

## IL Resource Guide April 2009

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## Improving Access to College and Employment

### Chafee Education and Training Grant (ETG)

Youth planning to enroll in college this summer or next 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 2009-2010 academic year are available on the [www.pheaa.org](http://www.pheaa.org) website as of April 1.

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](http://www.statevoucher.org) Each state has individual application processes.

### SAT Fee Waivers are available from the IL Project

You can obtain SAT fee waivers for juniors and SAT fee waivers/college application fee waivers for seniors entered into PILOTS from Janice Coplin at [jtc30@pitt.edu](mailto:jtc30@pitt.edu) or 717.795.9048, ext. 231.

### Poverty and Potential: Out-of-School Factors and School Success

This new report and policy brief examines the physical, sociological and psychological impact of poverty on students (and related issues of schools that continue to be segregated by income, race and ethnicity) and makes the case that schools alone cannot overcome poverty-induced barriers -- more comprehensive social policies and extended learning are needed. [www.greatlakescenter.org](http://www.greatlakescenter.org)

### Judicial Checklists to the Meet the Needs of Youth in Substitute Care

This technical assistance brief from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges includes a checklist of critical questions every judge should ask about education in every case, and a checklist of critical questions every judge should ask about education and older youth. [www.ncjfcj.org](http://www.ncjfcj.org)

### The Case for School-Based Integration of Services

The movement for schools as community centers just got a boost from this Public/Private Ventures brief, which finds that one-stop shopping for and family health care, out-of-school-time learning supports makes sense -- and schools can be a good hub. [www.ppv.org/ppv/publication.asp](http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publication.asp)

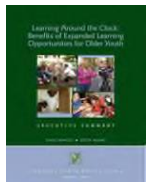
### Strengthening School Attendance

We know that good in-school programs and relationships can help prevent students from leaving high school early. But what can schools do to address the problems of students with poor attendance, those most likely to end up dropping out? The New York-based organization Student Advocacy has some answers. <http://studentadvocacy.net/about.html>.

### Learning Around the Clock: Benefits of Expanded Learning Opportunities for Older Youth

In its review of 22 high-quality after-school programs, the American Youth Policy Forum finds that strong out-of-school time learning opportunities can improve academic performance, college and career prep, social and emotional development and health and wellness.

[www.aypf.org/documents](http://www.aypf.org/documents)



### Supporting Foster Youth on College Campuses

The California College Pathways initiative hosted a Web seminar on March 3<sup>rd</sup> which focused on Supporting Foster Youth on Campus. California has been involved in innovative work to increase supports for their college students from foster care for a number of years. Their new Website [www.cacollegepathways.org](http://www.cacollegepathways.org) <<http://www.cacollegepathways.org>> provides information about their practice and policy work in higher education.

### Helping Former Foster Youth Graduate from College

Campus support programs provide financial, academic, and other types of supports to help former foster youth succeed in college. However, relatively little is known about the impact of these programs on college retention or graduation rates. This study lays the groundwork for an impact evaluation by examining program implementation from two different perspectives

Researchers conducted telephone interviews with the directors of 10 campus support programs in California and Washington State. The interviews covered a variety of domains, including the population served, referral sources and recruitment, the application process, the provision of services and supports, program staff, relationships with stakeholders, and data collection. In addition, participants from 8 of the 10 programs completed a web-based survey that asked about their perceptions of and experiences with the program. The survey included questions about students' demographic characteristics, referral and recruitment, the application process, reasons for participating in the program, services and supports received, unmet needs, contact with staff, and recommendations for improvement. The report concludes with several recommendations for moving forward with a methodologically sound impact evaluation of campus support programs for former foster youth.

[http://www.chapinhall.org/article\\_abstract.aspx?ar=1483&L2=60&L3=125](http://www.chapinhall.org/article_abstract.aspx?ar=1483&L2=60&L3=125)

## Transitions to Permanency

### **PAL-STEP: A Youth Driven Curriculum for Supervisors**

To reinforce the abilities of youth in foster care about to transition to an independent life and enhance their chances of success, the University of Houston collaborated with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) and the University of Texas at Arlington to produce a training curriculum for supervisors in child protective services (CPS) across Texas. This collaborative project, Preparation for Adult Living: Supervisor Training and Empowerment Program (PAL-STEP), focused on providing CPS supervisors with: (1) The skills and knowledge they would need to guide and direct adolescents in foster care; (2) The tools to share that knowledge with other CPS workers by imparting the four core principles of the training: positive youth development, collaboration, cultural competence, and permanent connections. PAL-STEP training included both a 1-hour web-based training and a day of live training led by PAL-STEP staff and former foster youth hired by the TDFPS. Youth trainers presented some of the curriculum content and shared their experiences about life in the foster care system. They recounted some common concerns: aging out of care, loneliness, being gay and lesbian in foster care, and separation from siblings. Subsequent evaluation results showed that the participation of these young people, who also discussed resources and answered questions, was the most highly rated aspect of the training. To learn more about PAL-STEP and to access the Supervisor Toolkit, visit: <http://www.palstep.com/index.cfm>

