

Teen Success

County of San Bernardino, Independent Living Program

Volume 1, Issue 2

Fall 2008

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In order to be a GREAT Leader



You must be a GOOD follower

ILP New Additions

In April of 2008 the former Independent Living Program Coordinator, Kevin Anderson, was promoted to the position of Supervising Social Service Practitioner and assigned the role of Supervising the Independent Living Program and Education Liaisons. Tracy Thorne replaced Kevin Anderson as the Independent Living Program Coordinator on May 27, 2008.

Tracy worked as an Independent Living Program Social Worker II from October of 2001 until April of 2005 when she was promoted to Social Service Practitioner. Tracy worked in the Rialto office as an Intake SSP before joining the Independent Living Program Team in May. For any ILP related questions or concerns you may contact Tracy at (909) 891-3559.

Desert Region

The Desert Region has a new ILP Clerk, Tiffany Walker. ILP youth in the Desert Region can call Tiffany Walker at (760) 843-4215 to register for ILP classes. Stacy Bryant has been reassigned to the Adoption Unit. Thank you for all of your hard work, Stacey!

San Bernardino Region (Eastern Region)

San Bernardino Region ILP Clerk Irma Romero will soon be leaving ILP for the state of Tennessee! Her replacement will be Tracy Ramos. Youth can reach Tracy at Irma's old number, (909) 386-1394. Irma your many years of dedication to the Independent Living Program and exceptional work effort is greatly appreciated. You will be missed!

Peer and Family Advocate Corner



This has been a wonderful year for me as a Peer and Family Advocate. This year I've met some awesome people such as Presiding Judge Marsha Slough and my co-workers Roxie Findsen and Gester Hernandez who play a big role in ILP. I've enjoyed going to the wonderful events such as Catalina Island, Body World, Museum of Tolerance, Introductory Picnic Fear Factor and meeting different foster youth with shattered pasts but bright futures. All these events and memories will be with me even after this year ends. Seeing the need for change has opened my eyes to a new state of mind to help youth obtain services because I am a former foster youth and I know without guidance you can end up in negative situations. Each and every one of you is our future and ILP stresses youth success and our goal is to see all of you succeed. I am currently working on a community calendar for youth that want information about what's going on in the community, so look out for that. Can't wait to see what next year brings, Happy Holidays and Happy New Year. If you have any questions or concerns you can call me at (909) 388-6716 or email me at jharris@hss.sbcounty.gov.

Jatori Harris



What's up everybody! This is your PFA Gester Hernandez. I want to let everyone know that starting January 2009 we are going to have deadlines to sign up for classes. Keep a look out for the calendar and the flyers that has all the upcoming classes and the deadlines to register for the classes. We are trying to improve the quality of our workshops so we have to know how many youth are attending the classes two weeks prior to class. Please remember to sign up for the classes so you don't miss out. I hope to see you in the next event! If you have any questions feel free to call me at (909) 891-3583 or email me at gghernandez@hss.sbcounty.gov.



Hey Everyone. This is one of your Peer and Family Advocates, Roxie Findsen. I hope you are enjoying the events and workshops so far and if you have any suggestions for the events to help make them better let me know. Keep an eye out for some exciting events that are coming which I am currently working on. Some of them include a Talent Show, which will be an opportunity to show case your talents and also the Foster Youth Summit an opportunity for you to express your feelings and make change in the foster care system. Also, be aware of your Foster Youth Rights, below you can read them and if you feel any are being violated tell your social worker. I highly encourage you take advantage of ILP and participate in every workshop and events we host. Hope you enjoy your holidays. If you have any questions feel free to contact me at (909) 388-6736 or rfindsen@hss.sbcounty.hss.

