

## **Improving Access to College and Employment**

### **Chafee Education and Training Grant (ETG)**

Youth planning to enroll in college this summer or in the 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 on the [www.pheaa.org](http://www.pheaa.org) website.

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.

### **Resources for the Fostering Connections Act**

Since the passage of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act in October 2008, a number of organizations have developed resources to help States and agencies plan for implementing the act. Two new resources are described below. Implementing the Educational Provisions - One of the Fostering Connections Act's major provisions is to promote the educational well-being of children and youth in foster care. The American Bar Association's (ABA's) Legal Center for Foster Care and Education has developed two checklists for State agencies and courts in preparing and implementing these provisions.

Checklist One lays out fundamental questions regarding the responsibilities of child welfare, education agencies, juvenile courts, and legislators in identifying and making needed changes in policies, practices, and laws to bring them in line with the act.

Checklist Two outlines the act's education requirements and special considerations for carrying out each obligation, including:

- Appropriateness of an educational placement and proximity to school
- Coordination between education and child welfare agencies
- Determining whether a child should remain in the same school or immediately enroll in a new school
- Transfer of education records
- Use of title IV-E dollars for transportation
- Assurances of enrollment and attendance
- Provisions for older youth

The report, *Fostering Connections Act Implementation Reports: Implementation Checklists for Education Provisions*, is available on the ABA website:

[www.abanet.org/child/education/publications/fc\\_implementation\\_checklists\\_final.pdf](http://www.abanet.org/child/education/publications/fc_implementation_checklists_final.pdf)

## **Transitions to Permanency**

### **Critical Elements for Family Team Decision Making**

This issue brief by Advocates for Children and Youth describes the family-centered case practice that Maryland is implementing to enable more families to safely keep their own children and keep more children out of foster homes or group care. It reviews some of the essential elements of a credible plan to expand family-centered case practice in Maryland, including: the establishment of one and only one uniform, family-centered case practice model; the utilization of the best practices of partnering with families, including: teaming, engaging, assessing, planning, and intervening; strong team facilitation; well-trained caseworkers; well-trained supervisors; implementation of Quality Service Reviews; development of training and coaching capacity; logistical planning for team meetings; identification of best services for individual families; a rollout strategy; engagement of everyone involved in the court process and the various community members who will serve on teams or provide services; policies and personnel evaluations; external assistance; the identification of case practice as the priority; and budgeting for creating the capacity to do family-centered practice. [http://www.acy.org/upimages/FTDM\\_Elements.pdf](http://www.acy.org/upimages/FTDM_Elements.pdf)

### **Family Engagement: A Web-based Practice Toolkit**

The National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice and Permanency Planning is proud to close National Foster Care Month by providing an additional timely resource to the field. The Family Engagement: A Web-based Practice Toolkit was funded through a cooperative agreement between the Hunter College School of Social Work in New York and the Children's Bureau to the National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning. This toolkit is intended as an online tool for programs, states and tribes where promising practices, programs and resources are made available. It can provide an opportunity to connect with colleagues and share program successes and challenges. For this toolkit, we have chosen a few examples and recognize that they are by no means the only programs using some of these principles and practices. Our goal is to continuously update this on-line toolkit to reflect current practices and resources in the field and recognize programs and practices.

<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/fewpt>

### **Youth Involvement in Systems of Care: A Guide to Empowerment**

This guide is a resource for youth, youth coordinators, family members, professionals, and other adults working with young people. The guide is a starting point to understanding youth involvement and engagement in order to develop and fully integrate a youth-directed movement within local systems of care.

<http://www.systemsofcare.samhsa.gov/headermenu/docsHM/youthguidedlink.pdf>

### **Exploring Youth Options From Many Perspectives**

This year's issue of *Child Welfare 360°* (CW360°) applies its comprehensive approach to the topic of adolescents in the child welfare system. Twenty-eight short articles written by researchers, caseworkers, policymakers, kin, and youth provide a variety of perspectives on the topic of achieving permanency for youth aging out of the child welfare system. The articles fall into three sections:

- The *Overview* focuses primarily on research and policies.
- The *Practice* section looks at specific issues (e.g., education) and populations (e.g., youth with disabilities).
- *Collaborations & Perspectives* includes personal stories and program descriptions.

