



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

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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 Deadlines

- **2009 Congressional Foster Youth Internship Application**

The Congressional Foster Youth Internship (FYI) Program provides talented college students, who have spent their formative years in foster care, an opportunity to intern in Congressional offices for the summer. These young adults, who have beaten the odds and thrived in spite of difficult circumstances, bring their unique perspectives and resilient spirits to serve in the offices of the U.S. Congress. [Download an application form](#) for the 2009 Congressional Foster Youth Internship program.

The eight-week internship is a full-time work experience. Interns are paid a small stipend that will cover daily expenses.” **Applications must be received by January 9, 2009**, so quick turnaround to foster youth is critical. For more information about the Congressional Foster Youth Internship program, please contact Chelsea Cathcart at chelsea@ccainstitute.org or (202) 544-8500.

- **HUD invites communities to apply for \$20 Million in New Housing Voucher for Child Welfare Families and Aging-out Youth**

Today, November 24, 2008, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) issued the 2008 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) inviting public housing authorities nationwide to apply for a portion of \$20 million in new Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers the Family Unification Program (FUP). FUP provides homeless and poorly housed families involved with the child welfare system with decent and affordable housing and supportive services in order to safely reunite them with their children. FUP vouchers are also available to prevent homelessness among former foster youth. You can access HUD’s website by clicking [here](#) or you can access the NOFA directly by visiting our website at www.nchcw.org. Once HUD issues the NOFA, **PHAs will have until Jan. 28th 2009 to submit an application.**

- **Foster Care Forum**

Assembly Member Jim Beall, Jr., the 2007-08 Chair of the Assembly Select Committee on Foster Care and Committee on Human Services, and the California Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care invite you to a Forum entitled "**Changes on the Horizon: The**

Recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care (BRC) & the Impacts of New Federal Legislation." The Forum will be held:

Wednesday, **December 10, 2008**

In the Ballroom of the San Francisco Marriott

55 Fourth Street, San Francisco

9 to 11 a.m. (to begin promptly at 9 a.m.)

If you have questions, you can contact Irene Frausto, Committee Secretary, at (916) 319-2089 or irene.frausto@asm.ca.gov.

INFORMATION AND PUBLICATIONS

- **[Project Avary](#)** (Alternative Ventures for At-Risk Youth) strives to break the intergenerational cycle of imprisonment. Avary provides counseling, enrichment, and training to 120 Bay Area children and teens with parents in prison. Nearly 40% of Avary participants are in foster or kinship-care. Avary is seeking partnerships with other youth-serving organizations throughout the Bay Area that offer employment training, mentors, and youth development activities. **Contact Maria Schell at 415 460-1184.**
- **[Serving Former Foster Youth in California Community Colleges: Success, Challenges and Recommendations \(October 2008\)](#)**
In an effort to provide an overview of how community colleges in California are currently meeting the needs of current and former foster youth, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation commissioned the Research and Planning Group's Center for Student Success, with assistance and support from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Foster Youth Success Initiative, to prepare a report that would:
 - Provide for a better understanding of the needs of emancipated foster youth enrolled at community colleges;
 - Examine successful responses to student needs from community colleges statewide;
 - Identify challenges faced by community colleges in meeting student needs; and
 - Make recommendations as to how programs can be enhanced, expanded, and improved.
- **[Casey Family Programs Releases Annual Report on Foster Care](#)**
Casey Family Program's 2020 Strategy aims to safely reduce by 50% the number of children in foster care by the year 2020. In this report, their 2007 accomplishments are presented. Their accomplishments include providing direct services to more than 16,000 children and families through nine field offices, consulting with states and counties, and educating lawmakers about the need for change.
- **[The McKinney-Vento Act and Children and Youth Awaiting Foster Care Placement.: Strategies for Improving Educational Outcomes Through School Stability](#)**
A report of the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY), made possible with support from Casey Family Programs, describes how eight jurisdictions are defining awaiting foster care placement and how they are implementing the McKinney-Vento Act for youth in out-of-home care. It offers concrete strategies for building

and maintaining effective collaborations between child welfare and education agencies and supporting the educational success of youth in care.

- **[Preparing Emancipated Youth for Positive Contact with their Birth Families](#)**
In research conducted by Casey Family Programs, 87.9 percent of surveyed youth had elected to contact their birth families after leaving foster care. Casey practitioners and researchers Catherine Roller White, Mary Wolf, Kirk O'Brien, and Peter Pecora have published an article to discuss preparing youth for contact with birth families. The article also discusses benefits that may come from birth family contact. These include engagement with identity, history, and culture. Included in the Fall 2008 issue of [Focus](#), the article is titled, *Contact with Birth Families*
- **[Creating Postsecondary Pathways to Good Jobs for Young High School Dropouts](#)**
This paper advocates expansion and better integration of efforts to connect high school dropouts between the ages of 16 and 24 to pathways to postsecondary credentials that have value in the labor market.