Foster Youth Rights

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO DO SOME THINGS ON YOUR OWN. YOU CAN:

- have your own emancipation bank account (unless your case plan says you cannot)
- learn job skills right for your age
- work, unless the law says you are too young
- manage the money you earn (if right for your age, developmental level and it's in your case plan)
- go to Independent Living Program classes and activities if you are old enough

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN A SAFE, COMFORTABLE HOME WITH:

- enough clothes and healthy food
- your own place to store your things
- an allowance (if you are in a group home)
- a phone that you can use to make confidential calls (unless a judge says you cannot)

YOU HAVE SCHOOL RIGHTS. YOU CAN:

- go to school every day
- go to after-school activities right for your age and developmental level

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- be treated with respect
- go to religious services and activities of your choice send and get unopened mail (unless a judge says someone else can open your mail)
- contact people who are not in the foster care system (like friends, church members, teachers, and others)
- make contact with social workers, attorneys, probation officers, CASAs, foster youth advocates and supporters, or anyone else involved with your case
- be told about your placement by your social worker or probation officer

YOU HAVE HEALTH RIGHTS. YOU CAN:

- see a doctor, dentist, eye doctor, or talk to a counselor if you need to
- refuse to take medicines, vitamins or herbs (unless a doctor or judge says you must)

NO ONE CAN:

- lock you in a room or building (unless you are in a community treatment facility)
- abuse you physically, sexually or emotionally for any reason
- punish you by physically hurting you for any reason
- look through your things unless they have a good and legal reason

YOU HAVE OTHER RIGHTS TOO. YOU CAN:

- tell the judge how you feel about your family, lawyer, and social worker
- tell the judge what you want to happen in your case
- have your own lawyer
- live with a family member if that would be a safe place
- call the Foster Care Ombudsman Office and Community Care Licensing at any time
- get help with school if you need it

YOU HAVE RIGHTS AT COURT TOO. YOU CAN:

- go to court and talk to the judge
- see and get a copy of your court report and your case plan
- keep your court records private, unless the law says otherwise
- be told by your social worker or probation officer and your attorney about any changes in your case plan or placement

YOU HAVE FAMILY RIGHTS TOO. YOU CAN:

- visit and contact your brothers and sisters (unless a judge says you cannot)
- contact parents and other family members, too (unless a judge says you cannot)



ILP Introductory Picnic



By Roxie Findsen

On Saturday, August 23, 2008 ILP hosted the Introductory Picnic, with a theme of Fear Factor. It was a beautiful day at Red Hill Park; music played in the background by our DJ from Audio Concepts. The youth enjoyed food from Ruben's King Pollo and throughout the day the youth participated in games and activities and also danced.

During the fun filled day we had a Fear Factor competition. Youth fought hard to stay in the race! It started with a balloon toss, then the youth cringed as they tossed cow pies at a target, next they tried their best to ride mini tricycles around the lake, they were hesitant as they stuck their hands in a bucket of crickets, gagged as they ate chocolate out of a diaper and lastly gulped down a milk shake of broccoli, beats, Brussels sprouts, carrot juice and grape fruit. It started off with about 100 youth in the competition and ended with 3 winners. The 3 winners were William C., Charles M., and Alex G.

We also had presentations from ILP, Probation, Olive Crest THPP, Project Focus THPP, THP-Plus, Cameron Hill Aftercare, TAY Center and CYC. Each program shared about their program and the resources they provide for our youth. The day was full of fun and excitement; by the end of the day the youth did not want to leave and had wished the event could last longer.

Catalina Island



By: Gester H.

September 12 through the 14, eighteen youth and seven staff went to Catalina Island Marine Institute (CIMI). We took a two hour ride on a boat from Long Beach to Catalina Island. When we first arrived we ate lunch and were able to pick out our rooms. Then we got ready for snorkeling. We had to put on a wet suit and use a snorkel as we went swimming in the ocean. Some interesting fish that we saw were the shovel nose guitar fish, the garibaldi, snails and much more. Later that night we went on a night hike up the mountain to view the stars. Unfortunately it was a cloudy night so we were not able to see any stars but our camp leaders shared stories with us about the different constellations that exist. The next day we went snorkeling again, like the day before we saw a great variety of beautiful fish and we even got to see sea lions which were only a couple of feet away from us. After snorkeling we went on a day hike; this hike was quite challenging because there were