A fourth section presents a bibliography and resources on this topic. CW360° is published by the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare at the University of Minnesota's School of Social Work and can be accessed on its website: <http://cehd.umn.edu/SSW/cascw/research/cw360.asp>

## **Reconnecting Youth**

### **Youth Empowerment and Participation in Mental Health Care**

The Summer 2009 issue of *Focal Point* highlights a number of successful and innovative efforts to promote youth voice and youth empowerment. Many of the articles are authored by or include contributions from youth who are directly involved in the featured programs. *Focal Point* is produced by the Research and Training Center (RTC) on Family Support and Children's Mental Health in Portland, Oregon. <http://www.rtc.pdx.edu/pgFPS09TOC.php>

### **Working with Immigrant Children and Families: A Practice Model**

*Working with Immigrant Children and Families: A Practice Model* by the State of Georgia is a training curriculum that offers child welfare service providers with new practices for improving the welfare of newcomer children and their families. The training aims to help service providers deliver culturally competent services, better recognize signs of maltreatment and human trafficking, utilize different resources in assisting immigrant children, and identify legal regulations and their impact on newcomer youth. This curriculum is the result of a collaboration between refugee resettlement agencies and child welfare officials. Participant Manual: <http://www.brycs.org/documents/GAparticipantguide.pdf> Trainer's Manual: <http://www.brycs.org>

### **How Can We Build Better Programs for Disconnected Youth?**

Nearly one in seven 18- and 19-year-olds is disconnected from the worlds of school and work. In a labor market that values education and skills, these young people are at a serious disadvantage. How can we build on the early promise of several current youth programs?

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

### **Healing the Invisible Wounds: Children's Exposure to Violence**

Healing the Invisible Wounds: Children's Exposure to Violence is a resource to help parents and other caregivers understand the potential impact of exposure to violence on the development of their children. It provides practical suggestions for supporting the healing process. Recommended strategies are tailored to children based on age (birth to 6, 7 to 11, and 12 to 18) and are easily integrated into every day interactions. The booklet is available in English and Spanish and can be downloaded from the Safe Start Center website.

<http://www.safestartcenter.org/wounds.htm>

### **Mediation in Child Welfare**

This information sheet, authored by Della Knoke and published by Centres of Excellence for Children's Well-Being, describes the use of mediation in child welfare and summarizes key findings of evaluations that have been conducted in a number of areas across Canada and the United States. <http://www.cecw-cepb.ca/sites/default/files/publications/en/Mediation74E.pdf>

### **PA Child Stat**

This year as part of Integrated Children's Services counties can use the new PA Child Stat Community Outcomes for Pennsylvania's Children and Families web link to review their community level outcome indicators (which include several child welfare, juvenile justice and school related data over different time periods). PA Child Stat is a county child outcomes indicators project that will allow stakeholders, counties and the state the ability to use data on child indicators to plan and program services for kids in Pennsylvania. A work in progress, PA Child Stat uses the best data available to measure the educational, social, economic, and physical well-being of children at the county level. Counties can generate maps, graphs and charts based on one or more indicators and can compare themselves to other counties.

<https://www.humanservices.state.pa.us/CommunityLevelOutcomeIndicators/viewer.asp>

### **"I Speak" Cards Requesting Translation Available in Twenty Languages**

Culture Connect has created "I Speak" Cards in twenty languages, along with translations in English. These cards briefly explain that the card holder speaks another language and requests an interpreter, which must be provided by federally-funded institutions. These cards may help any newcomer, who is not fluent in English, access child welfare and other social services, health care, and more. <http://www.cultureconnectinc.org/ispeakcards.php>

### **Working with Expectant Teens and Teen Mothers**

#### **MTV Chronicles the Issues of Teen Pregnancy**

This MTV series on teen pregnancy begins June 11 at 10 PM EST/PST. Since 1997, the Kaiser Family Foundation and MTV have partnered on a public information campaign on HIV/AIDS, other sexually transmitted diseases and related sexual health issues. Free resources, including an informational guide developed especially for the campaign, are available online.

[www.itsyoursexlife.com](http://www.itsyoursexlife.com)



#### **Working with Impoverished Young Women: The Need for a Three-Part Approach**

What do impoverished and homeless young women say about addressing substance use, HIV risk and victimization? Focus groups and interviews highlight the importance of addressing normative information, providing skills training and utilizing a non-confrontational approach when discussing these sensitive issues. The abstract is available online; the article is available for purchase. [www.informaworld.com](http://www.informaworld.com)

## **Rights and Resources.**

**Published:** 2009

**Available from:** National Crittenton Foundation

**URL:** <http://www.thenationalcrittentonfoundation.org/rights-and-resources>

**Abstract:** This guide was created for pregnant foster youth or young women who are parenting while in foster care. It provides links to State information sheets.

