Quick Links
(Just click on the link to go directly to this section of the resource guide)

Improving Access to College and Employment
- **Financial Aid Workshops sponsored by PHEAA – Register Now**
- **Chafee Education and Training Grant (ETG)**
- **Newly Added Resources and Tools on High School Graduation**
- **NCWD/Youth Releases Spanish Versions of Four Publications**

Transitions to Permanency
- **HUD Announces Grants for Child Welfare Families and Youth Aging Out**
- **NRCPFC Archived Webcast: Bridging the Gap: Families Working Together**
- **Mentoring at Any Age**
- **Understanding and Using Concurrent Planning to Achieve Permanency for Children and Youth**

Reconnecting Youth
- **National TA Center for Children’s Mental Health: Monthly Series of Topical Calls**
- **OJJDP Bulletin Examines Suitability of Assessment Instruments for Delinquent Girls**
- **Resource Center Launched to Support Implementation of Fostering Connections Law**
- **Characteristics of Children of Immigrants**
- **Resources for Working With Immigrant Youth and Families**
- **Latino Children of Immigrants in the Child Welfare System: Prevalence, Characteristics, and Risk**
- **Research on Pre-Adolescents in the Criminal Justice System**
- **Foster Youth Fall Through the Cracks between the Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Systems**
- **Foster Care Alumni Study**

Professional Development
- **IL/SWAN Winter Statewide Meeting**
- **Pennsylvania Permanency Conference**
- **Booster Club Supports Adults Working with Youth in Foster Care**

Independent Living Project Updates
- **Increasing Your Knowledge of IL Expectations and Best Practices**
- **Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) Training**
- **CWTP Training Calendar**
- **Know Your Rights Training**

People in Transition

In Memory
Improving Access to College and Employment

Financial Aid Workshops sponsored by PHEAA – Register Now

Each fall, the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) sponsors counselor workshops in each region of the state. These free workshops provide valuable information and insight into the financial aid and scholarship process and changes for the next academic year. You can register for a session in your area by logging on to www.pheaa.org; then click on K-12 counselors, then training. Sessions begin in November in most areas.

Chafee Education and Training Grant (ETG)

Youth planning to enroll in college this winter or spring should complete the Chafee ETG application in addition to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) worksheet. Chafee ETG applications for the 2009-2010 academic year are on the www.pheaa.org website. (Note: there are no deadlines for the federal Pell Grant or Chafee ETG; it’s not too late to submit a FAFSA application for winter or spring classes.)

For questions about current Chafee applications or a youth’s status, please contact PHEAA at 1-800-831-0797. If you have Aftercare youth who plan to move to another state and establish residency there, they can find state information on the ETG programs at: www.statevoucher.org. Each state has individual application processes.

Newly Added Resources and Tools on High School Graduation

The Promising Practices Network (PPN) has added a new Resources and Tools page on the topic of high school graduation. This new page includes links to data tables, fact sheets, seminal reports, and a variety of other resources that are among the best research-based materials available on this topic. More Resources and Tools pages are available on the topics of child abuse and neglect, childcare/preschool, low birth weight, mental health, and substance abuse. See the High School Graduation Resources and Tools: http://www.promisingpractices.net/resources_highschoolgrad.asp?ref=ppntext

See all Resources and Tools topics: http://www.promisingpractices.net/resources.asp?ref=ppntext

NCWD/Youth Releases Spanish Versions of Four Publications


Transitions to Permanency

HUD Announces Grants for Child Welfare Families and Youth Aging Out

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development invites public housing authorities (PHAs) nationwide to apply for $15 million for new Section 8 vouchers to provide permanent housing and services to families who are separated from their children because of homelessness or inadequate housing. A portion of these Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers will also be available to ease the transition to adulthood for youth age 18 or older who left foster care after the age of 16 and are at risk of homelessness. Sims also announced $5 million in funding for 11 PHAs who will receive vouchers immediately for FUP in six states: California, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, and Washington. Details about the state awards are available online and HUD has posted the full Notice of Funding Availability. Applications are due December 3, 2009. www.nchcw.org
NRCPFC Archived Webcast: Bridging the Gap: Families Working Together