"We even got to see sea lions which were only a couple of feet away from us."



narrow trails and a stream that we had to keep crossing throughout the hike. We finished the hike with a solo walk; we were able to enjoy the nature individually which was very relaxing. We even got to see some of the wild life that the island has such as some deer, stick bugs, a rattle snake, a red tail hawk and much more. Unfortunately, we did not get to see the bison that roam around the island. Later that night we went rock climbing. Some of the walls were challenging and hard to get up but we had a lot of fun. After rock climbing we had a camp fire by the beach and shared scary stories. My favorite part of the trip was being able to touch the sharks and the sting rays that CIMI has in an aquarium. On our last day we went kayaking some of us jumped in the water and some of us fell in but it was fun. This trip was not only fun but it was also educational. I think that this was a great experience and I believe all the youth would agree with me.

CYC

By: Celeste Osborne

The California Youth Connection Annual Summer Leadership and Policy Conference took place in San Diego at UCSD this year; it was August 8th -11th. Overall it was a great experience and a lot of fun. We arrived Friday and checked in our rooms, we then had an ice cream social where we created mascots to represent our chapter. We then played games until it was time for lights out. The next day is when all the fun hands-on events happened. We had breakfast and then were separated into four groups. The four groups represented the four main statewide issues which are emancipation, Medi-Cal, transitional housing and higher education. We all participated in three workshops that day, within the workshops we had to come up with the two most important things that needed to be changed within the issues, make a recommendation for the issue

and our solutions for the issue. Later that day we had dinner on a huge boat and a dance on the second floor as we cruised the bay and saw fireworks from Sea World. On Sunday we participated in more workshops to perfect our recommendation and to prepare to present them on Monday. Later that day we had a BBQ and were allowed to swim and to compete with other chapters in games such as tug-of-war war and a three-legged race. Our chapter also had the opportunity to eat at a restaurant where we had time to get to know each other better and to help us build a stronger chapter. On the last day each group presented their issue, recommendation and solution in front of a panel and guests that consisted of policy makers, social workers, and people that work within Children's Services. We had a really fun weekend and felt we were able to make a difference.



If you would like to be part of San Bernardino Chapter contact Celeste Osborne at celeste.osborne@yahoo.com or Roxie Findsen at roxierockstar0486@yahoo.com.

Independent City

By: Gester Hernandez

On Saturday, November 8, 2008 ILP hosted the biggest event of the year Independent City. This year's theme was "Strengthen your Money Management Skills for a Better Tomorrow". The event took place at San Bernardino Valley College. San Bernardino Valley College generously donated the use of their campus and provided breakfast burritos for the youth and staff. We had 167 youth attend this event. Youth arrived around 8 am to register for the conference and they received their nametags with their assigned group, a backpack with a folder, calculator, pen and a checkbook in it. On the checkbook were assigned jobs and a monthly salary for each youth. Before the event started everyone met in the Greek Theatre for introductions and a skit which was composed by our very own ILP Peer and Family Advocates, Cameron Hill Aftercare youth and staff.

The youth then broke into their groups and went to the money management workshop. The money management workshop covered three topics which were how to write a check, how to follow a monthly budget and how to balance a checkbook.

After the money management workshop the youth participated in seven other workshops. These workshops included the education booth which consisted of different universities and community colleges and the career booth where the youth participated in a small mock



interview. There was the transportation and insurance workshop where the youth learned different ways of purchasing a new or used car, types of insurances and alternatives for transportation such as taking a bus. Also there was a housing and utilities workshop to teach the youth different types of housing such as renting an apartment or room for rent, they also learned about different utilities they have to be aware of paying when living on their own. To help make Independent City more realistic the youth also participated in court where the youth were given different citations and had to appear in front of Judge David Heisler. We also had a health center and a grocery market. The youth learned about different health options and also how to budget to make a meal. Lastly we had an entertainment booth set up as a mini carnival, the youth were able to purchase movie tickets and play games. We had different representatives for our resource center which included ILP, the TAY Center, THPP, THP-Plus, Cameron Hill Aftercare, and Counseling.

