

Access to College and Employment Options



SAT Fee Waivers

The SAT Fee Waivers for 2007-2008 as well as 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.

First in the Family: Advice About College from First-Generation Students

For two years, Next Generation Press/What Kids Can Do has been gathering the wisdom of first-generation college students on the critical issues of college access and success. The result is a growing collection of resources by and for first-generation students. (Created with support from the Lumina Foundation.) www.firstinthefamily.org

Helping Low-Wage Workers Persist in Education Programs

Lessons from Research on Welfare Training Programs and Two Promising Community College Strategies. This working paper, prepared for a conference sponsored by the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, reviews what is known about education acquisition by low-wage workers and highlights promising strategies being tested at several community colleges. www.mdrc.org

Guidance on Implementing a Comprehensive Transition Program

High School/High Tech (HS/HT) is recognized as one of the most successful strategies for assisting youth with disabilities as they transition from high school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education and employment. Over the years, HS/HT has evolved from a small program in a few localities that focused on exposing youth with disabilities to technology-related careers to a comprehensive program of transition services. Through an array of activities identified in the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy and the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth's (NCWD/Youth) **Guideposts for Success**, HS/HT exposes youth with disabilities to careers in science, technology, engineering and math (the STEM careers) and encourages them to pursue post-secondary education to prepare for such careers.

The HS/HT Program Guide: A Comprehensive Transition Program Promoting Careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math for Youth with Disabilities is an updated and much expanded version of the *HS/HT Program Manual* that was produced in 2003. As HS/HT has spread to numerous states, the experiences of these programs and the resultant evolution of the HS/HT program from a locally-administered and implemented program to a state-administered and locally-implemented program have produced a wealth of additional information about the HS/HT program model. As a result, the newly released HS/HT Program Guide is full of information and materials used by the HS/HT programs throughout the country. Many thanks to these programs for their willingness to share their experiences, program materials, tips for partnership development, service strategies, activities, curriculum, and success stories, as well as their many examples of systemic change impacting how states and localities approach the provision of transition services. This information can be used by existing HS/HT programs for program improvement and expansion, and by new and developing programs to guide their implementation efforts. The **HS/HT Program Guide** can be downloaded from www.ncwd-youth.org or single copies can be requested and multiple copies purchased from NCWD/Youth by calling (202) 822-8405.

Earn Works – Helping Employers Find the Right Workers

The Employer Assistance & Recruiting Network (EARN) is a free service that connects employers looking for quality employees with skilled job candidates. The link to Earn Works is: <http://www.earnworks.com>

Financial Aid and Scholarships Update

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



Believe in
your right to
college

Comparing Student Financial Aid Packages

Soon after your college-bound seniors receive their acceptance letter(s), the colleges to which they've been accepted will send them their financial aid award letters. Typically, colleges subtract the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) listed on the Student Aid Report (SAR) from the total cost of attendance to determine the student's financial need. Financial aid can range from grants, scholarships, institutional awards, work-study and student loans. The award letter notifies students of the total amount and type(s) of aid the school is offering. We've compiled some tips to help your students and their families compare their award letters.

Ratio of grants to loans – Packages with a higher proportion of grant aid than loan aid are more appealing.

Ratio of self-help to grants – Self-help includes the EFC, loans and work-study. This is money and a work-study time commitment that students are expected to cover. Students and their families must determine whether they will be able to meet these obligations.

Loan Terms – Before signing on the dotted line, students should compare the various loans that are available. Different loans have different interest rates, discounts and repayment criteria. Subsidized Stafford Loans with low interest rates and no repayment until after graduation are more attractive than private or unsubsidized loans.

Gapping – The financial aid award the college offered does not cover the student's entire financial need. Students and their families must decide if they're willing to take on the additional responsibility of filling in this 'gap.'

Beyond the 1st Year – Students should find out if all of their financial awards are renewable beyond their first year at college. Many awards are renewable, but may have conditions attached to the renewal agreement.

Scholarships – At some colleges private scholarships may directly reduce the amount of institutional aid the college offers. Other colleges allow scholarships to reduce the amount of loans a student may have to consider to fill in a 'gap.'

Your students and their families can access the Award Analyzer at www.EducationPlanner.org. This tool helps students compare award packages from different schools.

If your college-bound students have questions related to their aid package, they should contact the financial aid office at the colleges they're most interested in attending. The financial aid office works with students and their families to help them find the best way to finance their college education.