The recent webcast offered by the National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections (NRCPFC), highlighted one of the core principles of family engagement – promoting meaningful partnerships between foster and birth families (and other formal/informal family members and caretakers) in order to promote safety, well-being and permanency for children – by presenting Bridging the Gap: Families Working Together – A Northern Virginia Foster Care and Adoption Initiative. During the webcast, NRCPFC’s Executive Director, Dr. Gerald P. Mallon together with Claudia T. McDowell, LCSW & Program Manager at a Foster Care & Adoption Program, Katherine Hawthorne, a foster parent, and Michael Davis, a parent, discussed Bridging the Gap, the process of building and maintaining relationships and communication between the families involved in a youth’s life (such as birth, foster and adoptive families) with the goal of supporting family reunification or another permanency plan. To access this and other NRCPFC archived webcasts, visit: http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/webcasts/index.html

Mentoring at Any Age

MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership has developed two guidebooks—one for staff and one for mentors—for recruiting and training mentors aged 50+ years. The staff guidebook discusses some of the reasoning behind focusing on this age group and the potential benefits for mentoring organizations and the youth and children they serve. The Wisdom of Age—A Staff Guide, by Andrea Taylor, also provides guidance for program staff on intergenerational mentoring, training older mentors, matching mentors with youth, and possible mentoring activities. The companion guide for older mentors addresses how to get started with mentoring, typical behaviors of youth today, and suggestions for mentoring activities.

Both guidebooks are available on the MENTOR website: www.mentoring.org/news/136

Understanding and Using Concurrent Planning to Achieve Permanency for Children and Youth

An informative power point which addresses the challenges of concurrent planning, Achieve Permanency for Children and Youth (from the ABA Conference; Best Practices to Implement AFSA: Creative Strategies for Practitioners, August 2009), is now available on the NRFCPPP website. http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/info_services/concurrent-permanency-planning.html#ppt

Reconnecting Youth

National TA Center for Children’s Mental Health: Monthly Series of Topical Calls

The National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health is sponsoring an exciting and well-received monthly series of topical calls. The conference calls cover important and emerging trends in the mental health field. Presentations from expert resource persons are followed by open discussion in order for all participants to ask questions and enrich the conversation.

The next calls will be part of a Technical Assistance Call Series on the Elimination of Disparities in Mental Health Care. This series of three technical assistance calls will deepen the knowledge and understanding of the root causes of disparities in mental health care and strategies that can be applied to address these disparities at the systemic, organizational and practice levels. The calls will focus on the following:

- Disparities in availability, accessibility, affordability, appropriateness, and acceptability of mental health services
- Social determinants of health and mental health status and the relationship to disparities
- Implementation strategies and lessons from other child serving systems, states, communities and organizations

IL Resources – October 2009
The role of cultural and linguistic competence in addressing disparities.

Registration information and full 2009 Calendar of Calls is available online at: http://gucchd.georgetown.edu/programs/ta_center/tacalls2009.html.

**OJJDP Bulletin Examines Suitability of Assessment Instruments for Delinquent Girls**

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has published "Suitability of Assessment Instruments for Delinquent Girls." Risk assessment instruments are often used to determine the programs and services that best serve the needs of youth within the juvenile justice system. Part of OJJDP's Girls Study Group series, the bulletin provides a comprehensive guide for juvenile justice practitioners to assist them in selecting an instrument which is suitable for assessing the needs of delinquent girls. Resources: ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/publications/PubAbstract.asp?pubi=248526.

**Resource Center Launched to Support Implementation of Fostering Connections Law**

October marks the first anniversary of the passage of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act, the most comprehensive and significant federal reforms to child welfare in over a decade. Child Trends, in partnership with The Finance Project and supported by a coalition of foundations, launches the Fostering Connections Resource Center to support state and local decision makers as they implement the Act.

The Resource Center's Web site will enable visitors to:

- access a wide array of tools and information;
- stay up to date on federal regulatory activity;
- learn about best practices and other state approaches to implementation;
- join webinars and other online discussion forums; and
- stay informed about major events and conferences hosted by the Resource Center and its many collaborating organizations.

