

IL Resource Guide
July 2009

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Improving Access to College and Employment

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 (FAFSA) and the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) worksheet. Chafee ETG applications for the 2009-2010 academic year are on the www.pheaa.org website. (Note: there are no deadlines for the federal Pell Grant or Chafee ETG; it's not too late to submit a FAFSA application for fall classes.)

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 Each state has individual application processes.

Tax Dollars at Work for College Students

Today's college prospects, but legislation enacted in 2007 is taking effect just in time to help. Thanks to the College Cost Reduction and Access Act, federal student-loan payments can be adjusted for income, those in public-service jobs can have their loans forgiven after 10 years of payments and Pell Grants will rise to \$5,350 this fall, reports the Washington Times, featuring the work of Mobilize.org and other advocacy groups. www.washingtontimes.org/news/2009/

Minimum Wage Hike Takes Effect July 24

Minimum-wage workers will get a raise to \$7.25 an hour beginning July 24. The Let Justice Roll Living Wage campaign says this is a good time to celebrate and speak up in support of the minimum wage. www.letjusticeroll.org

Helping Low-Wage Workers Advance - Implementation and Early Impacts of the Work Advancement and Support Center (WASC) Demonstration

WASC is an innovative strategy to help low-wage workers increase their incomes by stabilizing employment, improving skills, increasing earnings, and easing access to work supports. In its first year, WASC connected more workers to food stamps and publicly funded health care coverage and, in one site, substantially increased training activities. www.mdrc.org

Transitions to Permanency

Issue Brief Weighs Benefits and Costs for States Extending Foster Care to Age 21

This Chapin Hall issue brief provides preliminary estimates of what the potential costs to government and benefits to young people would be for states that extend foster care to age 21. Researchers project increases in postsecondary educational attainment associated with allowing foster youth to remain in care until they are 21 years old, resulting in greater lifetime earnings. Researchers estimate that lifetime earnings would increase an average of two dollars for every dollar spent on keeping foster youth in care beyond age 18. This information can be useful for policymakers in light of the passage of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008. Extending Foster Care to Age 21: Weighing the Costs to Government against the Benefits to Youth, by Clark M. Peters, Amy Dworsky, Mark E. Courtney, and Harold Pollack, is available on the Chapin Hall website.

<http://www.chapinhall.org/research/brief/extending-foster-care-age-21-weighing-costs-government-against-benefits-youth>

Permanency or Aging Out: Adolescents in the Child Welfare System.

Published: 2009

Journal Name: CW360

v. 2009, Spring, Spring 2008, p. 1-43

Available from: Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare

PDF: http://cehd.umn.edu/ssw/cascw/attributes/PDF/publications/CW360_2009.pdf

Abstract: This issue is focused on permanency and aging out of foster care for adolescents and includes recommended practice approaches and resources.

Reconnecting Youth

Understanding the Unique Needs of Girls

The June 2009 edition of the *PA CASSP Newsletter* on “**Female-Responsive Programs: Meeting the Unique Needs of Girls**” is now available online. The newsletter is no longer being printed and is only available electronically. You are welcome and encouraged to distribute the newsletter however you would like including printing and copying it yourselves. Link to CASSP newsletters online: <http://tinyurl.com/ms7qtu>

Young Adults Have High Expectations for Love and Marriage

Despite the recent increases in non-marital childbearing and cohabitation, most young adults in the U.S. have positive views of marriage and wish to marry someday, according to a new Child Trends brief. The brief, *Young Adult Attitudes about Relationships and Marriage: Times May Have Changed, but Expectations Remain High*, also finds that young adults value love, fidelity, and commitment in their relationships, and have positive attitudes about cohabitation..

Child Trends researchers analyzed data on 12,000 young adults between the ages of 20 and 24 from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health. Among the findings:

- About three-quarters of 20- to 24-year olds are in romantic relationships. 21 percent are married, 20 percent are unmarried but living together and 35 percent are in a romantic relationship, but not living with their partner.
- 83 percent of unmarried 20- to 24-year olds think it is important or very important to be married someday, and 70 percent believe that there is a good or certain chance that they will be married within the next ten years.
- Among cohabiting young adults, less than half want to be married "now," but 84 percent think it is important to be married someday.
- More than three-fourths of young adults believe that love, fidelity, and making a lifelong commitment are very important to a successful relationship, while less than one-fourth consider money of overriding importance.
- 57 percent of young adults agree that it is all right for unmarried couples to live together (cohabit) even if marriage is not being considered; 24 percent disagree, and 19 percent are neutral on the issue.

To read the entire report, go to: www.childtrends.org

Report Provides Guidance for Juvenile Defenders

The National Juvenile Defender Center has released "*Role of Juvenile Defense Counsel in Delinquency Court.*" The report describes the unique and crucial role that defense attorneys play in juvenile court proceedings in providing comprehensive legal representation to children charged with offenses. www.njdc.info/pdf.role_of_juvenile_defense_counselors.pdf



Boys & Girls Clubs' Role in Promoting Positive Outcomes for Teens

In this analysis Public/Private Ventures found that teens who participated more often each week in their Boys and Girls Club showed positive change on 15 of 31 measures. More important than specific programming, interview data suggest that the overall Club environment -- the safe place it provides and supportive interactions with adults and peers were crucial in helping promote teens' positive development. The third in a series of reports from P/PV's three-year study of the role Boys & Girls Clubs play in the lives of the youth they serve, *Making Every Day Count* examines how Club participation is related to youth's positive and healthy development in three outcome areas identified by Boys & Girls Clubs of America as central to its mission: good character and citizenship, academic success and healthy lifestyles.