Transitions to Permanency



Recommendations for Policy, Practice and Research

Casey Family Services has released a report from the research roundtable held during the last National Convening on Youth Permanence in 2006. The report offers an overview from national experts of how to document and understand youth permanence strategies for children in foster care. www.caseyfamilyservices.org

A Reason, a Season, or a Lifetime: Relational Permanence among Young Adults with Foster Care Backgrounds

In this study, Chapin Hall conducted in-depth interviews and created personal network maps with twenty-nine young adults participating in a program offering resources to help them make successful transitions to adulthood. The aim of this study was to explore their social support networks and examine how foster care might constrain or facilitate supportive relationships into adulthood. The report closes with implications for practice and policy
http://www.chapinhall.org/article_abstract.aspx?ar=1466

Connections Count

The latest issue of this newsletter from the Annie E. Casey Foundation/Casey Family Services focuses on retooling courts to achieve youth permanency.

http://www.caseyfamilyservices.org/enewsletter/march/index_march.html

Assessment and Intervention Strategies

Involved, Invisible, Ignored: The Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Parents and their Children in K-12 Schools

There are more than 7 million lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) parents with school-age children in the United States, according to a new report from the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network. These parents are more likely than the general public to be involved with their child's school -- 94 percent attend parent-teacher conferences compared to 42 percent overall. But they and their children often report harassment because of their family structure.

www.glsen.org

How, and Why, Does Wraparound Work: A Theory of Change

This publication from the National Wraparound Initiative at Portland State University discusses the essential characteristics of the wraparound process and the main mechanisms of change.

<http://www.rtc.pdx.edu/PDF/pbNWI-HowAndWhyDoesWraparoundWork.pdf>

Reconnecting Youth

Youth Engagement Toolkit

As part of its **Youth Engagement Strategy**, Community Recreation Services, in partnership with Heart Wood Centre for Community Youth Development, has compiled a "tool kit" filled with lots of tools, concepts, ideas, suggestions for action, strategies for innovation and tips/reminders to help adults engage young people. The TOOL KIT resource has 3 sub-sections according to level of action. Click on the link below to download the tool kit in a PDF format.

<http://www.halifax.ca/recreation/YouthEngagementToolkit.html>

Aged-Out and Homeless in Philadelphia

Published in Winter 2007, Philadelphia Safe and Sound researched the correlation between youth who have aged-out of the foster care system and homelessness in Philadelphia. Learn about what can be done to prevent homelessness among this vulnerable population.

www.philasafesound.org/homelessreport



National Drop-Out Prevention Project

On the 25th Anniversary of the landmark education report, *A Nation At Risk*, the America's Promise Alliance warns that "our educational system remains in peril -- with more than one-third of high school students dropping out before graduation." On April 1, the Alliance will launch a two-year national campaign that will include more than 100 summits nationwide to prepare our youth for college, work and life. Get involved in your hometown! The Children's Aid Society has posted recommendations from the conference on its Website. www.americaspromise.org

Eyes on Bullying . . . What Can You Do? A Toolkit to Prevent Bullying

In Children's Lives offers a variety of tools to help parents and other caregivers understand bullying in a new way, reexamine their knowledge and beliefs about bullying, and shape the beliefs and behaviors of the children in their care. This toolkit, created at Education Development Center, is designed especially for parents and other caregivers of preschool- and school-age children and adolescents to use in child care programs, after-school programs, and camps. <http://www.eyesonbullying.org>

Funding Opportunities and Sustainability

Grant: Corning Incorporated Foundation – Supports youth-related projects and organizations, including community-service programs for students, YMCAs and youth centers in company locations.

Funder: Corning Incorporated Foundation.

Eligibility: Nonprofits in company communities. (For company locations, go to <http://www.corning.com/locations/index.aspx> .)

Deadline: Open.

Amount: About \$3 million annually.

Contact: http://www.corning.com/inside_corning/our_commitment/community.aspx

Grant: Local Funding Partnerships – To encourage local grant makers to fund promising, original projects can that significantly improve the health of vulnerable people by forming community partnerships that tackle health or health care problems.

Funder: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Eligibility: Public and private nonprofits.

Deadline: June 2.

Amount: \$6 million for 14 matching grants of \$200,000 and \$500,000 each.

Contact: <http://www.rwjf.org/applications/solicited/cfp.jsp?ID=20203&c=EMC-FA144>

Grant: Share Our Strength's Great American Bake Sale – To ensure that low-income children receive nutritious food during critical out-of-school times; in particular, for efforts to increase participation among low-income children in summer and after-school meal programs.

Funder: Share Our Strength.

Eligibility: Nonprofits, schools with a valid National Center for Education Statistics code or local governments that work to ensure children have access to after-school and summer meal programs.

Deadline: May 30.

Amount: \$1,000 to \$10,000.

