and many months

to complete. It also allows the organization to move forward with the client.

To read more about the San Luis Obispo Information Sharing model, please [click here](http://www.nww.org/documents/ytatdocuments/transitionsept05/sanluisobispo.pdf). (<http://www.nww.org/documents/ytatdocuments/transitionsept05/sanluisobispo.pdf>)

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information on Multi Disciplinary Teams, contact Mary Solis, San Luis Obispo County, at (805)781-1825.

NEWS FROM THE CALIFORNIA YOUTH CONNECTION

Foster Youth Gather at State Capitol to Urge Governor's Support

Current and former foster youth gathered at the State Capitol on September 19, 2005 to urge the governor's signature on AB 1633 and AB 1412. Foster youth delivered more than 300 postcards signed by foster youth across the state to the governor's office, asking that he approve the legislation.

AB 1633 (Evans) allows foster youth to remain in foster care beyond age 18 if they are pursuing their GED, and also helps disabled youth get SSI and Social Security benefits so they

have a source of income when leaving care. AB 1412 (Leno) gives foster youth the right to be involved in decisions made on their individual case plans and permanent placement.

For further information, contact Sean MacNeil of Assemblymember Noreen Evans' office (916) 319-2007, Curt Child of National Center for Youth Law (916) 444-2290, or Tiffany Johnson of California Youth Connection (415) 442-5060 x 13.

HURRICANE RELIEF AND REBUILDING Resources and Links

Rebuilding after the Hurricanes: Resources & Projects Supporting Youth in Foster Care

Many national organizations are offering resources to those involved in supporting foster youth who have been affected by Hurricane Katrina or Rita:

Hurricane Relief Information and Resources

Connect for Kids has been collecting information about emergency guidelines for federal agencies involved in assistance, websites designed to help people get or give help, and resources on how to help children and youth cope. To access any of these resources, visit www.connectforkids.org/node/3372?tn=hp/1b.

Trauma Assistance Resources

Prevention Researcher has listed the following links to resources they deem to be very helpful.

- [American Psychological Association: Disasters & Terrorism](#)
- [The National Center for PTSD](#)
- [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)
- [Boys & Girls Clubs of America](#)
- [Big Brother Big Sisters](#)

Additionally, they have temporarily made available for free their article, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Youth, in hopes that it may help better serve youth effected by the hurricane. To download the article, visit www.tpronline.org/articles.cfm?articleID=25.

Rebuilding Guidelines

The Campaign for Youth has issued a five-point set of recommendations for supporting youth during rebuilding efforts. The first recommendation is to involve youth in

rebuilding efforts so that both communities and young people are helped. To read the statement, visit <http://www.nyec.org/CFY-katrina.pdf>.

Rebuilding Alert

The 9/11 Reconstruction Watchdogs organizations have issued an open letter to Congress, entitled "Warning About Hurricane Katrina." They advise Congress to make sure aid packages and rebuilding work are distributed equitably by establishing accountability measures to ensure that low- and moderate-income people, dislocated and unemployed workers, and small businesses have access to federal and state rebuilding subsidies. To read the letter and access other related resources, visit www.reconstructionwatch.net/openletterpage.htm.

Financial Support for Displaced Students

The U.S. Department of Education announced that it will cover 90 percent of costs incurred by postsecondary students forced to relocate after Katrina and Rita, which means providing as much as \$7500 per student to schools that have enrolled more than 10 displaced children. For information on the program, visit ifap.ed.gov/eannouncements/katrina.html.

Clothing Drive and Relief Fund

The National Foster Parent Association has launched a clothing drive and relief fund to support foster families displaced by Hurricane Katrina. Americans are being asked to donate good, usable clothing that will be distributed to foster families. To access a list of most-needed items and donation instructions, visit www.nfpainc.org/.

RESOURCE ROUNDUP

Publications & Materials

Policy Brief on Differential Response

The Foundation Consortium has issued a brief entitled "Choosing the Path Less Traveled: Strengthening California Families Through Differential Response" by Patricia Schene and Stuart Oppenheim. The brief defines differential response, explains its significance to California communities, and describes "three paths of differential response in California's Child Welfare Services." For a hard copy of the brief, please contact Michael Kressner at mkressner@consortium.net or (916) 646-3646 ext. 3008.

2005 Kids Count Databook

The Annie E. Casey Foundation released the 16th Annual Kids Count Databook, which features national and state-by-state measures of child well-being in America and a close look at families with the most difficulty connecting to and staying in the workforce. For more information, please visit www.aecf.org/kidscount/sld/databook.jsp.

