

June 2005

## Perspectives: Youth Leaving the Child Welfare System

### 18 And Out: Life After Foster Care

The Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (MSPCC), in collaboration with several legislators and more than 30 organizations, recently released this policy paper with recommendations to address the significant challenges faced by teens exiting the foster care system. [www.mspcc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction](http://www.mspcc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction)

### Surviving on Our Own: Independent Living Survey Final Report

To investigate the phenomenon of independent youth, also referred to as unattended/homeless youth, a partnership among Cornell's Family Life Development Center, Tompkins County Youth Services Department, The Learning Web, and a group of independent youth was formed in late 2002. By January of 2003, an 11-page semi-structured interview tool was developed and 16 participants in the Web's Youth Outreach Program were trained to be project interviewers. For more information, go to: <http://www.actforyouth.net/documents/ILS%20final%20Report.pdf>

### From the Child's Perspective: A Qualitative Analysis of Kinship Care Placements

This study from the National Abandoned Infants Assistance Resource Center was designed to provide a qualitative analysis of children in kinship care. An attempt was made to record the knowledge, feelings, and understandings of youth to create a description of their experience. For a summary of the research and a preliminary review of the data: <http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~aiarc/publications/monographs.html>

### Northwest Foster Care Alumni Study

A study by Casey Family Programs, Harvard Medical School, the State of Washington Office of Children's Administration Research, and the State of Oregon Department of Human Services. Few studies have examined how children in foster care have fared as adults, and even fewer studies have identified what changes in foster care services could improve their lives. This study provides new information in both areas. <http://www.casey.org/Resources/Publications/NorthwestAlumniStudy.htm>

### Network on Transitions to Adulthood

For information on studies about youth making the transition to adulthood, the Mac Arthur Foundation has a number of policy briefs, which include "Youth Aging out of Foster Care" and "Challenges in the Transition to Adulthood for Youth in Foster Care, Juvenile Justice, and Special Education." <http://www.transad.pop.upenn.edu/news/briefs.htm>

### Chapin Hall Study on Run Away Youth

In the largest study to date on youth who run away from out-of-home care, the Chapin Hall report includes analysis of government data on more than 14,000 youth who ran away from care in a 10-year period between 1993 and 2003. [http://www.chapinhall.org/article\\_abstract\\_new](http://www.chapinhall.org/article_abstract_new)



## Career and Youth Development Resources

### Quick Guides on Key Issues for Employment and Youth Development

The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth) is offering a series of **Quick Reference Guides** that provides resources on critical topics for administrators, youth service practitioners, and policymakers. Each Guide offers succinct descriptions of a topic with resources that have been identified by experts at NCWD/Youth. The topics include:

- **Youth development and youth leadership for all youth:** The guide explains youth development and leadership components and how they lead to more effective workforce development programs.
- **Workplace success:** The guide describes how to create successful work-based experiences for youth and their employers that foster adult employment success for all youth, particularly for those with disabilities.
- **Assessment:** The guide gives an overview of the process of collecting information that can be used in decision-making, career-planning, and service plan development for a young person.
- **Hidden Disabilities:** The guide provides a basic understanding of how to identify and screen for hidden disabilities; connect to formal diagnosis; provide appropriate accommodations; and identify support services.
- **Benefits Planning for Youth with Disabilities:** The guide helps those assisting youth with disabilities navigate the range of state and federal government programs and benefits for people with disabilities in the United States.
- **Universal Access:** The guide assists those developing a program, service, or activity to make them accessible to youth and adults with disabilities.

For information: [http://www.ncwdyouth.info/resources\\_&\\_Publications/quick\\_Reference\\_Guides/](http://www.ncwdyouth.info/resources_&_Publications/quick_Reference_Guides/).

### New Web Site, The Youthhood is Launched

A new website for young adults and their teachers, parents, and mentors is now available at <http://www.youthhood.org>. The Youthhood is a free, interactive, and dynamic site that assists young adults in preparing for life after high school. Grounded in the principals of universal design, the site addresses the future planning needs of all youth. The concept of Youthhood, as well as its content and activities, is based on current research in positive youth development and transition planning and their impact on post-high school success. Youthhood puts research into practice through a unique and extensive blend of content, interactive activities, links to related Web sites, and planning tools that tie youths' future goals to their current academic work. In addition, the site provides a progressive learning experience in that the further a specific topic is explored, the more activities that are tried and planning that is done, the more the youth will learn and be able to apply the information to their own lives.