Contact: http://gabs.strength.org/site/PageServer?pagename=GABS_grants

Positive Youth Development

Pennsylvania Youth Summit -- Partner for Change

On March 25th and 26th, nearly 100 youth met at the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program in Mechanicsburg to discuss the child welfare system in the Commonwealth and make recommendations for changes as part of the state's Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Self-Assessment and Program Improvement Plan (PIP) processes. The youth also had the opportunity to meet with key stakeholders from the Department of Public Welfare, educational and legal systems, the foster care system and county agencies to talk about their concerns and present findings. In addition, they presented their key recommendations to Deputy Secretary Richard Gold and heard from him about plans for changes.

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The Impact of After-School Programs That Promote Personal and Social Skills

A new report from the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) finds good outcomes from after-school programs that use evidence-based approaches to enhance personal and social skills. Outcomes included feelings of self-confidence, positive feelings toward school, grades and achievement test scores. www.casel.org/publications

Adopting a Child Welfare Practice Framework

A description of the history and importance of creating a practice framework or model of practice, from the Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group.

<http://www.childwelfaregroup.org/documents/CWGPracticeFramework.pdf>

Family Friendly Checklists

The Family Support Council of Ohio has produced these checklists to help families and agencies assess whether agency practices are family friendly. Together, families and agencies can use these check list to help make an agency family friendly.

<http://olrs.ohio.gov/other/checklistfamily.pdf>

<http://olrs.ohio.gov/other/checklistagency.pdf><>

Pathway to the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

This document assembles a wealth of findings from research, practice, theory, and policy about what it takes to improve the lives of children and families, particularly those living in tough neighborhoods. By laying out a comprehensive, coherent array of actions, the Pathway informs efforts to improve community conditions within supportive policy and funding contexts. The Pathways framework does not promote a single formula or 'silver bullet.' Rather, the emphasis is on acting strategically across disciplines, systems, and jurisdictions to reduce the costs of abuse and neglect and to promote thriving children, families, and communities. The Pathway provides a starting point to guide choices made by community coalitions, services providers, researchers, funders, and policymakers to achieve desired outcomes for children and their families.

<http://www.pathwaystooutcomes.org/>

8 Skills for Building Family Connections

A list of tips for CASA and GAL volunteers to help build connections for children and youth in foster care. http://www.nationalcasa.org/download/Connection/0802_top_tips_0036.pdf

The Effects of Childhood Stress on Health Across the Lifespan

This document from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention summarizes the research on childhood stress and its implications for adult health and well-being. Of particular interest is the stress caused by child abuse, neglect, and repeated exposure to intimate partner violence (IPV). This guide provides ideas about how to incorporate information on childhood stress into work.

www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/effects_of_childhood_stress.htm

Professional Development Opportunities

IL/SWAN Spring Quarterly Meetings: if you haven't registered, you still can attend the Quarterly Meetings on the following dates. Registration information is available at:

www.diakon-swan.org

- 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.

Registration information is available at www.nrcys.ou.edu/conferences

16th Annual Pennsylvania Permanency Conference, "Embrace the Journey."

Lancaster Host Conference Center Hotel, July 9-11, 2008. Registration materials will be available soon at www.diakon-swan.org

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Legislative Update

Second Chance Act

The Senate has passed the Second Chance Act (HR 1593), which is designed to help former prisoners -- both adults and juveniles -- receive housing, employment, education and health care assistance and family strengthening services where possible. President Bush is expected to sign the bill into law, the Child Welfare League of America reports. www.cwla.org/advocacy

Chafee National Youth in Transition Database

This final rule, published February 26 2008, adds new regulations to require States to collect and report data to ACF on youth who are receiving independent living services and on the outcomes of certain youth who are in foster care or who age out of foster care. The final rule implements the data collection requirements of the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 (Pub. L. 106-169) as incorporated into the Social Security Act.

http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/downloads/youth_in_transition_database.pdf

People in Transition –

Brenda Waltenbaugh, a long-time advocate of youth in transition, resigned from her position at the Greensburg YMCA ILP program in March. Good luck in your new endeavors, Brenda.

Jessica Eller, the IL case worker, in Somerset County is currently on maternity leave. Madison Riley Eller was born on 2.12.08. Both mom and baby are doing well.

Kathy Harvey is now working in the IL unit in McKean County. Congratulations, Kathy!

Lisa Matteo has been promoted to the position of foster care supervisor in Lawrence County and continues to serve as the IL liaison. Congratulations, Lisa!

Sadly, **Ellis Carle** from Luzerne County and a member of the staff at the Northeast Regional Office of OCYF, died recently after a short illness at Hershey Medical Center. Ellis will be sorely missed; he was a great friend of IL workers and transitioning youth. A scholarship in his memory has been established at Luzerne County CYS.

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