The report draws on several sources of data—surveys of a low-income, ethnically diverse sample of approximately 320 youth (starting when they were seventh and eighth graders and following them into the ninth and tenth grades), Club attendance records over a 30-month period, and in-depth interviews with a sample of ninth graders—to investigate the relationship between participation and outcomes. The findings show that teens who had higher levels of participation in the Clubs experienced greater positive change on 15 of 31 outcomes examined, including

increases in integrity (knowing right from wrong) and academic confidence, decreases in incidents of skipping school, and a lower likelihood of starting to carry a weapon or use marijuana or alcohol.

Qualitative data bolster these findings, providing insights from youth and staff about the practices and strategies that support the influence of the Club, as a whole, on youth's lives. The data suggest that there is a confluence of things the Clubs are doing right to serve teens and sustain their connection to the Club as they transition from middle school to high school. Interviewed staff and the teens spoke about the overall Club environment, the safe place it provides and the role of interactions with supportive adults and peers as crucial—and, in their view, more important than specific programming—in helping promote teens' positive development.



The findings from the evaluation offer a promising picture of the role Clubs can play in the lives of teens; they also point to valuable lessons for the larger out-of-school-time field, where there is increasing interest in the question of how to effectively engage teens—a population that has been critically underserved in many low-income communities. www.ppv.org

Program Resources

Guide Addresses Bullying in Schools

The U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) has published "*Bullying in Schools*." Part of COPS' Problem-Specific Guide Series, the guide provides information about the causes and extent of bullying in schools and includes recommendations for developing practices and policies that promote student safety. "*Bullying in Schools*" is available at www.cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/ResourceDetail.aspx?RID=18



Professional Development Opportunities

Growing Pains 2009, Nashville Tennessee

The 22nd Annual National Independent Living Conference for adults and youth will be held on September 1-4, 2009. Presenters include top leaders and experts in the field of independent living. The national youth conference is comprised of sessions dedicated to the needs of youth who are currently in care including workshops, panel discussions and leadership/team building activities. Each general session and workshop will present innovative ideas on how youth can deal with life's ever changing situations. One of our missions is to help professionals, clients and their respective organizations establish and maintain effective Independent Living Programs. This year's conference will be held at the **Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center**, in Nashville, Tennessee, "*Music City!*" For more information call 1-800-226-7612 or visit us online at www.danielkids.org.

IL/SWAN Winter Statewide Meeting, Penn State Hotel and Conference Center, State College, January 27-28, 2010.

Pennsylvania Permanency Conference, Lancaster Host Hotel and Conference Center, June 23-25, 2010.

Independent Living Project Updates:

Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) Training

Justin Lee and Steve Eidson 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. Look for workshop information and dates later this summer.

CWTP Training Calendar

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

Know Your Rights Training

The Juvenile Law Center, Kids Voice and the IL Project offer Know Your Rights training for youth, foster parents, casework staff and partner/community agencies. If you have not had the training or you are interested in another session, please contact the IL Project specialist for your county Neha Desai at the Juvenile Law Center: ndesai@jlc.org

People in Transition:

Bryon Mushrush is the new IL program specialist for Crawford County CYS. Welcome to IL!

Jenn Hammon has moved into the IL coordinator's position at Greene County CYS. Welcome!

Kari Farnham is the new IL coordinator at Warren County CYS. Welcome.

Christine Tirendi is moving on to the Department of Health; her last day working with IL at OCYF is July 24th! Good luck in your new position, Christine! We'll miss you.

Pennsylvania IL Youth Retreat - My Perspective Shaheed Days, Youth Ambassador

The 2009 Pennsylvania Independent Living Youth Retreat will be remembered and cherished by over two hundred youth and independent living staff throughout Pennsylvania for years to come. What started out as brainstorming ideas from a small, but diligent, steering committee culminated into a momentous event which tailored the way for youth to engage in self expression, relationship building, focus groups, early morning jogs through the woods, and a fine display of hilarity during a talent show.

As the week long retreat unraveled, the atmosphere was filled to the brim with youth led activities such as: The Outdoor Experience, Banner/Self Portrait, Discover Your Inner Chef, The Art of Making Music, Theatre, Scrapbooking, Be A Leader- Be An Advocate!, and Fun Furniture amongst many others. Having the experience of living in a college dormitory facilitated peer to peer interactions that youth can look forward to as many of them choose the path of secondary education.

The theme of for this year's past retreat was D.R.E.A.M.: Determine, Realize, Educate, Achieve, and Motivate. This was an acronym suggested by Ivory Bennett, a Youth Ambassador from the University of Pittsburgh Child Welfare Training Program. This theme was driven home by motivational speakers, who, throughout the course of the week related their stories and messages to dream building in the lives of youth, especially those who are in substitute care. There is a tremendous amount of momentum that is already brewing for next year's retreat. Besides, there is much to plan for and plenty of fun to anticipate.

Some quotes from youth who attended the retreat: "I thought it was educational," "Who do I talk to about taking a leadership role next year?" "What's for lunch?" "Everyone's so nice and caring" "Sorry I burned the popcorn you guys!"

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