During the middle of the day the youth enjoyed Ruben's King Pollo for lunch which included: chicken, rice, beans, potato salad, and tortillas. As soon as lunch was over everybody (Continue on Page 6)

Teen Corner

Foster Children Move From
Place to Place
By: Yessenia M.

Foster children move from place to place
with memories that walk the night alone,
nor is the love theirs they must embrace
yet most survive with a peculiar grace,
even though their hearts should turn to
stone, as they move about from place to place.

Perhaps within themselves they find a
space to furnish as they would a mobile
home, finding scraps of things they can
embrace.

A memory like some much-fingered lace,
Thoughts and dreams that only they have
known, moving as they do from place to place.

Their childhood impossible to trace in the
years of yearning after they are grown
filled with love they've chosen to embrace
yet with their losses etched upon their face,
pain for which no penance can atone.

How can they move from place to place,
surrendering the love they must embrace...

Poem For -U-
By: Mariea S.

*In a box that has a face, inside the box is the
Place where all secrets are held if you don't
Understand don't have a cow you will figure it out,
This box will hang for it holds everything, it is white
And plain which symbolizes wealth, you will know
What box it is when it is time.*

*In a place that is yellow, ducks are all around, all
Ducks have the same face except one, this duck stands
Out and always will which water will fill the
Loneliness that it has, this duck likes to be above
Water where it can see all the squares and circles life
Throws at it.*

*In this place you can be yourself for as long as it
Takes, there is no limit, for you can see yourself inside
For what you are so take your time to reads this poem
For which you will understand even if you read this
More than once, you will know what was in my mind
When I wrote this.*

My Soldier
By: Kristie P.

*This foster mom, she helped me in so many ways,
When I was in pain which was like rain.
She made the sun pop out and helped me maintain.
Her name is Betty Tolbert, she is like my soldier,
She helped me become bolder,
When I felt like no one cared, she was the one
That was there.*

*When I felt down she was around,
She turned my frown upside down
When I felt like I wasn't loved she showed me what
Love was*

*When she first got me my heart was torn up,
Shredded, cut, bruised, just messed up
She helped me heal all the cut's.
She showed me that some foster parents do care
They do throw a little love in the air,
And that I have always been loved by someone out there,
I'd just been too blind to realize who cared,
She told me even though you came from a broken home
"I love you" and you are not alone.*

*And when I leave and go on my own I need her to also
know
That she is not alone and that I love her too and what I
have*

*To say to her is that my love
Will always continue to grow for her.
Just stay true
You are now my momma #2.
I Love You!!*

Beauty
By: Yolanda C.

Beauty isn't seen through the makeup
brushes or hair products...

Beauty is seen by those who choose
not to see imperfections, and by those
who you love and those who love you.

Everyone is Beautiful, but some people
choose to hate on others for things
they don't like. Forget about those
who make your days miserable, and
live for those who make your life
Beautiful

Remember each and everyone
of us is beautiful
in our own way,
never forget that!

Bad Choices
By: Ashley R.

You made a bad choice
To act like that towards me
You made a bad choice
To listen to your friends
And not be your own person.
If you were your own person
You would choose who you are friends with
And who you want to hang out with.
Making bad choices gets you nowhere
Go ahead keep making bad choices
See where it gets you.
You should really choose who you hang out with
And who you are friends with.
You would get a lot further in life
If you made your own decisions.
The more you make your own decisions
The more you will get out of life.
You only have a certain amount of time on this
earth
So make the most of it and make good choices
Not bad ones.
When you make bad choices you hurt
People who love and care about you.
You also hurt those that you are close to.
You may even hurt your friends.
If you want to be happy in life and live it to its
fullest,
Then make better choices!!

