

A BASSC POLICY MONOGRAPH

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Marin
Monterey
Napa
San Francisco
San Mateo
Santa Clara
Santa Cruz
Solano
Sonoma*

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**EMANCIPATING FROM FOSTER CARE
IN THE BAY AREA:**

**What Types of Programs and Services are Available
for Youth Aging Out of the Foster Care System?**

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**Funded by the
Zellerbach Family Foundation
San Francisco, CA**

January 2006

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EMANCIPATING FROM FOSTER CARE IN THE BAY AREA:

What Types of Programs and Services are Available for Youth Aging Out of the Foster Care System?

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This BASSC Monograph examines the current needs of youth aging out of the foster care system and programs developed to assist youth with their transition to adulthood and independent living. It is based upon a review of the most up to date national and state empirical research to identify what the challenges youth aging out of care face. It is also based upon interviews with program administrators of Independent Living Skills Programs, community-based organizations, and private foundations and endowments.

The monograph is divided into the following four sections (along with an Appendices that includes an in-depth profile of the major community-based service providers in each county that serve youth aging out of foster care):

- Description of national and State of California outcomes, conducted in the last five years, of youth who have aged out of the foster care system
- Description of local, San Francisco Bay Area interventions, innovative practices, and major initiatives that have been developed for serving these youth.
- Identification of current gaps in services and limitations of services

Major Research Findings

The major research findings (2000-2005) relate to the outcomes of older adolescents in foster care who have left care since the passage of the 1999 Foster Care Independence Act (known as the Chafee Act). Outcomes are for housing/homelessness, employment, achievement of financial self-sufficiency, receipt of public assistance, educational attainment, incarceration, mental health, substance use, social support and pregnancy.

All studies examined in this monograph explored the outcomes for former foster youth between the ages of 18 and 24. A significant conclusion is that youth aging out of foster care still struggle to survive independently and do not do as well as young people in the general population. Former foster youth continue to lack employment experiences and educational attainment, and therefore still have to cope with homelessness, hunger, incarceration and receipt of public assistance. In fact, one study in particular, Courtney et al., (2005) examined 732 youth longitudinally, as they left care at 17 and 18 and again at age 19 (2 years after leaving foster care) in Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin.

California Demographics

- There are 40,059 youth in out-of-home placements between the ages of 11 and 21, and 11,600 are between the ages of 16 and 18
- There are approximately 4,355 youth aging out every year
- Approximately 1,300 age out of care from the eleven San Francisco Bay Area counties (Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano and Sonoma).

California Outcomes

In terms of outcomes for youth in foster care in California, there has been one seminal study examining 10,228 youth who emancipated foster care between 1992 and 1997. The study, conducted by Needell, Cuccaro-Alamin, Brookhart, Jackman and Shlonsky (2002), found that these youth experienced many difficult outcomes. Approximately 65% entered the foster care system between ages 11 and 19 and 54% had five or more placements. The following outcomes are from the Needell et al., (2002) study:

- About 1/4 received TANF/AFDC within six years of leaving the foster care system
- 1/10 received Medi-Cal for a disability within six years after leaving care
- Low rates of high school graduation/proficiency, community college attendance, and graduation from 4-year colleges

- High rates of mental health services prior to emancipation (mood disorder was most common)
- 4% entered the California State Prison System within 7 years after leaving care
- Birth records showed that 2/3 of the females had at least one birth within five years after leaving care, and 1/5 gave birth within one year after leaving care

Goerge, Bilaver, Lee, Needell, Brookhart & Jackman (2002) also conducted an outcome study of 2824 youth who aged out of the foster care system in California.

- 1/4 of these youth reported no income from employment 13 months after leaving care (yet 1/2 had employment earnings prior to their 18th birthday). Of those youth who found employment, their mean earnings were \$6235 per year

Service Interventions: What is being done in the Bay Area?

