

Improving Access to College and Employment

Chafee Education and Training Grant (ETG)

Youth planning to enroll in college this spring or next summer 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 are still available at www.pheaa.org. If your youth or you have 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 information on the ETG programs in other states at: www.statevoucher.org

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 or 717.795.9048, ext. 231.

Juvenile Law Center (JLC) Newsletter Addresses New Legislation's Impact

This link will take you to an article entitled "New Federal Law Increases Opportunities for Foster Youth", referencing Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoption Act (FCSIA)—HR 6893. <http://jlc.org/news/11/fcsia/>

Question and Answer Factsheets on Education and Children in Out-of-Home Care

Throughout 2008, the Legal Center for Foster Care and Education (www.abanet.org/child/education) developed and disseminated monthly "Question & Answer Factsheets" addressing critical issues related to the education needs of children in out-of-home care. The topics of the 2008 Monthly Q&A Factsheets were: Blueprint for Change: Education Success for Children in Foster Care; Credit Transfer and School Completion; Head Start and Early Head Start; Surrogate Parent Programs; "Awaiting Foster Care Placement" and McKinney-Vento; Mobility and Special Education; Child and Family Service Reviews and the Well Being Education Outcome; No Child Left Behind and Children in Out-of-Home Care; Data Collection; Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (H.R. 6893) - Education Provisions; Tuition Waivers for Post-Secondary Education; Information Sharing. All of these factsheets are now available on the NRCFCPPP website. http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/info_services/education-and-foster-care.html

Financial Aid and Counseling Boost Success Rates in Community Colleges

MDRC's report on an Opening Doors project in Louisiana finds that performance-based financial scholarships combined with student counseling helped low-income students stay and succeed in community college. www.mdrc.org/press_release

Failure to Finish High School Carries High Costs

Lifetime costs in lost income, greater incarceration rates and greater reliance on public assistance make the costs of failure to graduate high. On the other hand, state taxpayers can realize a lifetime net benefit of nearly \$210,000 per high school graduate, a return of \$11.62 for every \$1 invested. www.oapcs.org/content/pdf/benefitsofhsdiplomafinalJan2009.pdf



Engaging Families to Boost Teens' After-School Enrollment: Tips from the Beacons Project

Quality out-of-school time programs can have strong academic and developmental benefits for middle school youth, especially disadvantaged young teens -- but only if they attend. Contrary to the myth that young teens don't want their parents around, programs that engage the whole family help boost recruitment, participation and retention. www.connectforkids.org/node/6833

The School Environment and Adolescent Well-Being: Beyond Academics

School touches children's lives and development across a range of areas: health, social support, civic engagement and more. This Child Trends brief offers national estimates from a variety of sources on the impact of the school environment on adolescent development. www.childtrends.org

Helping Public Housing Residents Find and Keep Jobs : A Guide for Practitioners

This guide contains practical advice on implementing a program model — known as the Jobs-Plus Community Initiative for Public Housing Families (Jobs-Plus) — aimed at helping public housing residents find and keep jobs. The most rigorously evaluated employment program initiative ever tried in public housing, Jobs-Plus has shown strong potential for improving the employment outlooks of low-income workers and job-seekers. The guide draws on the experiences of six programs based in housing projects around the country that took part in MDRC's national Jobs-Plus demonstration. www.mdrc.org

Moving from Jobs to Careers: Engaging Low-Wage Workers in Career Advancement

The Work Advancement and Support Center (WASC) demonstration offers a new approach to helping low-wage and dislocated workers advance by increasing their wages or work hours, upgrading their skills, or finding better jobs. At the same time, these workers are encouraged to augment and stabilize their income by making the most of available work supports, such as food stamps, public health insurance, subsidized child care, and tax credits. This report presents preliminary information on the effectiveness of strategies that were used to attract people to the WASC program and engage them in services. www.mdrc.org

Transitions to Permanency

Aftercare Youth Connections

Aftercare youth often decide to leave the county in which they were in substitute care to move to a new region of the country. When they move they try to maintain ties to their IL program staff members, but they may need to connect to transition and aftercare services in their new location. If you need to help them make connections, the following website could be invaluable to your youth and you – it provides a list of all statewide IL coordinators, who can then help your youth and you make local contacts and connections. [Statewide IL coordinators: http://www.nrcys.ou.edu/yd/resources/ilcoords.php](http://www.nrcys.ou.edu/yd/resources/ilcoords.php)

Program Instruction on Guardianship Assistance Program Provided by Children's Bureau

The Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth and Families recently issued Program Instruction to State, Tribal and Territorial Agencies Administering or Supervising the Administration of Title IV-E of the Social Security Act, Indian Tribes, Tribal Organizations and Tribal Consortia (Tribes). The purpose of this Program Instruction (PI) is to provide interested Title IV-E agencies and Tribes instruction on how to implement and operate the Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP) plan option as authorized by the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, Public Law (P.L.) 110-351.

