



YTAT Newsblast

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

The FosterClub 2009-2010 All-Stars Program:

For the past several years FosterClub has been providing a way for young leaders to reach out to other youth through conferences, trainings and events. This year, 12 young people from the foster care system will be chosen as FosterClub All-Stars. They will be provided with intensive leadership and public speaking training, and then sent to teen conferences and foster care-related events across the country. In addition to motivating, educating and empowering foster youth across America, the FosterClub All-Star's will raise awareness about the 530,000 children in foster care and specifically the 24,000 youth who transition from foster care every year, mostly without the support of a permanent and stable family.

Have Your Youth Apply Today!

If you know youth that like travel, public speaking, and making a difference in the foster care community, this is the perfect internship for them! Youth aged 18 to 24 who have spent time in foster care are eligible. **The application deadline is March 1st** – encourage young people to apply today! [Click Here](#)

Orphan Foundation of America Accepting Applications

The Orphan Foundation of America (OFA) is now accepting applications for scholarships for the 2009-2010 academic year. Scholarships are available to eligible former foster youth who are pursuing postsecondary education. To qualify, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Have been in foster care for one consecutive year at the time of their 18th birthday or high school graduation OR have been adopted or taken into legal guardianship out of foster care after their 16th birthday OR have lost both parents to death before age 18 and not been subsequently adopted
- Be accepted into or enrolled in an accredited postsecondary program (university, college, community college, or vocational/technical institute)
- Be under age 25 on March 31, 2009

For more information, visit the [OFA website](#).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Ways Receives Funding to Increase Career Development Activities for Foster Youth:

New Ways to Work has received two new grants, one from the San Francisco Foundation and one from the Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles, to support deeper work with the YTAT's in each region. With San Francisco Foundation funding, New Ways will work with five bay area counties (including Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Marin) to increase foster youth access to career technical education opportunities that exist at the county, district and school levels.

The funding received from the Jewish Community Foundation will be targeted towards assisting LA YTAT work with youth during the summer youth employment program and assisting those youth in connecting their summer jobs experience to career and educational goals.

This targeted assistance to specific counties will be integrated into the overall work that New Ways will conduct throughout the year with the existing 18 YTAT counties.

Summer Jobs are a Reality this Year!

As most of you probably know, the economic stimulus package has been signed into law by President Obama. The good news is that funding for summer jobs is included and on the fast track for implementation this summer – creating opportunities for 6 weeks of subsidized employment in public and non-profit sectors through the Workforce Investment Act. The legislation extends the age of eligibility up to 24.

Some things you can do right now.

1. **Contact your partners at the Workforce Investment Board and Youth Council.** Find out how they are getting ready for the summer program.
2. **Offer to help.** Let them know that you are ready to work with them to help the youth you are working with be ready for a summer workplace experience.
3. **Create an opportunity.** Think about internships and projects that you could host this summer. Most workforce areas will be looking for high quality worksites in the public and non-profit sectors.
4. **Start getting your youth ready.** The summer jobs experience will be most valuable if directly connected to educational goals, the exploration of a career interest, and the youth's next step. Help your youth think about what they might want to learn, and the kind of experience that would help them explore a career that interests them.
5. **Engage new partners.** You may want to connect with new partners that are working with older youth. Currently, it looks as if eligibility for the program will be extended to age 24. Find ways to connect these youth to the opportunity.

If you need help connecting, or strategies about how to maximize the summer opportunity, feel free to give one of us here at New Ways a call.

INFORMATION AND PUBLICATIONS

[New Help for Children Raised by Grandparents and Other Relatives: Questions and Answers About the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008](#)

This report is intended to help ensure full and prompt implementation of the improvements in the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act for children being raised by grandparents and other relatives. It was prepared by an informal coalition of 18 organizations, many of whom have been working individually and together for years to support children being raised by grandparents and other relatives. In this guide, the collaborating organizations have answered a number of questions posed to them by persons interested in implementing the new act. The Guide is intended to be useful to those charged with implementing the improvements for children being raised by grandparents and other relatives, as well as others who are advocating for the new improvements and assisting with implementation.

[Identifying Special Education Decision Makers for Children in Foster Care: State Law Questions](#)

This article can be useful to anyone who: has struggled with understanding how various states have different processes and procedures for determining who is the special education decision maker for a child; wants to identify what areas of state law or policy may need to be clarified to more effectively implement the federal law; and wants to engage in discussions in states and jurisdictions about what would be the right policy and practice for their state.