Housing

There are a variety of housing program models, and more permanent funding options for such programs, for youth aging out of foster care, such as:

- Transitional Housing Placement Programs (THPP) are for youth ages 16 to 19. These programs are funded through the CDSS and licensed through community care licensing. They may be communal living or scattered site models.

- Transitional Housing Placement-Plus (THP-Plus) programs are for former foster youth ages 18 to 24. Only three counties in the Bay Area are accessing State of California THP-Plus funds (Alameda, San Francisco, and Santa Cruz).
- Two cities in Alameda County (Fremont and Livermore) have utilized Federal HOME Funds to help fund supportive services for a THP-Plus program.
- Alameda and Kern counties have worked collaboratively with their county Housing Authority to develop programs and funding for youth aging out of care.
- Transitional Living Programs for youth ages 18 to 24 are often run through community-based organizations and are funded through private giving and HUD monies.
- Two counties, Alameda and San Francisco, offer a permanent housing option for homeless youth (former foster youth are eligible).
- San Mateo County offers Foster Youth Housing stipends for youth attending school/work for 30 hours per week.

Education

There are currently some school districts in the Bay Area that have developed specific program for foster youth in K-12. There are now more funding and supports for youth accessing higher education through the Chafee Higher Education Grant and local Guardian Scholars Programs.

Employment Training

Employment training is mainly provided through community-based organizations, Workforce Investment Boards, and ILSP.

Mental Health

Mental health services for former foster youth under the age of 21 are primarily funded through State of California EPSDT monies.

Other Initiatives

There are numerous state-wide initiatives occurring with some Bay Area counties related to youth aging out of care. These are Family to Family, California Connected by 25, California Permanency for Youth Project, Family Finding, Gateway Project, and Fostering the Future Fund. Various Bay Area counties are participating in these initiatives and projects.

A Call for Action

Challenge 1: Cease Early Discharge of Foster Youth

There is a need for the child welfare and judicial systems to examine the early discharge practices of older youth. In October 2005 the California state legislature passed a new law (SB 1633) requiring counties to allow GED preparation to count as "working on high school proficiency." Consequently, older foster youth should be allowed to remain in county-funded foster care placement until age 19. However, it is unclear how this information is

being disseminated to county child welfare workers or to the juvenile courts that make the final decision about the closing of a foster care case. Also, as a result of this legislation, some youth may be required by their child welfare workers and the courts to leave high school and pursue a GED educational plan if they are not expected to graduate from high school before their 19th birthday. This practice may need to be further examined in terms of youth's educational rights.

Challenge 2: Increase Support for Housing Interventions

A more thorough examination of the various housing options is needed. Counties (Social Services, Housing Authority), cities, and community-based organizations can work collaboratively to ensure there are a variety of funding option and choices for youth aging out of care, depending on their needs.

Challenge 3: Develop Creative ILSP and Employment Training Interventions for Disconnected Youth

There is a lack of participation in ILSP and community-based employment training, especially for youth in foster care with mental health issues, geographic concerns, or behavioral issues. An examination of various program models (one-stop versus scattered site versus caregiver training) and developmentally-appropriate curriculum should be conducted.

Challenge 4: Address the Mental Health Needs of Youth

An emphasis should be placed on fully utilizing EPSDT monies. Counties could implement a Transitional Youth Mental Health Team to ensure a smooth transition for these youth from the foster care system, and perhaps into the adult mental health system. Lastly, Proposition 63 monies should be utilized for transitional youth leaving foster care for housing and other supportive services.

Challenge 5: Assess and Treat Substance Use

Given the high numbers of current and former foster youth utilizing alcohol and illicit substances, counties should examine utilizing an assessment tool for early intervention and prevention, and explore training in the area of substance use for child welfare workers. Exploration of starting a California CARE program in each county is also necessary.

Challenge 6: Improve Education Outcomes

Work with local school superintendents to offer more supportive foster youth programs such as been in the Oakland Unified School District's Social Services for Foster Youth Program. Advocacy is also needed to ensure non-public schools meet educational standards.

