



YTAT Newsblast

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

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February 4, 2008

Welcome to the YTAT Newsblast, a timely update on events, legislation, and resources for Youth Transition Action Teams and your partners working with youth in the child welfare system.

UPCOMING EVENTS/TRAININGS/DEADLINES

- **FOSTER YOUTH EDUCATION FUND: APPLICATION FOR EDUCATIONAL GRANT DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 15, 2008**

This educational grant program has been developed by the Foster Youth Education Fund to support the ongoing educational efforts of youth who are emancipating from foster care in **Sacramento County**. [Click here for Grant Guidelines and Application](#)

- **California Department of Education (CDE)** is sponsoring a conference designed to strengthen and expand the knowledge, working relationship, and network of Secondary Transition professionals working in the field of special education in collaboration with the California Community of Practice for Secondary Transition. The California Community of Practice (CoP) for Secondary Transition is a group of individuals representing multiple agencies who meet regularly to share ideas, problem solve, and improve practices related to secondary transition.

In addition to attendees they are also looking for presenters. If interested please click the following link for more information: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/ac/transitionconf.asp>

- **St. John's Law School's Child Advocacy Clinic announces:
No Place to Live: the Housing Crisis Facing Youth Aging-Out of Foster Care
Friday, March 28, 2008**

Location: St. John's Manhattan Campus

[Please click here for the brochure and registration materials.](#)

- [Child Welfare League of America Conference](#)

Pencil it in: "Children 2008: A Call for Action -- Leading the Nation for Children and Families." This conference will take place in Washington, D.C. from February 25 to 27.

- **THP-Plus Training Series: Get Your Questions Answered!**
The THP-Plus Statewide Implementation Project will be offering three workshops in February and March. The topics of this three-part series will include THP-Plus administration, lessons learned from implementing THP-Plus programs and an advanced training on the THP-Plus participant tracking system. The workshops will be on-line "webinars" and will be taped and available on the THP-Plus website, www.thpplus.org. Registration information will be sent out in February.
- **15th Annual National Foster Care Conference**
Conference dates: May 21-23, 2008
Conference Location: Orlando, FL
This is a conference designed to help professionals, clients and their respective organizations establish and maintain an effective and comprehensive Foster Care Program.

21st Annual National Independent Living Conference

Conference dates: September 3-6, 2008

Conference Location: Orlando (Kissimmee), FL

Now in its **21st year**, this conference is a must-attend event for youth service professionals, independent living professionals and youth ages 15+. The national youth conference is comprised of special sessions dedicated to the needs of youth who are currently in care.

For more information about the above two conferences, please visit:

http://www.danielkids.org/Sites/web/images/conferences/2008_Conferences.pdf

INFORMATION AND PUBLICATIONS

- **THP-Plus Participant Tracking System Webinar Posted Online**
The recently developed THP-Plus Participant Tracking System is designed to collect consistent demographics and outcomes about THP-Plus participants statewide, to be used for program self-evaluation and state-level budget advocacy. In December, the system was introduced through an online "webinar," which included a detailed walk-through of the data entry screens. A video recording of the training is now available for download on the THP-Plus website at www.thpplus.org under Trainings - Past Trainings.
- **Study Shows Extending Care Past Age 18 May Benefit Foster Youth**
Foster youth allowed to remain in care past age 18 are more likely to go to college than those who exit at 18, according to a new Chapin Hall study. Evidence that many former foster youth face significant hardships when compared to adolescents in the general population is described in [Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth: Outcomes at Age 21](#), by Mark E. Courtney, Amy Dworsky, Gretchen Ruth Cusick, Judy Havlicek, Alfred Perez, and Tom Keller.
- **The Chafee Educational and Training Voucher (ETV) Program: Six States' Experiences**
A 46-page report examining how the Chafee educational and training vouchers (ETVs) and other state-based supports for higher education have been working since 2003 in California,

Maine, Montana, New York, North Carolina and Wyoming. Authors: Robin Nixon and Maria Jones (National Foster Care Coalition) [Download](#) (PDF: 2MB)

- **Supporting Kinship Care—Promising Practices and Lessons Learned**

[Download](#) (PDF 840KB)

In 2004 and 2005, Casey Family Programs sponsored a [Breakthrough Series Collaborative](#) (BSC) to improve how systems support [kinship care](#). This new report summarizes the work of teams involved in the BSC.

- **Successes for Children and Families: It's Time to Build on What Works in Child Welfare** [Successes for Children and Families: It's Time to Build on What Works in Child Welfare](#) released by the [North American Council on Adoptable Children](#) highlights nine programs that are successfully applying innovations in their foster care programs to improve outcomes for children in care.

- [Improving Child Welfare Outcomes Through Systems of Care: Building the Infrastructure -- A Guide for Communities](#)

This Child Welfare Information Gateway guide is designed for communities looking to build “systems of care” that bring child welfare professionals together with their counterparts and other agencies to provide necessary services; it outlines definitions, goals, activities, personnel and expected outcomes.

- [Foster Care Dynamics: Entry and Exit Patterns](#)

A new Chapin Hall report examines a sample of nearly 350,000 children entering foster care for the first time between 2000 and 2005. The data includes changes in the number of children in care, the chances of entering care, placement type, movement and exit rates.

