

Independent Living Project Update

April 2004

IL Transition to Needs Based Planning and Budget Process Delayed

As you were made aware in the Children, Youth and Families Bulletin # 3140-04-01 Guidelines for Independent Living, the Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF) was preparing to transition the IL Grant Program into the county needs based planning and budgeting process for fiscal year 7/05 through 6/06. This transition would have required county agencies to supply information in their application due August 2004. OCYF staff reconsidered this implementation date and delayed the transition for one year. This updated information was conveyed in the IL allocation letter to counties. More information will be shared at the IL Statewide meeting on June 4, 2004.

Pennsylvania IL Practice Standards Update

Monthly meetings continue for the development of Pennsylvania IL Practice Standards. The work group has met since October 2003 and has made significant progress towards our goals of establishing practice standards for the youth and young adult population and complying with requirements for the CFSR Program Improvement Plan. The workgroup and its subcommittees are using the PA Child Welfare Standards as a model and expect to complete the first draft in June 2004. The workgroup has the on-site assistance of Wendy Blome from the Child Welfare League of America.

Pennsylvania Highlighted at National IL/TL Conference

David Derbes from OCYF presented a 90 minute workshop entitled "Developing Pennsylvania's Independent Living Practice Standards" at the 2004 Pathways to Adulthood 2004 National Independent Living/Transitional Living Conference in Washington, D.C. on April 14, 2004. The national conference was attended by over 600 IL/TL coordinators, federal officials, grantees, private providers and youth. Over 45 workshops were available over a two-day period with state IL coordinator and TL grantee forums on the day prior to the national conference. Dave provided workshop participants with information on Pennsylvania's IL standards development process, the background and rationale for standards and some examples of the workgroup's current progress. Several state coordinators were in attendance for this workshop. Others attending the conference included Angelo Santore, Idotress Joseph as well as staff from Hill House, Covenant House and Stepping Stones.



Attention: IL Youth Artists!

Pennsylvania IL Youth Retreat Logo Contest! The theme of this year's Pennsylvania IL Youth Retreat is "Lost in Lock Haven: Find Yourself." IL youth are asked to submit an original drawing or picture for the retreat logo. Artists should portray the idea about the theme "find yourself." Featured artwork will be imprinted on materials used during the IL Retreat. The top prize is \$200; two runners-up will each receive \$100. **Submit entries by May 30, 2004** to: Tracy Eisenreich, Valley Youth House, 103 W. Fourth St., Bethlehem, PA 18015. 610.317.0721. E-mail: tracye@valleyyouthhouse.org.

Vstreet.com and Getting Ready Magazine Art Contest! Art students are invited to submit an original drawing or picture in color or black and white about "Caring." Win cash prizes (\$50 for 1st prize; \$20 for the four runners-up) for your art! Here's how to enter: Print your name and address on the back of your art. Put it in an envelope and send it to: Vstreet Art Contest, 326 W.12th Ave., Eugene, OR 97401. Send your art to us by June 30, 2004 to enter. Questions? Email: susan@vstreet.com

National Children's Memorial Flag Day.

Six years ago, CWLA launched a public awareness campaign to direct attention to the tragedy of violent child deaths as part of a national initiative to reduce child mortality. The centerpiece of the initiative is a simple, moving image--a red flag depicting blue, paper-doll figures of children holding hands. In the center, the white chalk outline of a missing child symbolizes the children lost to violence. Created by a 16-year-old student in Alameda County, California, the Children's Memorial Flag is flown in remembrance of the thousands of children killed by violence each year. National Children's Memorial Flag Day is celebrated each year on the last Friday in April. This year, CWLA is encouraging the flying of the flag on April 30th in all communities nationwide. If your agency is interested in getting involved and raising awareness, consider purchasing a flag for your own use or providing one for a prominent government office in your community. To order, click [here](#); for more information about the Children's Memorial Flag, contact Tiffany Lindsley at 202/942-0318 or send an e-mail to flag@cwla.org. Gary Shuey in Cumberland County points out that the Exchange Club in his area purchased a flag and presented it to the county. The Exchange Club has an international goal to prevent child abuse and neglect.