Challenge 7: Increase Social Support

Family Finding should be initiated, along with increased advocacy for CASA to work with older youth in care, and collaborations with mentoring programs should occur. Increased social support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, queer,

or questioning youth is also imperative.

Challenge 8: Educate Foster Youth about Their Rights and Privileges

There is a lack of clear understanding about the rights and privileges of former foster youth among community-based organizations. Counties need to educate housing and other supportive service programs about the rights foster youth have upon emancipation, along with the various “extras” some youth can receive (i.e. money/stipends for housing or education, transportation passes, laptops etc). Mandated Emancipation Conferences should occur and all counties should develop and disseminate an Emancipation Binder to every youth aging out of care like the one now available in Contra Costa County.

Challenge 9: Pursue Further Research

More research is needed to fully understand the efficacy and client satisfaction of community-based and county services for youth aging out of care. Best practices can be emulated, but only if empirical research shows that such programs are working for these young people.

EMANCIPATING FROM FOSTER CARE IN THE BAY AREA:

What Types of Programs and Services are Available for Youth Aging Out of the Foster Care System?

Introduction

In the last decade there has been increased attention on youth aging out of the foster care system. Specifically, research has focused on how this population of young people has fared after emancipating from the foster care system (see Courtney et al., 2004; Cook, 1994; Courtney, Piliavin, Krogan-Gaylor, and Newsmith, 2001). These young people often leave the foster care system at the age of majority, or otherwise become legally emancipated (Needell et al., 2002).

Unfortunately, most outcomes have been bleak (e.g. high unemployment, low educational achievement, homelessness, incarceration, high rates of public assistance, etc.). There has also been additional research related to outcomes of older foster care youth who access Independent Living Skills (ILS) program services in their counties of origin (see Lindsey and Ahmed, 1999; McMillen et al., 1997; Scannapieco and Shagrin, 1995; Waldinger and Furman, 1994). However, most of these studies had small sample sizes and weak methodology. Additionally, only a few of these studies were conducted in California, the state with the largest numbers of youth in care.

It is important to note that there are limitations to the following literature review section. First, the empirical literature related to this population of

youth often does not take a strengths-based approach. There are, however, a few studies that have examined best practices with this population. These studies are mentioned in the following sections. Secondly, there are only few studies that have compared outcomes of former foster youth to those of the general population of transitional youth. Third, this report does not include information from birth/biological families or foster families. It is also important to note the difficulties in studying a representative sample of former foster youth, given how few remain in contact with social service agencies after they emancipate.

California Outcomes

In California, children enter the foster care system under the auspices of either county child welfare services or probation departments (Needell et al., 2002). The state has the largest foster care population in the United States (97,261 as of September 30, 2003). In July 2002 there were 40,059 youth ages 11 to 18 in its child welfare system. This age group represents 46% of all children in California in supervised foster care. Of these youth, 11,600 (29%) are between the ages of 16 and 18 (U.S. DHHS, 2004).

Approximately 4,355 foster youth leave the California foster care system each year (CDSS, 2002). The majority of these young people leave care at age 18

(72% for child welfare and 69% for probation), but many emancipate before age 18 (15% for child welfare and 28% for probation).

About one-third of these young people have had five or more placements and 41% have been in care for 5 or more years (Needell et al., 2002). Between 2000 and 2001 approximately 65% of the youth aging out needed affordable housing at the time of emancipation (Needell et al., 2002) and 30% were linked to TANF after leaving care. Also, former foster youth from California have high rates of publicly funded mental health services (53%), Medi-Cal insurance (59%), and pregnancy (20% are mothers within 1 year of leaving the system) (Needell et al., 2002).

Of the 4,355 youth that leave care in California, it is estimated that 1000-1300 are from the San Francisco Bay Area (CDSS, 2002). Yet, there is very little information about these young people. A study by Rashid, Doherty and Austin (2001) explored what Independent Living Skills Program services are available for Bay Area older adolescents in foster care. Barth (1990) interviewed 55 youth, from the San Francisco Bay Area, at least one year after leaving foster care. These youth reported significant monetary troubles and one third admitted to committing crimes just to survive.