- [Getting Beyond the Foster Care System: What Works for Teens](#)

Could you have made it entirely on your own at 18 or 21? Each year, roughly 25,000 young people "age out" of the foster care system, many without family or economic supports. Betsy Krebs, co-director of the New York City-based Youth Advocacy Center, talks about what works to help teens aging out of foster care succeed.

- **Check out these two new websites that showcase the experiences and insights of young people who have been in the nation's foster care system and make the case for reform in their own words.**

The [My Story Project](#), created by the [Public Children Services Association of Ohio](#) features video of former foster youth sharing their experiences and emphasizing the types of system reforms that can make a difference for the children and young people in foster care today.

[Band Together](#), a project of [FosterClub](#), is a comprehensive advocacy site designed by former foster youth for current and former foster youth, parents and others to mobilize and call for reform of the foster care system.

- **Youth Law News: Journal of the National Center for Youth Law**

Viewed by many youth advocates as a national model of collaboration and youth empowerment when it opened in November 2005, VOICES is so far living up to its image.

[Former Foster Youth Take Charge of Their Lives](#)

[VOICES: A Model of Support for and by Youth Aging Out of Foster Care](#)

- **The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators Dedicates Their Publication to Raising Awareness About Youth In Foster Care**

The articles below were published in the recent *Student Aid Transcript*. Their magazine is distributed nationally to 15,000 higher education administrators and over 3,000 campuses.

[Making A Difference: California Community Colleges Target Problems of Foster Youth Access and Success for the Forgotten Student: How Financial Aid Administrators Can Help](#)

[Students from Foster Care](#)

[A Step Ahead For Youth From Foster Care](#)

[Living in Survival Mode: Foster Care Youth Talk About Their Needs](#)

[How A Montana Foster Care Youth Beat The Odds: Never Give Up](#)

- **Latest Quarterly Report from Fostering the Future**

[Target Summary: Fostering the Future](#)

BUDGET UPDATES

- **Governor Releases Proposed Budget for 08-09:**

- THP-Plus Intact Amid Significant Cuts in Child Welfare Services**

Despite deep cuts in child welfare services proposed by Governor Schwarzenegger in his 08-09 budget, the THP-Plus budget remains intact. No cuts were proposed for the current fiscal year (07-08) and a \$5 million increase was proposed for the next fiscal year (08-09), bringing the annual THP-Plus budget to \$40.89 million. At this funding level, an estimated 1,600 former foster youth would be able to participate in THP-Plus annually. Other areas of child welfare services face serious cuts in the Governor's proposed budget. For detailed information about Governor Schwarzenegger's budget proposal, please visit the California's Budget Project's website at <http://www.cbp.org/> or the California Department of Finance <http://www.ebudget.ca.gov/>

LEGISLATIVE ALERT:

- **ECONOMIC STIMULUS AND SUMMER JOBS-CONTACT MEMBERS OF CONGRESS**

On January 29, 2008 the House of Representatives passed a \$145.9 billion stimulus package ([H.R. 5140](#)). The Senate Finance Committee has released a slightly expanded stimulus bill. Some members of the Senate have indicated a desire to introduce amendments to the stimulus package. The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee has proposed a **\$1 billion summer jobs program** through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) to states for youth activities with the following provisions:

- Funds may only be used for summer jobs and not other year round activities.
- Funds will be available for use from April 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008.

- Governors may not reserve any portion of the fund for statewide activities, and no portion may be used to fund the Youth Opportunity Grant program.
- The only performance measures which may be used to rate the effectiveness of funded activities are work readiness indicators.

Please contact your members of Congress to support this proposal. You may use this [sample letter](#) as a guide when creating your own letters. Contact information for your member of Congress can be found by visiting [here](#) and entering your zip code.

In addition, please consider writing to Senate Majority Leader Reid, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, Senator Finance Committee Chair Max Baucus, or Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Grassley individually, as well as your own Senators who are members of the Senate Finance Committee (that list can be found [here](#)). If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact Jonathan Larsen at jl@nyec.org or at (202) 659-1064.

- **DUE BY FEBRUARY 22, 2008-SIGN-ON LETTERS: RECONNECTING YOUTH TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS ACT (H.R. 4208 AND S. 2560):**

The National Network for Youth is circulating letters for national organization sign-on. The letters communicate support for the Reconnecting Youth to Prevent Homelessness Act (H.R. 4208/S. 2560). We are re-circulating the sign-on letter on the House legislation, which was introduced in late 2007, and circulating for the first time an identical letter on the Senate legislation, which was introduced just this week.

Among its provisions, the bill extends federal foster care maintenance payments to youth in the child welfare system through age 20. It extends eligibility for the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program to transitioned foster care youth through age 24. You may find the complete legislation on line at <http://thomas.loc.gov>. Please add your organization's name to the letters by close of business, **Friday, February 22. To sign on, please email your organization name to Bob Reeg, National Network for Youth, at bob.reeg@verizon.net.**

[Click her for a summary of this legislation and copies of the Sign-on Letters](#)