### **Promoting Health and Success in Young Families**

Arguing that the special needs of young parents are often overlooked in family and youth policies, the Health Teen Network offers a comprehensive set of federal policy recommendations aimed at establishing or reforming public programs and systems that influence whether or not young families may achieve health and success after a teen birth. [www.healthyteennetwork.org](http://www.healthyteennetwork.org)

## Reconnecting Youth

### **Youth Benefit From Strong Families Regardless of Income**

When families make the news, it is often for negative reasons such as violence or abuse. However, families are critical to the positive development of children and youth, as well as to problems that may affect development. A new Child Trends brief, *Exploring The Links Between Family Strengths and Adolescent Outcomes*, finds that family strengths are associated with significantly better outcomes for adolescents in both lower-income and higher-income families. Family strengths include emotional/subjective strengths (such as close and caring parents); behavioral/concrete strengths (for example, parental monitoring and parent involvement); and passive parenting strengths (for instance, positive parental role modeling). Among the findings:

- Adolescents who reported having close and caring parents are significantly more likely to perform well in school. Higher parental monitoring and parent involvement are also associated with better school performance.
  - These patterns were found in both lower- and higher-income families.
- Adolescents in families with higher parental monitoring are more likely to avoid risky behaviors. Also, risky behaviors are significantly lower when parents are more close and caring and more involved.

- These patterns were found for both lower- and higher-income families.

Focusing on family strengths identifies what we value and seek in families. It also clarifies the behaviors and supports families can provide -- building close and caring relationships, monitoring, being involved, and setting a good example. Moreover, it provides insights for funders, policymakers and service providers on ways that the strengths of families can be leveraged to improve services and, subsequently, outcomes for youth. [www.childtrends.org](http://www.childtrends.org)

### **Ten Reasons to Refocus National Attention on Teen Childbearing**

Seven years ago, when the teen birth rate had been decreasing for more than a decade, Child Trends reminded the public that teen childbearing was still a serious problem in the United States, releasing *Ten Reasons to Keep the Focus on Teen Childbearing*. With news last month from the federal government that the teen birth rate increased for a second year in a row, Child Trends releases *Ten Reasons to Still Keep the Focus on Teen Childbearing*,

The brief enumerates ten important research-based findings that underscore why we cannot afford to lose focus on the need to reduce the relatively high rates of teenage childbearing in the U.S. Among the findings:

- The human costs associated with teen childbearing are substantial, both for the children and for their parents.
- The financial costs of teen childbearing are stark.
- Most teens who give birth did not *intend* to have a baby.

"Recent trends and high teen birth rates among vulnerable populations show the need to keep the focus on this issue," said Jennifer Manlove, Ph.D., one of the report's authors.

[www.childtrends.org](http://www.childtrends.org)

## **Program Resources**

### **Solving the Data Puzzle**

The Legal Center for Foster Care and Education has released a new publication, *Solving the Data Puzzle: A How-To Guide on Collecting and Sharing Information to Improve Educational Outcomes for Children in Out-of-Home Care*. This How-To Guide is divided into two sections: a Manual and Tools. The Manual provides details on relevant legal and policy considerations, as well as examples from around the country engaging in this important work. The Tools provide checklists to guide education and child welfare agencies in collaboration.

[www.abanet.org/child/education/publications/solvingthedata puzzle.pdf](http://www.abanet.org/child/education/publications/solvingthedata puzzle.pdf)

**Teen Parents ... You're Not Alone!** (from *Strengthening Families and Communities: 2009 Resource Guide*)

**Published:** 2009 in English and Spanish

**Available from:** Child Welfare Information Gateway

**URL:** [http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/res\\_guide\\_2009/ch\\_six\\_teen.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/res_guide_2009/ch_six_teen.cfm)

**PDF:** [http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/res\\_guide\\_2009/ch\\_six\\_teen.pdf](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/res_guide_2009/ch_six_teen.pdf)

**Abstract:** Being a teen parent is a 24-hour-a-day job and can feel overwhelming at times. This tip sheet reassures teen parents that these feelings are normal.

**Ten Ways to Be a Better Dad** (from *Strengthening Families and Communities: 2009 Resource Guide*)

**Published:** 2009 in English and Spanish

**Available from:** Child Welfare Information Gateway

**URL:** [http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/res\\_guide\\_2009/ch\\_six\\_dad.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/res_guide_2009/ch_six_dad.cfm)

**PDF:** [http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/res\\_guide\\_2009/ch\\_six\\_dad.pdf](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/res_guide_2009/ch_six_dad.pdf)

**Abstract:** Fathers who spend time with their children increase the chances that their children will succeed in school, have fewer behavior problems, and experience better self-esteem.