California Youth Connection Policy Conference Report

The report, titled, "One Recommendation at a Time," presents recommendations and action items that the organization developed at their fall 2003 and fall 2004 conferences. To view the materials, please visit www.calyouthconn.org/files/cyc/PDF/2003_2004%20Fall%20Policy%20Conference%20Report.pdf.

Analysis of Trends in Poverty, Household Income, and Health Insurance Coverage

The Democratic staff of the Joint Economic Committee has issued three briefs that analyze national and state-by-state trends in poverty, household income, and health insurance coverage since 2000 (based on new 2004 data released by the Census Bureau).

Poverty Brief: <http://jec.senate.gov/democrats/Documents/Reports/poverty7sep2005.pdf>

Household Income Brief: <http://jec.senate.gov/democrats/Documents/Reports/income7sep2005.pdf>

Health Insurance Brief:

<http://jec.senate.gov/democrats/Documents/Reports/healthinsurance7sep2005.pdf>

UPCOMING CONFERENCES & EVENTS

Youth Courts: An Implementation Training Seminar

October 17-19, 2005 (Cincinnati, OH)

The National Youth Court Center is conducting an implementation training seminar for communities interested in establishing youth courts. For information, please [click here](#).

Introduction to Youth Development

October 20-21, 2005 (San Francisco, CA)

Community Network for Youth Development (CNYD) presents a 2-day course that provides youth programming staff with an overview of research-based youth development principles and practices. For more information, visit www.cnyd.org/home/index.php.

Healthy Communities – Healthy Families Conference

November 3 - 5, 2005 (Dallas, TX)

The conference, titled *Creating Intergenerational Community*, will showcase the ways youth and adults are building bridges across generations and across differences within communities to create healthy communities. "Intergenerational" asset building work is youth and adults, older youth and children and elders taking new roles in the asset movement - each generation collaborating with another. For more information, please visit www.search-institute.org/hchy/.

NEW CONNECTIONS Timely Sources of Information

Youth Transition Action Team Web Site

www.nww.org/initiatives/ytat.html

New Ways to Work Redesigned web site

www.nww.org

California Permanency Youth Project web site

<http://www.cpy.org/>

Family to Family web site

www.aecf.org/initiatives/familytofamily

Connected by 25 publication

<http://www.hewlett.org/Archives/Publications/connectedBy25.htm>

A Guide to Health Care Transitions

<http://hctransitions.ichp.edu/resources.html>

National Foster Care Coalition Updated FAQ on Chafee

www.natl-fostercare.org/



CAPITOL STEPS

News about Pending California Foster Care Legislation & News about Federal Budget & Legislation

Pending Foster Care Legislation in California

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.

Child Welfare Council (AB863)

AB863 addresses the siloing of support services for youth in foster care. The bill would create a Child Welfare Council that would bring together leaders from judicial, child welfare, health, education and mental-health agencies as well as people most affected by foster care to identify and resolve the barriers within the system. The goal is to develop a cross-system council that can help create a more effective, seamless system. The bill has been held over for next year.

Improving Foster Youth Educational Outcomes (AB 1261)

AB 1261 addresses the fact that appropriate school placements are not always made for foster youth. This bill, which makes technical corrections to 2003 legislation, requires an organized process for school placements and requires that local educational agencies provide explanations regarding placements if they are disputed. The goal is for foster youth to be placed in the appropriate setting. The bill was passed by the Legislature on September 8; the governor must now decide to approve or veto it.

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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. AB1412 was passed September 8; the governor must now decide to approve or veto it.

Foster Children: Social Security Assistance (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 would require the State Department of Social Services to appoint a representative payee for each foster care beneficiary who cannot manage or direct the management of his or her benefits. The goal is to make sure that the eligible children and youth receive their benefits and have them managed reliably. The bill was passed by the Legislature on September 2; the governor must now decide to approve or veto it.

Foster Care: Transitional Housing (SB436)

SB436 acknowledges the fact that current transition housing for pregnant or parenting youth emancipating from foster care is not sufficient to meet need. This bill would require the county department of social services in a county that provides transitional housing placement services to include in its annual Independent Living Program report a description of currently available transitional housing resources in relation to the number of emancipating pregnant or parenting foster youth in the county, and a plan for meeting any unmet transitional housing needs of the emancipating pregnant or parenting foster youth. The goal is to make sure that all pregnant or parenting transitioning youth have adequate housing. The bill was passed by the Legislature on September; the governor must now decide to approve or veto it.

Updates on Federal Budget and Legislation

FY 2006 Budget

Congress has delayed the final round of the federal budget reconciliation – which would have included deep cuts to mandatory programs and the passage of more tax cuts – until mid-October.

(Federal Update continued on page 10)