FUN FACTS

1. The sound you hear when you crack your knuckles is actually the sound of nitrogen gas bubbles bursting.
2. The only part of the body that has no blood supply is the cornea in the eye. It takes in oxygen directly from the air.
3. The only 2 animals that can see behind its self without turning its head are the rabbit and the parrot.
4. Intelligent people have more zinc and copper in their hair.
5. Women blink nearly twice as much as men.
6. Whips make a cracking sound because its tip moves faster than the speed of sound.
7. Large kangaroos cover more than 30 feet with each jump.
8. The human heart creates enough pressure while pumping to squirt blood 30 feet!!
9. If you are right handed, you will tend to chew your food on your right side. If you are left handed, you will tend to chew your food on your left side.
10. The pupil of the eye expands as much as 45 percent when a person looks at something pleasing.
11. Chewing gum while peeling onions will keep you from crying.
12. The Titanic was the first ship to use the SOS signal.
13. The reason honey is so easy to digest is that it's already been digested by a bee.

Directory

Call Your ILP Clerk to Sign Up For Classes

Eastern Region (San Bernardino)

Irma Romero: 909-386-1394
Philomena Dias: 909-386-1147
Tracy Ramos: 909-386-1394

Western Region (Rancho)

Sandra Hernandez: 909-945-3931
Angelica Reyes: 909-945-3808

Desert Region

Tiffany Walker: (760) 843-4215

California Youth Crisis Line

1-800-843-5200 (Available 24/7)

Foster Care Ombudsman

1-877-846-1602

(Continued from Page 4)

headed to the Greek Theatre for some entertainment, the youth enjoyed a performance by a singing group called Dynasty Promise. To finish the day off we had a raffle which included: cell phones, digital cameras, mp3/mp4 players, DVD players, stereos and ipod shuffles. To top the day off each youth received an incentive for attending which was a gift card to Wal-Mart.



Youth Feedback



I learned how to write checks, balance my account, and how to spend my money better
-Michael R.

It was an eye opener for me, I learned how many helpful things there are out there for me when I emancipate.
-Heaven R.



It made me realize that I want to be someone in life
-Tommy G

The checkbook made this event more realistic
-Ayotunde A.

I learned about filling a renting application, purchasing car insurance, and being mentally prepared for the future.
-Anonymous

The Greatest Event! It was FUN! I learned A Lot!
-Alexandra M.





Recipe



BLC (Bacon, Lettuce, Caesar)

Need:

- Multi grain bread, sandwich sliced
- Lettuce (shredded)
- Cheese slices (American, Swiss, or your favorite)
- Caesar salad dressing
- Pepper
- Bacon strips



Directions:

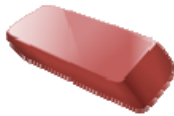
1. Toast bread.
2. Top with cheese slices and melt cheese in toaster oven.
3. In a small bowl, add dressing to lettuce and toss.
4. Smother salad over cheese and lightly pepper.
5. Cook bacon in microwave or fry pan and place strips over salad.
6. Add some pickles or olives if you like.
7. Place toasted bread on top to make a delicious lunch and enjoy!

ATTENTION ILP YOUTH!!!

Do you love to cook?

Share your passion with the rest of the county...