Yet, no comprehensive study in the Bay Area has examined what current services are available to foster care youth (in addition to county ILSP services) or the best practices of such services. Housing, employment preparation, educational support, mentoring, and independent living skills training will be examined in

this monograph. Qualitative interviews were conducted with key constituents serving youth aging out of the foster care system in the Bay Area.

Findings from this study will provide county social service directors, child welfare administrators, philanthropic organizations, non-profit service providers, and policy makers with important information about the services and funding opportunities available for older youth in foster care in the Bay Area since passage of the Chafee Act in 1999.

General Outcomes for Adolescents in Placement

There are approximately 523,085 children and adolescents in out-of-home care in the United States (AFCARS Report, 2005) and about 20% of these youth are older adolescents. In fact, about 105,000 adolescents ages 16 to 21 years were in care, and another 75,000 are between the ages of 14 and 15 years old (Casey Family Programs, 2000).

While many of the studies cited in the following review of the literature relate to high risk populations, the different populations studied or the methodologies used may not always apply directly to the foster care population as a whole.

Youth aging out of foster care

Of the 105,000 older adolescents in foster care each year approximately 34,600 have case plans with emancipation as the treatment plan (ACF, 2001). It is estimated that 7% of all of the young people in foster care (about 38,000) emancipated from the system in 2000 (U.S. DHHS, 2003).

However, many youth experience significant challenges in making the transition from the out-of-home placement system to independent living (U.S. GAO, 1999).

Unfortunately, many young people that exit the out-of-home care system as adolescents ultimately receive services as adults either through the criminal justice system, the welfare system, or as residents of homeless shelters (Casey Family Programs, 2000). Their lack of self-sufficiency may be traced to limited life skills, education, employment, and social skills. The following sections describe the most recent empirical research addressing the outcomes of youth aging out of out-of-home care.

The majority of youth placed in foster care as adolescents remain in care until they reach 18 years old and emancipate. Fanshel, Finch & Grundy (1990) examined 585 youth in care with a mean age of first placement being 12.84 years (standard deviation 2.99 years). The researchers found that 55.5% were emancipated, 20.2% reunified with parents, 20.7% transferred, and 3.9% ran away by the time the case closed.

Housing and Homelessness

One of the most important changes youth will make in the transition to independent living and self-sufficiency is assuming the responsibility for housing (Sheehy et al., 2000). Yet, homelessness is another serious outcome for many youth aging out of care. A number of studies have shown that either temporary or permanent homelessness can result after emancipation; homelessness is defined by all studies as

at least one night living on the streets or in a shelter.

Homeless young people, who have been cast out, abandoned, or rejected by their families, frequently experience multiple placements in group homes or treatment centers as permanent wards of the state (Morrissette & McIntyre, 1989 p. 603). Often, they were taken into state custody and placed in unsuitable or inappropriate placements, and when the placements became intolerable, some youth ran to the streets (Kurtz et al., 1991). Other youth become homeless after leaving care. There are estimates that between 20 and 50% of youth accessing homeless agencies have a history of foster care or have run directly from care (Kurtz et al., 1991; NASW, 1993, Larkin Street Youth Services, 2001).

A seminal study was recently conducted by Chapin Hall Center for Children through the University of Chicago. The researchers, Courtney, Dworsky, Ruth, Keller, Havlicek, and Bost (2005) followed approximately 750 youth two years after leaving foster care from Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin. Follow-up data was collected on 603 youth (of the 736 that participated in baseline interviews 1-2 years earlier). The median age of the 603 youth was 19. Of those youth no longer in care (n=321) only 1% were currently homeless at the time of the interview. However, 14% reported being homeless at least once since leaving foster care.