Access the Program Instruction issued December 24, 2008:

[http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/info_services/...](http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/info_services/)

Access the State Plan Amendment Pre-Print form:

http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/info_services/

Reconnecting Youth

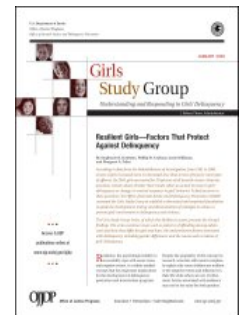
Strategic Sharing—Telling your story in a way that is effective, meaningful, and safe

Strategic sharing helps people who have been involved with the child welfare system to tell the story of their experiences. When told strategically, these stories can inspire and motivate others to make change on behalf of children in foster care. Published by Casey Family Programs and Foster Care Alumni of America, this booklet is for those who want to learn more about sharing strategically, while at the same time protecting their own well being.

www.casey.org/Resources/Publications/strategicsharing.htm

OJJDP Bulletin Describes Protective Factors in Girls' Delinquency

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has published "Resilient Girls—Factors that Protect Against Delinquency." Part of the Girls Study Group series, the bulletin describes how four factors (the presence of a caring adult, school connectedness, school success, and religiosity) influence girls' propensity for delinquent behavior. Resources: "Resilient Girls—Factors that Protect Against Delinquency" is available online at <http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/publications/PubAbstract.asp?pubi=241923>



Program Resources

Access to Resources in Spanish on Child Welfare Information Gateway Website

The Resources in Spanish section of the Child Welfare Information Gateway website, which replaces the En Espanol section, is now live. Designed for child welfare professionals who work with Spanish-speaking families, the section includes a dictionary of Spanish and English terms for child welfare, as well as topically organized resources on: Child abuse and neglect, Preventing and responding to child abuse and neglect, Supporting and preserving families, Out-of-home care, and Adoption. www.childwelfare.gov/spanish

Foster Care Central

Foster Care Central is an online resource that was created for all those dedicated individuals who are working to improve the lives of foster youth. Members include foster and adoptive parents, kinship caregivers, social workers, and CASA workers. Foster Care Central provides a platform for the exchange of information, resources, and discussions to better support foster youth. Sign up free online.

www.fostercarecentral.org

Here To Help – New Pennsylvania Information Website

Governor Rendell has announced the state's new online site with information about jobs, housing, seniors, economic development and family services. It's at <http://www.heretohelp.pa.gov>.

Toolkit: Helping Students with Disabilities

The federal Office of Special Education Programs has released a toolkit on teaching and assessing students with disabilities.

www.osepideasthatwork.org/toolkit



Assessment and Intervention Strategies

ACCESS Family Advocacy for Addiction Treatment

Although a wide array of addiction treatment resources are available in Pennsylvania, families in crisis are often forced to struggle to access needed treatment – sometimes with tragic results.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health estimates that over 941,500 residents in our state are in need of drug and alcohol addiction treatment. During fiscal year 2005-2006 however, only 92,000 Pennsylvanians entered treatment. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) identified reasons why people in need of treatment did not seek services. Of that population, over 33% did not seek treatment due to cost or insurance barriers.

Families and clients currently lack advocacy in addressing the cost and difficulties of accessing healthcare coverage. *ACCESS Family Advocacy for Addition Treatment* seeks to remedy the problem of needless barriers to the existing treatment resources. Further, addiction treatment resources for the uninsured and under-insured are severely limited. The need for treatment far exceeds funding available for those without insurance. For this reason, it is critically important to ensure that Pennsylvania's families are able to access the insurance and health plan coverage that is available to them before they are forced to turn to other resources. This program is a result of a two-year grant awarded by PCCD to develop a statewide system to provide advocacy services for individuals and family members experiencing financial difficulties accessing chemical dependency treatment. The grant for this program commenced on July 1, 2008.

The program has brochures which list services along with their toll free and confidential helpline. There is no charge to Pennsylvanians for this service. <http://www.access-treatment.org>

Adaptation Guidelines for Serving Latino Children and Families Affected by Trauma

In an effort to improve services for Latino/Hispanic children and families who have experienced trauma, the Chadwick Center for Children and Families in San Diego, California, as part of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN), has coordinated a groundbreaking national effort to create Adaptation Guidelines for Serving Latino Children and Families Affected by Trauma. Experts in the fields of child trauma research, clinical practice, policy and cultural diversity worked together to create these guidelines that address a number of key priority areas to fit the needs of traumatized Latino children and families. The priority areas range from micro issues (Assessment and Provision of Therapy) to macro issues (Organizational Competence and Policy). The final document is designed to be viewed either in its entirety or by individual priority area. Portions of these guidelines are geared for advocates and therapists, while other priority areas are designed for program administrators and policy makers.

<http://www.chadwickcenter.org/WALS.htm>

Funding Opportunities and Sustainability

Measuring Youth Program Quality: Second Edition

In 2007, the Forum for Youth Investment released the first edition of this report comparing the purpose, history, structure, methodology, content and technical properties of different program observation tools to help individuals and systems make sound decisions. The second edition includes a new instrument and updated technical and practical information.

www.forumfyi.org/node/660

What Do Out-of-School Time Programs Cost?