## **Engaging Fathers**

### **Father Involvement Benefits Infants' Cognitive Development**

Fathers' involvement in a wide range of activities with their infant children is positively associated with infant cognitive development, according to a Child Trends study published in the *Journal of Family Issues*. The study, "**Involvement Among Resident Fathers and Links to Infant Cognitive Outcomes**," also shows that the benefits of father involvement for infants' cognitive development are greater for male infants and for infants with a disability.. [www.childtrends/fatherhood](http://www.childtrends/fatherhood)

### **Unwanted or Mistimed Pregnancy is Associated with Higher Levels of Depression Among First-Time Fathers**

A Child Trends study, "**Pregnancy Intentions During the Transition to Parenthood and Links to Coparenting for First-Time Fathers of Infants**," finds that unwanted or mistimed pregnancy is associated with higher levels of depression among fathers and with lower mother-father relationship happiness. These factors, in turn, are associated with poorer co-parenting, lower levels of support between mother and father, and higher co-parental conflict when children are infants. [www.childtrends/fatherhood](http://www.childtrends/fatherhood)

### **Eight Promising Practices in Programs for Fathers in the Criminal Justice System**

Between 1991 and 1999, the percentage of children with an incarcerated father increased by 58 percent. There is more interest in developing programs that specifically address the needs of fathers in the criminal justice system. A National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse brief authored by Child Trends, "**What Works" in Programs Serving Fathers Involved in the Criminal Justice System? Lessons from Evidence-Based Evaluations**," identifies eight common features of "model" programs for fathers involved in the criminal justice system. [www.childtrends/fatherhood](http://www.childtrends/fatherhood)

### **Ten Promising Practices in Teen Fatherhood Programs**

For many years, teen fathers were either overlooked or blamed for their role in teen pregnancy. However, interest in designing programs to reduce teen pregnancy, to enhance outcomes for babies and children, and to engage these young fathers, has increased in recent years. A National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse brief authored by Child Trends, "**Promising Teen Fatherhood Programs: Initial Evidence Lessons from Evidence-Based Research**," identifies ten common features of "model" and "promising" programs for teen fathers. [www.childtrends/fatherhood](http://www.childtrends/fatherhood)

### **Non-Resident Fathers and the Child Welfare System Spring 2009 Newsletter**

The Quality Improvement Center on Non-Resident Fathers and the Child Welfare System (QIC-NRF) recently announced that the Spring 2009 Newsletter is now available. This edition focuses on the theme of Non-Resident Fathers and the Courts. The newsletter includes a variety of articles on this topic, including: Enhanced Representation for Non-Resident Fathers in Child Welfare Proceedings, My Kids are in State Custody, What Do I Do Now?, 10 Tips on How to Work With Your Lawyer, and, Constitutional Rights of Non-Resident Fathers, amongst others. QIC-NRF newsletters are posted quarterly and provide current information on the QIC-NRF, its fatherhood project sites and the field. <http://www.fatherhoodqic.org/may09final.pdf>

## Program Resources

### Implementing High-Quality Youth Programs

Three new Child Trends briefs present research findings and effective strategies to implement high-quality out-of-school time programs. These briefs complete a six-part series on the drivers for implementing evidence-based practices in out-of-school time programs, available at [www.childtrends.org/youthdevelopment](http://www.childtrends.org/youthdevelopment)

- **How Program Administrators Can Support Out-Of-School Time Staff** - Research on out-of-school time programs has found that effective program managers--referred to as facilitative administrators--promote high-quality implementation in multiple ways: by providing organizational leadership; selecting program staff; ensuring that staff receive training and supervision; and identifying and addressing implementation problems. This brief presents effective strategies for facilitative administration in out-of-school time programs.
- **Building Systems-Level Partnerships** - Partnerships among out-of-school time programs, schools, and the community have been recognized as a feature of high-performing programs. In addition, systems-level partnerships can play critical roles when programs decide to implement new evidence-based practices or activities. This brief links research findings to effective strategies for building systems-level partnerships in out-of-school time programs.
- *Data-Driven Decision Making in Out-Of-School Time Programs* - The use of high-quality data facilitates program management, reduces reliance on anecdotal information, and ensures that data are available for decision-making purposes. Both research and program experience have shown that decision-support data systems are effective tools for gathering high-quality data. This brief offers recommendations and action steps to support the use of high-quality data to inform the implementation of evidence-based practices.

### **A Guide to Low-Cost Curricula and Resources for Marriage and Relationship, Fatherhood and Parenting, and Financial Education.**

**Published:** 2009

**Available from:** United States Administration for Children and Families

**URL:** <https://hhsu.learning.hhs.gov/communities/downloads/0427EBD38838.doc>

**Abstract:** This guide offers a list of low-cost or free curricula to support efforts to strengthen relationships for singles, couples, parents or families.

## Professional Development Opportunities

**Annual Pennsylvania Community on Transition Conference**, "Success by Design," Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center, State College, July 22-24. Workshop and registration information is available from Mary Gordon at [mgordon@pattan.net](mailto:mgordon@pattan.net)

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

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

IL Resources – June 2009

### **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/>

### **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.

### **People in Transition:**

**Roselyn Hibbard** recently left her position in IL at Trehab in the northeastern part of the state. Best wishes.

**Judith Herschel** is the new IL coordinator at Trehab. Welcome.

**Ivory Bennett** from Pittsburgh and **Shaheed Days** from Philadelphia have recently been hired as Youth Ambassadors at the IL Project. Please welcome them when you see them!

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