Pecora et al., (2003) examined the outcomes from the Northwest Foster Care Alumni Study of former foster youth who were in care in Oregon and Washington between 1988 and 1998. The study found that of 659 alumni

(average age at interview was 24.2 years), 22% reported being homeless for one day or more after the age of 18.

Housing Service Outcomes

At present there is a dearth of research examining the outcomes of former foster youth that access transitional living programs that are developed to assist them with the move to adulthood. Throughout the nation there are approximately 200 programs to assist these young people, yet there is little empirical information about the effectiveness of these programs.

Rashid (2004) examined the outcomes of a transitional living program that served former foster youth ages 18 to 23. The goals of this study were to: 1) assess the outcomes of former foster care youth utilizing transitional living programs and 2) compare outcomes achieved by former foster care youth who participated in an employment training program with similar youth who did not.

The study sampled 23 former foster care youth using transitional living services in San Francisco County. Hourly wage, money saved, and employment status outcomes were examined at discharge and housing outcomes were examined at six month post-discharge. All outcome variables demonstrated improvement post-intervention; hourly wage, housing situation, employment, and money saved. At six month follow-up 90% of youth with known housing situations (18 of 23 youth) were in permanent, stable housing. In comparing youth with employment training and those without on hourly wage, those youth with comprehensive employment training had significantly higher hourly wages. This

study illustrates that transitional living programs coupled with employment training may be effective interventions for former foster care youth (Rashid, 2004).

Mallon (1998) examined the outcome data of 46 youth who discharged from a residential independent living program in New York between 1987 and 1994. All participants were male and were between the ages of 16 and 23 while in the program. The outcome data shows approximately 72% of the 46 youth had full-time employment and 74% had received a high school diploma or GED (General Equivalency Diploma) when they exited the program. Follow-up was completed on all 46 youth after they had left the program for at least six months. It was found that 76.5% lived in independent living situations and 15% lived with family members. A limitation to this study is that there was no control group.

Employment and financial self-sufficiency

Courtney, Terao, and Bost (2004) surveyed 732 foster care youth, with a median age of 17, prior to leaving care. The researchers found that 47.7% of the youth had been employed at some point in the past and 35% were currently employed at the time of the survey. The average hours worked per week was 25 and the median was 27. Approximately 30% of the young people reported that they obtained their employment through either job corps or another job training program, which illustrates that training may play an important role in these youths' employment (Courtney et al., 2004). It is important to note, however, that 50% of the young people in the

overall sample reported still needing future assistance with employment problems even though 67% reported they had participated in a vocational support program. Clearly, youth recognize that employment training and support may be needed even after youth exit foster care, during their transitional years.

The Courtney et al. follow-up study (2005) conducted with 321 former foster youth illustrated that although 72% had worked for pay during the last year, only 47% were currently employed at the time of the survey. Additionally, of those who had worked for pay, 84% made less than \$9.00 per hour. These employment outcomes show that youth may struggle to survive financially. In fact, 40% of youth reported not having enough money to buy clothes, 20% did not have enough money to pay rent, and 22% had their phone service disconnected.

The same study found that 37% of the 321 former foster youth reported being not in school and not employed. Additionally, almost 40% were not in school and not employed, or homeless, or incarcerated at the time of the interview. These numbers illustrate the high rates of “disconnectedness” among this population of young people (Courtney et al., 2005; Wald and Martinez, 2003; Youth Transition Funders Group, 2004).

Lastly, Courtney et al. (2005) found that 15% of participants reported being hungry because of not having enough money to buy food and 28% had received food or money for food from family or friends. Additionally, over one-quarter of participants could be

deemed as “food insecure” by the USDA’s food security measure. In terms of receipt of government assistance, Courtney et al. (2005) found that 36% of former foster youth had received food stamps at some point since emancipating and 22% were currently receiving food stamps. And, 17% of the parenting former foster youth were currently receiving TANF.