Additionally, we have completed a series of factsheets to address the issues of special education decision making geared to different audiences. Each of these factsheets is available at www.abanet.org/child/education/publications.

[National Review of Policies and Programs Supporting Youth Transitioning Out of Foster Care](#)

This comprehensive review of policies and programs designed to support youth transitioning out of foster care spans all 50 states and the District of Columbia. As part of the review, Chapin Hall administered a web-based survey of state independent living services coordinators to collect up-to-date information about their state's policies and programs. Click here to access the Chapin Hall abstract and full report:

http://www.chapinhall.org/article_abstract.aspx?ar=1481&L2=61&L3=130

[California Connected by 25: Efforts to Address the K-12 Educational Needs of Transitioning Foster Youth.](#)

This report is the first in a series documenting the challenges, accomplishments and lessons learned thus far among the California Connected by 25 Initiative's (CC25I) early implementing counties in California.

The report was produced by the Systems Change Assessment Team at UC Berkeley for the CC25I funding partners – The Annie E. Casey Foundation, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The Walter S. Johnson Foundation, The Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation and The Stuart Foundation.

Future reports will examine CC25I efforts to expand the continuum of supports available to transitioning foster youth in several other areas including Transitional Housing, Financial Literacy and Financial Asset Development, Permanency and Employment/Job Training/Post-secondary Education. [Click here to read the full report.](#)

[Finding Resources to Support Mentoring Programs and Services for Youth](#)

This brief highlights three strategies that leaders and stakeholders can use to finance and sustain mentoring programs and services for youth. These strategies include building partnerships with businesses and foundations, conducting community fundraising to generate revenue and maximizing public revenue. In addition, it provides information on 25 federal funding sources that can be used to finance and sustain these programs. This publication is available at:

<http://www.financeproject.org/publications/FindingResources-MentoringPrograms.pdf>

[2007-08 Annual Report: California College Pathways Helping California's Foster Youth Access Higher Education and Reach Their Educational Goals](#)

A report developed by the John Burton Foundation, the California State University Office of the Chancellor and the California Community College System Office highlights the progress campus support programs have made statewide in their effort to increase access to higher education for California's former foster youth.

http://www.cacollegepathways.org/pdfs/011609_CCSPAR_wholeFINAL.pdf

[REPORT: The Forgotten Middle: Ensuring that All Students Are on Target for College and Career Readiness before High School](#)

This new study offers evidence of the importance of upper elementary grades and middle school in preparing students for college and work. The researchers constructed predictive models to examine six factors, including higher grades and taking honors courses, in influencing students' college readiness, as defined by their performance on the ACT EXPLORE test. They found that, on average, only the approximately 20% of students who were on target for college and career readiness by 8th grade were ultimately ready for college and career by 11th and 12th grade.

"What we're saying is college and career readiness is a process that includes high school but is not exclusively a high school issue. It's a K-12 issue," said Cyndie Schmeiser, president of ACT's education division. <http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/reports/ForgottenMiddle.html>

[Nation Lags In College Access and Success](#)

Other nations are advancing more quickly than the United States in preparing citizens for college success according to *Measuring Up 2008* from [the National Center For Public Policy and Higher Education](#). The report card grades all 50 states on five areas: preparation, participation, affordability, completion, and benefits. It shows how income, race and ethnicity and geography are playing an increasing role in determining which Americans receive an education that prepares them for college

[Education Leaders Propose New Agenda for Higher Education](#)

A report from the [College Board's Commission on Access, Admissions and Success in Higher Education](#) addresses the sobering reality that the next generation of U.S. workers is likely to be less educated than the retirees they replace. To boost college attainment rates, [Coming to Our](#)

[Senses: Education and the American Future](#) suggests more rigorous high school coursework, improved recruiting of low-income students, and increased financial aid.

Employers: Teens need better career preparation

Amid a push to prepare all high school students for college, some employers say schools aren't encouraging enough students to look into occupations like welding that often pay well but do not require a college degree. Even those students who plan to attend college need to develop better career skills, said Janet B. Bray, executive director of the Association for Career and Technical Education. "We have to find the right balance," she said.

http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/02/11/21intl_ep.h28.html?tmp=885027610