

Mentoring Resources



Are Brothers and Sisters a Good Source of Support?

This brief from Data Trends summarizes research that indicates that children who experience stressful life events are less likely to experience an increase in internalizing symptoms if they have an affectionate relationship with an older sibling. This protective effect was not dependent on the quality of the relationship between the mother and child, so it is possible that older siblings may be an important source of the support and comfort usually assumed to be the responsibility of a parent. <http://www.rtc.pdx.edu/PDF/dt151.pdf>

Joshua Mentoring Education Conference, April 5, 2008. Sponsored by Philadelphia DHS Prevention Services. The one-day workshop will be held at the Southwest Leadership Academy at 7101 Paschall Avenue in Philadelphia. Participants will learn how to be successful mentors for troubled youth who are in placement and those who have aged out of care. If you have questions or to register contact: Gertrude Teat at 215.683.4037.

Preparing Youth for Education and/or Employment

SAT Fee Waivers

The SAT Fee Waivers for 2007-2008 as well as the College Fee Waivers are available at the IL Project. If you need application forms for your youth, please contact Ann Molsky at akm9@pitt.edu or 717.795.9048. You can duplicate the application form as often as needed. Youth can register for fall SAT dates now. Keep in mind that SAT and College Fee Waivers are specific to each youth, therefore a separate application for each youth must be completed. Youth must take the SAT and use that fee waiver to be able to use the college application fee waivers. If youth don't need to take the SAT, IL coordinators can request an admissions application fee waiver by writing directly to the college.

Chafee Education and Training Grant (ETG)

Youth planning to enroll in college this fall should complete the Chafee ETG application in addition to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) worksheet. Chafee ETG applications for the 2008-2009 academic year will be available on 1 April at www.pheaa.org. If your youth or you have questions about current Chafee applications or a youth's status, please contact **Tina Blair** at PHEAA at 1-800-831-0797. If you have Aftercare youth who plan to move to another state and enroll in a college or university there, they can find information on the ETG programs in other states at: www.statevoucher.org

The Blueprint For Change: Education Success For Children In Foster Care

Youth in foster care face numerous educational challenges, including frequent school changes, delayed enrollment, and inadequate support services. Legal Center for Foster Care & Education (a collaboration between Juvenile Law Center, Education Law Center-Pennsylvania, the American Bar Association and Casey Family Programs), recently published Blueprint for Change: Education Success for Children in Foster Care. The heart of the Blueprint is eight goals. Following each goal are national, state, and local examples of policies, practices, programs, and resources that exist to improve educational outcomes for children in foster care. The Blueprint is a resource for lawyers, judges, caseworkers, parents, foster parents and others concerned with the education success of youth in out-of-home care. The Blueprint, as well as more information about the Legal Center, can be accessed at www.abanet.org/child/education/home.shtml

Transitions to Permanency

Aging Out of the Foster Care System to Adulthood: Findings, Challenges, and Recommendations

The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies Health Policy Institute and Black Administrators in Child Welfare conducted reconnaissance on the unmet needs of youth who age out of the nation's child welfare systems. A literature review, a telephone survey (with 800 social workers), and listening sessions with youth and stakeholders in the foster care systems in three

cities were conducted to gather information about youth who age out of foster care.
<http://www.jointcenter.org/>

Foster Youths' Views of Adoption and Permanency

This study from the Urban Institute used data collected from focus groups with foster youth, ages 11 to 19, to examine the youths' views of adoption, permanency, and adoption recruitment. The study raised three important findings: (1) foster care experiences influence youths' perceptions of adoption; (2) youth have concerns and fears about adoption; and (3) youth expect autonomy and want to feel empowered. <http://www.urban.org/publications/411609.html>

New Wave of Midwest Evaluation Released by Chapin Hall

The Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth: Outcomes at Age 21 was released in early 2008 by Chapin Hall Center for Children. This report describes the outcomes experienced by former foster youth in several areas including living arrangements, relationships with family of origin, social support, receipt of independent living services, education, employment, economic well-being, physical and mental health, and criminal justice system involvement. Visit the Chapin Hall website (www.chapinhall.org/home) to view the report.