Children of Incarcerated Parents: A Bill of Rights

More than 2 million American children have a parent behind bars today 50% more than a decade ago. One in 32 adults is under some form of correctional supervision (probation, prison, or parole), affecting 10% of the population under the age of 18. Children of prisoners have a seemingly daunting array of needs, from a safe place to live and people to care for them. They need someone to listen without judging. To that end, the San Francisco Partnership for Incarcerated Parents has created a Bill of Rights in the hope is that the criminal justice and human services systems will eventually consider the needs of the families and communities affected by crime and to support these children to improve their chances for success, so they will become Children of Promise instead of Children of Prisoners. To view a copy of the complete Bill of Rights, visit www.cwla.org/programs/incarcerated/cop_billofrights.htm

Health Services for Youth in Public Care

Mental Health Screening

A little screening can do a lot. A 10-minute screening tool designed to pick up serious mental health problems -- such as psychosis or suicide ideation -- can identify youth who need more thorough assessments, and is helping to improve mental health services in the juvenile justice system, reports the Youth Law Center. Advocates are now calling for increased use of the screen, especially for girls in the juvenile justice system. http://www.jlc.org/newsletter/health_screen.htm

School-related Trauma

The American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress has an online checklist for response during and after a school-based crisis. <http://www.crisisinfo.org/schoolcrisisresponse/practicalchecklist.pdf>

Anti-Bullying Campaign

In addition to animated "Webisodes" about bullying for kids, a new Health and Human Services campaign has resources and to help adults take seriously children's complaints about bullying. <http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov>

Partnerships for After-School Success:

The National Collaboration for Youth offers toolkits designed for community-based organizations and local and state education agencies. The kits can help boost partnerships between schools and local organizations -- they outline research supporting the effectiveness of such collaboration, strategies for creating and sustaining partnerships, and "Responsibility" and "Risk Management" checklists. <http://www.nydic.org/nydic/toolkits/index.htm>

Encourage College Seniors to Shop Now for Low Cost Health Insurance

College seniors should take advantage of low-cost health insurance that will carry over into the job market. While still enrolled in college, they should sign up for student insurance for about \$40 per month from Assurant Health www.fortishealth.com. **Basic coverage is renewable if students enroll before they graduate** or they can switch to a non-student plan with bigger benefits but not much higher premiums until they land that first job. For more information about student health insurance visit: www.ehealthinsurance.com.

New Scholarship for 2004

The PA House of Representatives will offer a scholarship to any college bound senior who plans to attend a PA college, university or career school. Applicants must be PA residents who plan to attend college full-time. Scholarships are worth \$2400 each year and are renewable if a recipient has a 2.5 GPA after the first year and a 3.0 GPA in remaining years. Applicants must have a 3.0 GPA in high school, be committed to their community and have demonstrated leadership ability. A 300 word essay is also required. Contact: www.house.state.pa.us.

Working with Youth in Transition

Assessing Foster Care from the Inside

Foster care failures often make grim headlines. Foster care successes sometimes emerge as personal stories of success against the odds. But not nearly enough is known about which elements of the foster care experience help or hinder children. A new study looks to "graduates" of foster care for thoughts. http://www.connectforkids.org/benton_topics1544/benton_

Foster Youth Face Greater Challenges

Making it on your own isn't easy -- but children aging out of foster care have it especially tough. They are more likely than their peers to face mental health and substance abuse problems, sexually transmitted diseases, involvement with the juvenile justice system and difficulty completing high school. Review an abstract of Chapin Hall's longitudinal study of youth aging out of foster care. http://www.chapinhall.org/article_abstract.

Youth as E-Citizens: Engaging the Digital Generation

Young people see the Internet's potential for civic and political engagement: they go online to register to vote and volunteer, to write about world events, launch projects for community improvement, and learn skills for political action. Keeping -- rather than getting -- youth engaged may be the next step for advocates and activists. <http://www.centerforsocialmedia.org/ecitizens/youthreport.pdf>

Financial Aid Information Divide

According to a new Sallie Mae Fund survey, Latinos lack awareness of college financial aid options, which has a direct impact on their college attendance. More than two thirds of Latino parents did not receive any financial aid while their child was in K-12 and more than half (56 percent) of the young adults who were not attending college indicated that they had not received any financial aid information in K-12. <http://www.thesalliemaefund.org/>

Dependent Youth Aging Out of Foster Care: A Guidebook for Judges

The Juvenile Law Center says judges should treat as seriously decisions affecting older youth -- especially those who, at 18, are aging out of the foster care system -- as those affecting young children in public care. This guidebook outlines questions judges should answer when ruling on permanency or discharge plans for youth in foster care.
<http://www.jlc.org/Resources/pdfs/agingoutjudgesguide.pdf>



Dates to Remember

IL Statewide Meeting, June 3-4, Days Inn Penn State.

SWAN Summer Meeting, June 29-30, Lancaster Host Resort and Conference Center

SWAN 13th Annual Permanency Conference, June 30-July 2, Lancaster Host Resort

Communities of Practice Secondary Transition Conference, July 13-16, Penn Stater

PA IL Youth Retreat, July 26-30, Lock Haven University

E-Update in April

The UPDATE is now available on line. You can access the e-UPDATE on the 25th of each month. Click on: www.ilp.pitt.edu and follow the link.

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