**Tips for Parents** (from *Strengthening Families and Communities: 2009 Resource Guide*)

**Published:** 2009

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**Available from:** Child Welfare Information Gateway

**PDF:** [http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/res\\_guide\\_2009/en\\_tips.pdf](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/res_guide_2009/en_tips.pdf)

**Abstract:** This set includes six tip sheets written to help service providers offer guidance to parents and caregivers on specific issues.

### **The Challenges of Collaboration in Child Welfare**

When youth in the child welfare system face problems the agencies charged with their care often find that they do not have the capacity to act without the cooperation of other government departments. The trap gets tighter when parents have lost custody or are in the criminal justice system themselves. This Urban Institute book offers practical examples to guide child welfare service agencies through challenging scenarios. [www.urban.org/books/childwelfare/](http://www.urban.org/books/childwelfare/)

## **Funding Opportunities and Sustainability**

### **Gifts In Kind International**

Many of you are either working in non-profit organizations or know of some that are barely getting by. This is an organization that receives donations from the fortune 500's and then donates equipment, supplies and so many other items to help make non-profits be successful. I had a rare opportunity to sit next to the CEO on a plane trip once and she told me all about her organization and how she started it to help out those who were doing such wonderful work. I recommend that you check out this terrific organization and help those involved in non-profit work in your community to access its bounty. [www.giftsinkind.org](http://www.giftsinkind.org)

### **Literacy Grants from Dollar General**

Receive up to \$3,000 for literacy projects to help kids reading below grade-level.

**Deadline May 22.** [www.dollargeneral.com/ServingOthers/Pages/GrantPrograms.aspx](http://www.dollargeneral.com/ServingOthers/Pages/GrantPrograms.aspx)

### **Target Grants**

Target Stores are accepting applications for Arts, Literacy and Family Violence Prevention grants of up to \$3,000. Grants will be awarded to agencies working to improve the lives of children and families. **Deadline: May 31** <http://sites.target.com/site/en/company/page.jsp>

## **Professional Development Opportunities**

**Leading Change Through Innovation** – PA Partners 25<sup>th</sup> Employment, Training and Education Conference, May 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>, Hershey Lodge, Hershey. For information and registration materials, go to: [register@papartners.org](mailto:register@papartners.org)

**National Pathways to Adulthood 2009 Independent Living/Transitional Living Conference June 3-5, 2009** in San Diego, CA This Conference will provide important opportunities to hear about promising practices from across the country and for participants to work together to explore effective transition solutions for young people. Connect with your colleagues and take advantage of networking and collaboration opportunities. <http://www.nrcys.ou.edu/conferences/np09>

### **IL/SWAN Summer Statewide Meeting**

Lancaster Host Resort and Conference Center, Lancaster, June 23-24, 2009

### **17<sup>th</sup> Annual Pennsylvania Permanency Conference**

Lancaster Host Resort and Conference Center, Lancaster, June 24-26, 2009

### **Growing Pains - National Independent Living Conference**

**September 1-4, 2009** in Nashville, Tennessee. [www.danielkids.org](http://www.danielkids.org)

## **Independent Living Project Updates:**

### **Pennsylvania Independent Living Statewide Youth Retreat**

This summer's statewide IL Youth Retreat is July 13-17, 2009 at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown. The theme, "DREAM -- (Determine, Realize, Educate, Achieve, and Motivate) was suggested by Ivory Bennett, a high school senior from Allegheny County. Ivory also submitted the winning logo for the week. The banquet speaker on July 16<sup>th</sup> is going to be Jaiya Johns.

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Retreat information and registration materials were mailed to county/provider provider contact last week.

### **Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) Training**

Justin Lee and Steve Eidson recently completed a three-day training from Casey Family Programs 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.

### **Independent Living Curricula: Coming Soon Throughout the State**

Two new Independent Living curricula are now being scheduled by the IL Project and the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program. The first curriculum, The Foundations of Independent Living: An Overview, is a one-day introduction to IL programs. This training would be excellent for anyone who wants to have some knowledge of IL services and the transition philosophy. The second curriculum, The Independent Living Services Continuum: Engaging Youth in Their Transition Process is a two-day workshop for Independent Living professionals. Look for more information about workshops which will be offered in your area...

### **CWTP Training Calendar**

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

### **People in Transition – Congratulations to:**

**Levin Tucker**, who was recently promoted to the position of Lead Coach at the Achieving Independence Center in Philadelphia. .

#### **UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH IL PROJECT**

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