A new report from The Wallace Foundation highlights findings from their newest study as well as a new National League of Cities' Institute for Youth, Education and Families strategy guide describing options cities may consider for financing programs in a tight fiscal environment.

www.wallacefoundation.org



Beyond the Checkbook: A Financial Management Guide for Leaders of Small Youth-Serving Organizations.

Author(s): LaVallee, Robert E.; Sandel, Kate. **Published:** 2009

Available from: Finance Project

PDF: <http://www.financeproject.org/publications/BeyondtheCheckbook.pdf>

Abstract: This financial management guide is for leaders of small youth-serving organizations with budgets of less than \$2 million.

Home Depot Foundation

The Foundation offers grants to nonprofits in the U.S. and Canada to support the production and preservation of affordable, efficient and healthy housing. **Deadline for letters of inquiry: March 1, 2009.** www.homedepotfoundation.org/grants.html

Positive Youth Development

Personal Finance Guides for Foster Youth

The Casey Foundation and the National Endowment for Financial Education jointly published this series of guidebooks expressly for use by foster children and teens to educate them about personal finance and empower them to make sound decisions about reaching their future goals. They were developed after speaking with foster parents, youth counselors, social workers, and other foster care professionals. The guidebooks include: I Know Where I'm Going (But Will My Cash Keep Up?): Part One and Two; Money Pals: Being Cool with Cash, Part One and Two; and, Caregiver's Handbook for Money Pals: "Being Cool with Cash" and "I Know Where I'm Going (But Will My Cash Keep Up?)".

<http://www.aecf.org/KnowledgeCenter/PublicationsSeries/FosterYouthMoneyGuides.aspx>

Teens Speak Out on Faith, Religion and Doubt

In the latest issue of New Youth Connections (NYC), teens take on faith, religion and the age-old question, "Does my head look big in this hijab?" Also, check out the other great Youth Communication publications. www.youthcomm.org

Professional Development Opportunities

Governor's Extra-Learning Opportunities Conference

The Pennsylvania Department of Education in partnership with the Center for Schools and Communities announces the PROMISING PRACTICES-PROVEN STRATEGIES: Afterschool Programs Working for Pennsylvania Youth Conference. Plan now to attend this statewide conference in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania at the Hilton Harrisburg on March 4-6, 2009. The conference will focus on key elements of high-quality extra learning opportunities, and on developing systems that support and promote collaboration and youth success. Who should attend? All who work on behalf of children and youth. There is no registration fee to attend this conference and Act 48 and LSW credits will be available (pending approval). Details and online registration for this event are available on the Center for Schools and Communities website at www.center-school.org.

Power Through Knowledge: 8th Independent Living Disabilities Conference

April 2-4, 2009. Harrisburg

Independent Living advocates from across the state will gather in Harrisburg on April 2-4, 2009 for the 8th Power Through Knowledge Independent Living Conference. The 3-day event is the largest cross-disability conference in the state and is hugely popular with IL veterans and newcomers. The conference will feature more than 25 amazing workshops with topic for the experienced conference attendees and the first-timers! Plus, entertaining dinners, a national disability history exhibit, a march to the state Capitol and rally, an Independent Living Expo feature produces and services that promote independence. www.PaSILC.org

IL/SWAN Spring Quarterly Meetings:

Wednesday, April 1, 2009 – Radisson Lackawanna Station Hotel, Scranton

Monday, April 6, 2009 – Holiday Inn, Clarion

Tuesday, April 7, 2009 – Four Points Sheraton, Greensburg

Tuesday, April 21, 2009 – The Conference Center, Central Pennsylvania College, Summerdale

Monday, April 27, 2009 – Embassy Suite Hotel, Philadelphia Airport

Tuesday, April 28, 2009 – Holiday Inn, Fort Washington

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

17th Annual Pennsylvania Permanency Conference

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

Independent Living Project Updates:

Pennsylvania Independent Living Statewide Youth Retreat

Next year's statewide IL Youth Retreat is being planned for 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. The banquet speaker on July 16th is going to be Jaia Johns. More information will be sent to IL programs in the coming months.

Know Your Rights Manual Trainings

The Know Your Rights manual, which was developed by the Juvenile Law Center, Kids Voice and the Youth Advisory Board, has been recently updated. Training is available in your area from the Juvenile Law Center, Kids Voice or the IL Project staff at the University of Pittsburgh. If you have

not already submitted a request for training, please contact your IL specialist at Pitt and we'll arrange for one of the groups to provide training for your youth, staff and/or partners.

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 will soon be offered by the IL Project; currently, they are in the final stages of review at the University. 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 this spring and summer.

Please Welcome Our New Staff:

Tonya Burgess has joined our staff as a Parent Ambassador.

James Wilson, a student at Shippensburg University, is our new Youth Ambassador.

People in Transition – Congratulations to:

Martie Young, the IL coordinator in Clinton County, has moved to a new position at CYS. She is the new Parent Partner coordinator. Best wishes!

Bob Farley, who has been the senior caseworker at Clinton County CYS, is now the IL coordinator. Welcome to IL!

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH IL PROJECT

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