Improving Child Welfare Outcomes Through Systems of Care: Building the Infrastructure: A Guide for Communities

Designed for communities developing and implementing systems of care, this guide outlines definitions, goals, activities, personnel, and expected outcomes for the fundamental components of the infrastructure needed to support systems of care. View this guide as well as other resources from the Technical Assistance and Evaluation Center for Systems of Care at: www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/service/soc/communicate/initiative/ntaec.cfm

Permanency Planning Today

The Winter 2008 issue of Permanency Planning Today is now available. This issue includes excerpts from Director Gary Mallon's interviews with Harry Spence and Marketa Gautreau, as well as articles on permanency planning for newborns, employment transition for youth in foster care with disabilities, and an opinion piece from an alumnus on helping youth in foster care succeed. <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/newsletters.html#pptoday>

Making "Relative Search" Happen: A Guide to Finding and Involving Relatives at Every Stage of the Child Welfare Process

This terrific new guide from Child Focus provides a framework for creating and supporting a process of searching for relatives that can be used throughout the child welfare process to ensure that children and youth are connected to family members. It addresses not only the specifics of relative search, but the underlying values and policy needed to "signal a commitment to the importance of kinship connections throughout a child's life."

<http://www.childfocuspartners.com/images/RelativeSearchGuide10-15.pdf>

Assessment and Intervention Strategies

Parental Incarceration: How to Avoid a "Death Sentence" for Families

This article from the Clearinghouse REVIEW Journal of Poverty Law and Policy highlights a number of promising services and supports for incarcerated parents and recommends what attorneys representing or working with incarcerated parents and their children can do to minimize harm to children. http://www.clasp.org/publications/parental_incarceration2007.pdf

Family Strengthening Writ Large: On Becoming a Nation that Promotes Strong Families and Successful Youth

As a nation, our culture may "value" families, but too many policies and practices do not reflect that value. This new brief from National Human Services Assembly synthesizes research and practice in the field and identifies macro strategies to mobilize culture change that will produce long-lasting gains in child and youth well-being. www.nhsa.org



Preparation for Adulthood - Supervising for Success

The goal of the project is to develop, implement, evaluate and disseminate a training curriculum for public child welfare supervisors. This curriculum will strengthen supervision of staff's interventions with older youth who are in foster care. Please explore this site, including the Digital Stories that bring the voices of young people, workers and supervisors into the curriculum, and the Learning Circles that are designed to build cohesive learning communities and provide structure for high quality peer learning. <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/pass/>

Reconnecting Youth

What Works for Disconnected Youth -- Two New Studies

Two new reports from the Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse look at dropout prevention and what can help improve educational outcomes for struggling students.

Intervention: New Chance. New Chance helps young mothers on welfare who have dropped out of school improve their employment readiness and parenting skills. In a randomized trial in 10 states, the program had some - small impact on mothers' school completion.

Intervention: First Things First. This is a reform model designed to boost the academic achievement and labor market skills of young people in schools that serve a large number of economically disadvantaged students. It was found to have no discernible effects on staying in school -- but researchers note this is its first year of implementation.

For more information on these studies, go to: www.ed.gov/whatworksclearinghouse/

Funding Opportunities and Sustainability

Grant: Disadvantaged Youth

The Staples Foundation for Learning funds programs that support or provide job skills and/or education for all people, with a special emphasis on disadvantaged youth. For the first two funding cycles in 2008, the deadlines for proposals are: March 14 and June 16. www.staples.com

Girl Overboard Challenge Grant - For youth-led ideas to change the world.

Funder: Burton Snowboards and Girl Overboard author Justina Chen Headley, in partnership with Youth Venture. Eligibility: Youth-led ventures - such as school-based clubs, community organizations, or for-profit or nonprofit businesses - involving kids ages 12 to 20 years. Deadline: May 1. Amount: \$1,000 each. Contact: <http://genv.net/en-us/burton/process>

Grant: Ronald McDonald House Charities – For services that improve the well being of children worldwide. Funder: Ronald McDonald House Charities. Eligibility: Nonprofits. Deadline: April 28 and Sept. 8. Amount: Varies. Contact: www.rmhc.org/grants

Orphan Foundation Scholarships – The Orphan Foundation of America, which administers the Casey Family Scholars program, is now accepting applications for scholarships for the 2008-2009 academic year. Scholarships up to \$10,000 per year 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 younger than 25 on March 31, 2008