The Fostering Connections Resource Center will also provide access to national networks of state-based and local stakeholders organized according to the six major topic areas of the law -- adoption, kinship, older youth, Tribal child welfare, health, and education. Through its networks, the Resource Center will disseminate materials and provide ongoing expertise to state policymakers and administrators.

Sign up for email updates or view the Center's resources at www.fosteringconnections.org.

**Characteristics of Children of Immigrants**

This brief, *Children of Immigrants: National and State Characteristics*, describes the national and state characteristics of the nation's 16 million children of immigrants. The interactive *Children of Immigrants Data Tool* allows users to generate detailed comparative charts by state, immigrant status, family characteristics, or other features.

Link to the brief: http://www.urban.org/publications/411939.html
Link to the data tool: http://datatool.urban.org/charts/datatool/pages.cfm

**Resources for Working With Immigrant Youth and Families**

Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services (BRYCS) recently revised its toolkit for service providers who work with immigrant youth. In *Growing Up in a New Country: A Positive Youth Development Toolkit for Working With Refugees and Immigrants*, authors Susan Schmidt, Lyn Morland, and Jennifer Rose present a positive youth development perspective for designing a program that will help immigrant and refugee youth succeed in school and employment. This strengths-based approach emphasizes helping youth grow into successful adults rather than just preventing problem behaviors. The toolkit pulls together articles, resources, and programs that can assist agencies in adopting a positive youth development approach to working with
newcomer youth. The authors note that culturally competent programming that helps develop the strengths of these youth is critical to their success in this country.

BRYCS is funded by ACF's Office of Refugee Resettlement and is a joint project of Lutheran Immigration Services and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops/Migration and Refugee Services. The publication is available online at: www.brycs.org/documents/growingupinanewcountry-web.pdf (657 KB)

In "Unique Challenges for Immigrant Families in the Child Welfare System," Casey Family Services provides another perspective on the hurdles child welfare agencies face when working with immigrant families. In many jurisdictions, child welfare professionals are not prepared to deal with families who do not speak English, have few support systems, fear deportation, and have little knowledge of their rights as parents. In addition, a family's cultural norms may not perceive a problem with crowded living conditions or corporal discipline.

The article suggests that agencies need to conduct training on these issues and provide language access for these families, either through bilingual staff or translators. The article appears in the Spring 2009 issue of Voice, pp. 6-7, which is available on the Casey website: www.caseyfamilyservices.org/userfiles/voicemagazine/voice-2009-spring.pdf

**Latino Children of Immigrants in the Child Welfare System: Prevalence, Characteristics, and Risk**

This study, co-authored by Alan Dettlaff and Ilze Earner, provides new information on the characteristics and risk factors of children of Latino immigrants who come to the attention of child welfare agencies. The data also highlights important differences between immigrant and U.S-born Latino families that should be considered in the assessment process. Particularly, the data indicates that although immigrant families may experience significant stress resulting from migration and acculturation, they may not be at greater risk of maltreatment. This is important to consider in the assessment process when developing strategies to address the factors that led to child welfare system involvement. http://sswr.confex.com/sswr/2009/webprogram/Paper11124.html

**Research on Pre-Adolescents in the Criminal Justice System**

From Time Out to Hard Time: Young Children in the Adult Criminal Justice System is a report that analyzes available data to provide a comprehensive look at how the nation treats pre-adolescent children who commit serious crimes and offers related recommendations for the consideration of policymakers. It finds that more than half the states permit children age 12 and under to be treated as adults for criminal justice purposes. In 22 states, plus the District of Columbia, children as young as 7 can be prosecuted and tried in criminal courts, where they may be subject to severe sanctions, including long prison terms, mandatory sentences, and placement in adult prisons. Resources: “From Time Out to Hard Time: Young Children in the Adult Criminal Justice System” is available online at www.utexas.edu/lbj/news/images/file/From%20Time%20Out%20to%20Hard%20Time-revised%20final.pdf.