Goerge, Bilaver, Lee, Needell, Brookhart & Jackman (2002) conducted an outcome study of 4213 youth who aged out of the foster care system in California (n=2824), Illinois (n=1084) and South Carolina (n=305) during the mid-1990s. The study examined employment rates, as well as earned income from employment during a 13-month period. Participants’ outcomes were compared with those who were reunified with their parents prior to their 18th birthday and those who were from low-income families.

Results indicated that the former foster care youth’s unemployment rates varied from state to state (30% in Illinois, 23% in California, and 14% in South Carolina). Youth aging out of the foster care system earned significantly less than youth in any comparison group both prior to and after their eighteenth birthday. In fact, the former foster care youth averaged less than \$6000 per year in wages, which was substantially lower than the 1997 poverty level of \$7890 for a single individual (Goerge et al., 2002).

Pecora et al. (2003) found that of 659 alumni (average age at interview was 24.2 years), 80% reported being employed full-time or part-time. However, their overall employment rates were lower than that of the general

population and 33% had household incomes at or below poverty level. Also, 17% were currently receiving cash assistance and 33% had no health insurance (almost twice the rate of the general population of adults ages 18 to 44).

Employment Training Outcomes

Courtney et al. (2005) found that of the 321 former foster youth surveyed, only 63% reported never having received employment or vocational training with ILSP. Training included such things as resume writing, job application and interviewing skills, or help with job referrals or placements.

Homeless former foster youth have historically been overlooked in studies examining employment training. Lenz-Rashid (2005) examined the baseline information and outcomes following a comprehensive employment training program for 104 homeless former foster youth. The mean age of the sample was 19.27 years (1.40 s.d.) with 39% of the youth African American, 29% Caucasian, 12% Latino/a, and 20% Other. Approximately 66% had a mental health issue and 46% had a current substance abuse issue. Although all youth in the sample were over the age of 18 at the time of the study, only 50% reported having a high school diploma or proficiency.

Approximately 60% of the study participants found employment within three months following the training and the mean hourly wage of all participants post-training was \$8.88. Follow-up comparisons found that having a mental health issue most significantly predicted whether a youth found employment following the employment training

program, even while taking into consideration foster care history and all other control variables.

Financial self-sufficiency and finding stable housing are two of the most important elements to achieving independence. Youth that emancipate from foster care are clearly at a high risk of not retaining stable housing and not being able to support themselves financially, which can lead to homelessness and dependency on others.

Education

Educational deficits have also been found in numerous studies among youth who have emancipated from out-of-home care (Courtney et al., 2000; Festinger, 1983).

Courtney et al's. (2005) follow-up study found that of the 321 former foster youth interviewed, more than 36% reported they did not have a high school diploma or GED. Only 7.9% of those participants were enrolled in a 2-year college and only 3.8% were enrolled in a 4-year college.

Pecora et al. (2003) found that of 659 alumni (average age 24 years), 65% reported seven or more school changes from elementary through high school, 85% had completed high school diploma or GED credential, and 43% received some education beyond high school. Approximately 21% completed a degree or certificate beyond high school, but only 1.8% had completed a bachelor's degree. In fact, the youth in this study were 14 times less likely to complete college than the general population.

Buehler et al. (2000) discovered that participants with a history of foster care were not statistically different from non-foster care participants, or a matched group, in educational attainment (choices were categorized as: less than high school, high school, some college or post high school training, college degree, post baccalaureate). Yet, when examining the variable education dichotomously ('high school or less' and 'more than high school') the authors found that the non-foster care participants were significantly more likely to report 'having a high school degree or more' than the foster care and matched groups. Adults in the foster care and matched groups did not differ on this dichotomous measure of educational attainment (Buehler et al., 2000).

Clearly there are some discrepancies in the educational achievements of youth in care when compared to youth not in care. Whether these discrepancies are due to a lack of ability due to upbringing, a non-supportive home-life, or minimal residential stability, there is one thing apparent; youth in care tend to fare worse educationally than the general population of youth that reside with their families.