### It's My Life: Employment Guide for Child Welfare Professionals Working with Youth

Expanding on the "It's My Life" framework, this handbook from Casey Family Programs is for child welfare professionals who help young people prepare for transition to adulthood and the workplace. It provides benchmarks for career exploration and techniques for job seeking. It also provides links to online tools and assessments and suggestions for taking advantage of community resources. [www.casey.org/Resources/Publications/ItsMyLifeEmployment.htm](http://www.casey.org/Resources/Publications/ItsMyLifeEmployment.htm)

## Working with Youth in Transition

### **SAT and College Application Fee Waiver Requests**

The Independent Living Project provides fee waivers for the SAT for juniors and seniors as well as fee waiver requests for college admission applications. Youth must be registered in PILOTS to qualify for the waivers. Forms are available from Ann Molsky at the Independent Living Project. Contact her at [akm9@pitt.edu](mailto:akm9@pitt.edu) or 717.795.9048, ext. 231.

### **Harvard University: Tuition Program for Low-Income Honor Students**

If you know a family earning less than \$40,000 a year with an honor student graduating from high school next year, Harvard University wants to pay the tuition. The prestigious university recently announced that from now on undergraduate students from low-income families can go to Harvard for free...no tuition and no student loans! For more information, go to: <http://www.piqe.org/Assets/Home/Harvard.htm>

### **Criminal Neglect: Substance Abuse, Juvenile Justice and the Children Left Behind**

The results of a five-year, comprehensive study of substance abuse and state juvenile justice systems found that substance abuse and addiction were involved in 1.9 million of 2.4 million juvenile arrests, but only 68,600 of those juveniles received substance abuse treatment. Based on the findings, the report calls for a complete overhaul of the juvenile justice system to ensure that each child receives a comprehensive assessment of needs, substance abuse treatment, and other appropriate services. [www.casacolumbia.org/Absolutem/articlefiles/JJreport](http://www.casacolumbia.org/Absolutem/articlefiles/JJreport)

### **Experience Corps: Successful Recruiting of Adult Volunteers**

Research done by Independent Sector shows that most older adults will volunteer when asked, but that less than half are ever asked. To help nonprofit organizations to do more asking, Experience Corps has collected what's known about crafting successful recruitment messages aimed at older adults and published *Appealing to Experience: Zeroing In On the Right Message*. The 40-page booklet -- available free while supplies last -- includes information gathered from advertising executives, academic researchers, focus groups, nonprofit organizations, federal agencies, volunteer recruiters, photographers, and storytellers. Much of the research was funded by a grant from the U.S. Administration on Aging. For more information, go to: [http://www.experiencecorps.org/news/releases/2005\\_3\\_01\\_appeal.html](http://www.experiencecorps.org/news/releases/2005_3_01_appeal.html)

### **Staples Foundation for Learning: Resources for Youth Programs**

The mission of Staples Foundation for Learning(TM) is to provide funding to programs that support or provide job skills and/or education for all people, with a special emphasis on disadvantaged youth. The foundation considers educational funding to be an investment in the future of our communities. Its goal is to help local groups -- many of which include its customers and associates -- with programs and services that will positively impact their community every day. For more information, go to: [www.staplesfoundation.org/foundapplication](http://www.staplesfoundation.org/foundapplication)

## People in the News

**Erin Zimmerman** is the new education specialist with Somerset County's IL Program. She is a Slippery Rock grad and replaces **Sandra Benko**, who has accepted a new position outside IL. Welcome, **Erin** and best wishes to **Sandra**!

**Christina Carter** is leaving the IL program at Trehab in Susquehanna and Wyoming counties. Christina is taking another position in drug and alcohol counseling with Trehab on July 1. Best wishes, **Christina**!

**Debbie Kissell**, the IL director for Bedford County, finished her master's degree in May. Congratulations, **Debbie**!

**Michelle Crowther**, the IL coordinator in Warren County has accepted a position as a counselor at SCI-Marienville in Forest County. Good luck, **Michelle**!

**Rose Weir**, the IL supervisor in Snyder County is moving on to become the administrator for Snyder County CYS. Best of luck, **Rose**!

If you have news to share, please e-mail Steve Eidson for inclusion in the next UPDATE.

## Professional Development Opportunities in 2005

The North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) conference is at the Westin Convention Center, Pittsburgh, August 3-6. SWAN is partnering with NACAC this year. More details are available at [www.nacac.org/conference](http://www.nacac.org/conference)

Daniel Memorial's National Independent Living Conference, "**Growing Pains**," will be held on September 21-24 at the Westin Peachtree Hotel in Atlanta. [www.danielkids.org](http://www.danielkids.org)

**SAVE THE DATES!** Independent Living and SWAN are going to partner for combined training opportunities starting this fall. More details and information will be available soon, but save these dates for fall regional meetings:

- Thursday, October 6, Radisson Expo Mart, Pittsburgh.
- Friday, October 7, Holiday Inn, Beaver Falls,
- Wednesday, October 12, Holiday Inn East, Harrisburg.
- Monday, October 24, Radisson Lackawanna Station, Scranton.
- Tuesday, November 1, Radisson Valley Forge, Trevoese.
- Wednesday, November 2, Embassy Suites Airport, Philadelphia.

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