Call Gester Hernandez: 909-891-3583 or email him at gghernandez@hss.sbcounty.gov



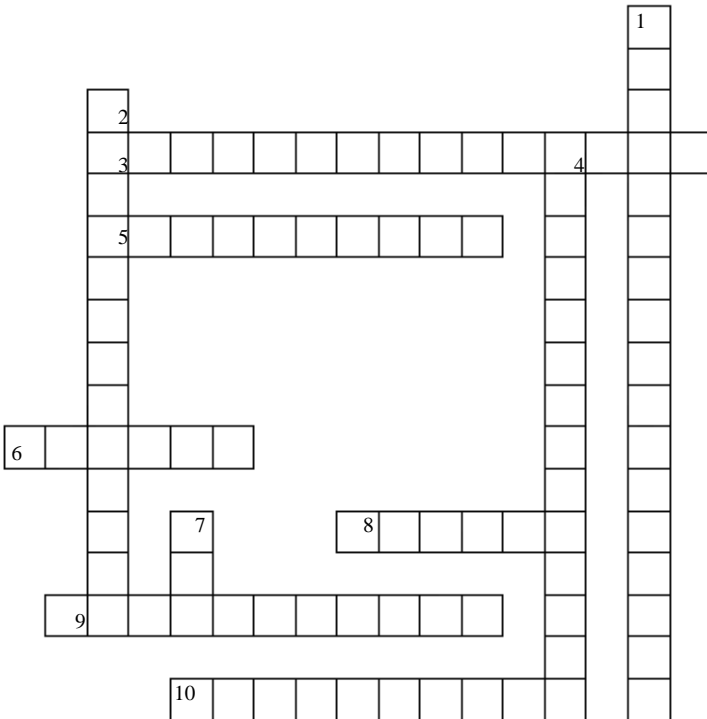
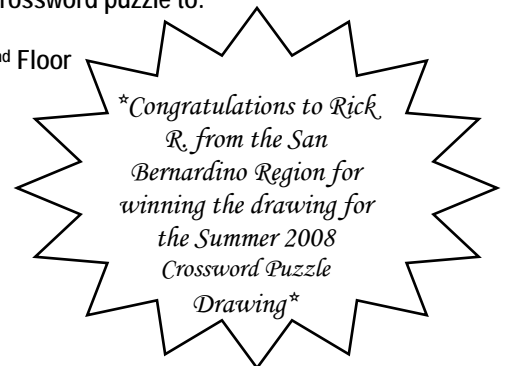
Crossword Puzzle



Directions:

Answers can be found throughout the newsletter. Any ILP youth who completes this puzzle correctly and sends it in will be placed in a drawing for a gift card. The drawing will take place on December 15, 2008. Please send your completed crossword puzzle to:

Roxie Findsen
412 W. Hospitality Lane, 2nd Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92415



Across

3. A conference set up as a mock city
5. What was the theme of the introductory picnic?
6. In order to be a GREAT _____ you must be a GOOD follower
8. These animals sweat turns red when they are upset
9. Who is the new ILP Coordinator?
10. The first step to making a BLC

Down

1. Being able to tell the judge what you want to happen in your case is one of your _____
2. Who is the new ILP Clerk for the Desert Region?
4. We did not get to see the bison here
7. An organization that makes a difference

Teen Success

County of San Bernardino, Independent Living Program

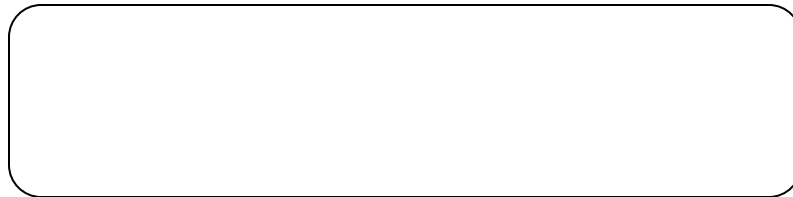
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Independent Living Program
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San Bernardino, CA 92415-0913

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Special Thanks

The Independent Living Program would like to give a special thank you to our community partners for all their generous contributions and help for making each of our ILP Events a special occasion.

Bill Vanderham Dairy Farm, Children's Fund, Boomers, Scandia, Fiesta Village, Szees Candies, Claim Jumper, Six Flags Magic Mountain, The Cheesecake Factory, El Torito, Castle Park, Costco, Target, San Bernardino County Department of Children's Services, San Bernardino County Juvenile Probation, Clyde and Florenez Stewart, County of San Bernardino Public Health Nurses, San Bernardino Desert YES Center, Cameron Hill Aftercare Program and THP-Plus, San Bernardino County Counsel, Olivercrest & Project Focus, Knott's Family Agency, Dynasty Promise and Victor Concepcion, San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools-Foster Youth Services, San Bernardino County Juvenile Dependency Court, San Bernardino Valley College, ILP Clerks and Staff, and the rest of our County Family.