**Foster Youth Fall Through the Cracks between the Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Systems**

Foster care, mental health services or juvenile justice -- the point of entry into the public service system matters a lot, determining to a large degree the kind of services provided a teen in trouble. The lack of collaboration and coordination among systems can undermine efforts to protect children's safety and access to education and health care services. A new book from the Urban Institute details ways to strengthen the fragile web connecting the many systems involved in protecting foster youth. www.urban.org/publications
Foster Care Alumni Study

The Ohio chapter of the Foster Care Alumni has just released the results of its survey of youth engagement efforts in the United States. You can view the survey and learn ideas that are working in youth engagement at: http://sites.google.com/site/childwelfaretrainingsurvey/

Professional Development


Free Positive Youth Development Training

You can train your staff in Positive Youth Development while avoiding travel costs and registration fees! This new self-paced online course, Introduction to Positive Youth Development, will familiarize your staff with the theory and practice of this positive approach to working with young people. And it’s completely free. Staff members who take the course’s two modules will learn:

- The internal and external influences that help young people thrive
- How to build individual strengths in youth
- How to create positive places for young people

They’ll also receive certificates showing they have completed 1 hour and 45 minutes of training. For more information, contact the National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth at http://ncfy.acf.hhs.gov/

Booster Club Supports Adults Working with Youth in Foster Care

Foster Club, a national online community serving current and former foster youth, has designed a new section for its website—Booster Club, for caring adults who wish to improve the lives of children in foster care. Booster Club highlights various initiatives to raise awareness and generate resources for children and youth in care. The new section covers:

- Foster parenting
- Online training
- Child welfare tools
- Message board for grownups

In addition, Booster Club offers concrete ways for adults to support youth in foster care. For more information, visit the Booster Club section of the Foster Club website: http://booster.fosterclub.com

Independent Living Project Updates:

Increasing Your Knowledge of IL Expectations and Best Practices

The Independent Living Project is offering The Foundations of Independent Living: An Overview Curriculum at various sites around the state; this is a one-day overview to help those entering the field or those who want to learn more valuable information about Independent Living and transition programs. A two-day intensive curriculum for IL and transition professionals, The Independent Living Services Continuum: Engaging Youth in Their Transition Process is also offered to those who have completed the Overview. For more information about the curricula and when they are offered, please contact the IL specialist for your county.

Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) Training

Justin Lee and Steve Eidson are certified to train programs about the ACLSA and its many advantages and resources for youth and programs. If you’d like to learn more about the ACLSA and how it could be used (or better utilized) by your program, please let either Justin or Steve know.

IL Resources – October 2009
CWTP Training Calendar

If you'd like to know what courses are offered to counties and providers, the Encompass database permits you to view all of the training opportunities at the CWTP. The following website will provide access to trainings at: http://www.encompass.pitt.edu/

Know Your Rights Training

The Juvenile Law Center, Kids Voice and the IL Project offer Know Your Rights training for youth, foster parents, casework staff and partner/community agencies in addition to our new partner, students at the Dickinson School of Law. Know Your Rights Part 2: How to Conduct Yourself in Court is an addition to the original training which provides scenarios, role play and practical advice for youth as they prepare for hearings/reviews and advocate for themselves in court. If you have not had the original training and/or you are interested in a session with Part 2, please contact the IL Project specialist for your county or Neha Desai at the Juvenile Law Center: ndesai@jlc.org

People in Transition:

Leanna Harenski who works for the IL program at Try-Again Homes in Washington County is moving on to a position in counseling at her agency. Best wishes, Leanna!

Maggie Nelson is the Independent Living Specialist at the Mars Home for Youth, which is the IL provider for Butler County. Steven Green is her supervisor and directs Continuous Quality Improvement and Community Based Services for the Mars Home. Welcome!

In Memory:

The Office of Children, Youth and Families at DPW and the IL Project at the PA CWTP would like to extend our sympathy to the family and friends of Don Hockenberry, the long-time IL supervisor at York County CYS. Don was a passionate advocate for youth and a good friend to many in the field of IL and transition work. Don died of heart failure on Monday evening this week and his funeral is on October 30th in Gettysburg.