<https://scholarships.orphan.org/index.shtml>

Grant: My Hometown Helper – For civic-oriented projects, including youth-related initiatives.
Funder: Hamburger Helper. Eligibility: Public schools, and 501(c)(3)s or 501(c)(4)s that sponsor an application for funding. Deadline: March 31. Amount: Up to \$15,000 per project.
Contact: www.myhometownhelper.com

Grant: Full-Service Community Schools – To coordinate educational, developmental, family, health and other services to provide comprehensive educational, social and health services for students, families and communities.
Funder: U.S. Department of Education. Eligibility: Consortia of a local educational agency and one or more community-based organization, nonprofit or other public or private entity.
Deadline: April 15. Amount: Nearly \$5 million for eight to 12 grants averaging \$415,000 each.
Contact:
<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20081800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/pdf/E8-2934.pdf>

Grant: Building Healthy Teen Relationships – To support the creation and evaluation of comprehensive community-based models of prevention that decrease relationship violence and increase positive, protective relationship skills.
Funder: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Eligibility: Public or private nonprofits.
Deadline: April 16. Amount: Eight grants of \$250,000 per year, with a maximum award of \$1 million each. Contact: www.rwjf.org/applications/solicited/cfp.jsp?ID=20202&c=EMC-FA144

Positive Youth Development

Pennsylvania Youth Summit -- Save the Date!

Youth in IL programs throughout the state are invited to the first Youth Summit, which will be held at the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program offices in Mechanicsburg on March 25-26, 2008. The summit is youth-led and youth-focused and is a direct result of the youth self-assessment work that is being done for the upcoming Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) in 2008. Applications are due next week.

Promoting Youth Involvement in Politics

Common Sense Media offers some effective tips for helping youth understand the election process. You can access these resources at www.common sense media.org:



Getting Kids Interested: It's Their Future Common Sense Media has resources, links and curriculum ideas for revving kids' interest in and understanding of politics.

Campaign Drama, Classroom Lessons

The presidential campaign season provides a prime opportunity to explain the importance of elections and the discourse that they trigger.

Professional Development Opportunities

Save the Dates for the IL/SWAN Spring Quarterly Meetings:

- Tuesday, 1 April – Radisson Lackawanna Station Hotel, Scranton
- Tuesday, 8 April – Holiday Inn, Clarion
- Wednesday, 9 April – Radisson Hotel, Monroeville
- Wednesday, 16 April – The Conference Center at Central PA College, Enola
- Monday, 28 April – Embassy Suites Hotel Philadelphia Airport
- Tuesday, 29 April – The Desmond Hotel, Malvern

Pathways to Adulthood National IL Conference, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. May 14-16, 2008.

16th Annual Pennsylvania Permanency Conference, "Embrace the Journey."
Lancaster Host Conference Center Hotel, July 9-11, 2008.

IL Resources – February 2008

Legislative Update

Reconnecting Youth to Prevent Homelessness Act

The Reconnecting Youth to Prevent Homelessness Act has been introduced to committee and seeks to create the income security conditions and family supports needed to ensure permanency for the nation's unaccompanied and other disconnected youth. 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. It amends the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program to improve young family access to that program. It also adds homeless youth as a target group for eligibility for the Work Opportunity Credit. A summary of the legislation is attached. You may find the complete legislation at: <http://thomas.loc.govhttp://thomas.loc.gov/>

How a Bill Becomes a Law: Roles of Congressional Staff

Federal policy has a direct impact on how services are provided to infants, toddlers and their families. In case you missed "Schoolhouse Rock" in your youth, this ZERO TO THREE advocacy tool recaps how a bill becomes a law and explains the roles of key Congressional staff. www.zerotothree.org

Federal Tax Benefit Guide for Foster/Adoptive Parents and Kinship Caregivers

This guide from the National Foster Parent Association provides valuable information for the 2007 tax year. It explains basic rules and offers tips on ways that foster and adoptive parents and kinship caregivers may be able to claim deductions and credits available to them. <http://www.nfpaonline.org/content/index.asp?page=TAXINFORMATION&nmenu=3>

People in Transition –

Jim Berkeimer is the new IL coordinator for the Blair County IL program, which is based in Hollidaysburg.

Family Services of Northwestern Pennsylvania in Erie County has some recent staff changes. **Mandy Cole** and **Stacy Angerer** have taken positions in other agencies. New staff for the Interdependent Living program are **Brian Hills** and **Vanessa Smylie**.

Contact Information:

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