Mental Health Needs

The data documenting special needs of youth aging out of care are largely unavailable, incomplete, or unreliable from most states (Casey Family Programs, 2000). For the purpose of this paper, 'special needs' is defined as a diagnosed disability; vision or hearing impairment, mental retardation, physical disability, emotional disturbance, other medical condition, child behavior

problem, substance abuse problem, or receipt of Social Security Insurance. This information was gathered from the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) database. Approximately 80% of foster youth have received services for their mental health needs.

Pecora et al. (2003) found that of 659 alumni (average age 24 years), 54% had one or more mental health diagnosis. In fact, 25% held a post-traumatic stress disorder diagnosis (a rate nearly double that of U.S. war veterans), 20% held major depressive disorder, and 17% were diagnosed with social phobia. About 90% received mental health services while in care.

Courtney et al.'s (2005) study showed that 12% of 321 former foster youth surveyed had a lifetime diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and 10% for Major Depressive Disorder (based on the Composite International Diagnostic Interview – CIDI). Also, 11% (at median age 19) were most recently hospitalized for a mental health or substance abuse issue in the last year. PTSD and Major Depression were more prevalent among females. Thirteen percent had received counseling in the last year and 15% had received medication for mental health issues.

Buehler et al.'s (2000) study of three samples of 101 participants (those with a history of foster care, those matched on demographic variables, and those randomly sampled with no history of foster care) compared the three groups on mental health outcomes. Two measures of mental health were examined: self-esteem and depressive affect. Self-esteem was measured using

the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale and there were no differences found between the three groups. Depressive affect was measured using the mean of 12 frequently used items (e.g. feel depressed, feel sad, feel overly bothered by things) (p. 618). Participants were asked to note the number of days during the past week they had experienced each of these feelings. There were no statistically significant group differences.

Social Support

There are various kinds of social support young people can receive: emotional support (e.g. someone to share your worries with), tangible support (e.g. someone to take you to the doctor), and recreational support (e.g. someone to spend time with having fun) (Courtney et al., 2005).

Courtney et al. (2005) examined the level of reported social support of 321 youth who had already left foster care by using the MOS Social Support Survey (Sherbourne and Stewart, 1991). Responses were rated on a five point Likert scale (0 = none of the time, 5 = all of the time).

Youth reported receiving the lowest rates of social support with emotional support and tangible support (between some and most of the time) and the highest rates for recreational (i.e. fun) support (between most and all of the time).

The Buehler et al. (2000) study explored the variable 'relations with biological family.' This was defined as the respondent's perception of the quality of the relationship with his or her biological

mother and father and siblings, and was analyzed using a 7-point scale. The scale ranged from 'very poor' to 'excellent.' Adults in the foster care group had poorer quality relationships with their mothers and fathers than the adults in the random sample and the matched groups. Similarly, the adults in the foster care group got along less well with their siblings than did adults in the other two groups.

In addition to familial relationships, community involvement was also assessed. 'Involvement in community activities' was assessed by asking the frequency of involvement in fifteen community groups (e.g. service clubs, church, school groups, sports groups). Adults in the foster care group were less involved in community activities than adults in the random group, but did not have a significantly different level of community activities than the matched group.

LGBTQ Youth

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) youth aging out of foster care are often overlooked in child welfare services, especially when they choose not to self-identify. They may suffer a host of problems because of discrimination, harassment and abuse based on homophobia, misinformation, lack of information, and prejudice against their sexual orientation, perceived orientation, or their lack of conformity to gender stereotypes (Richardson, Early and Rivera, 2005). Although the legislature passed the California Foster Care Nondiscrimination Act which ensures fair and equal access to services and prevents discrimination and harassment,

there are no formal instruments used to identify youth who are LGBTQ in the State of California. Counties should decide whether identifying these LGBTQ older youth in foster care may, in fact, provide some them with extra support. Identification may provide an opportunity for advocacy from these young people's child welfare workers, especially when related to placement decisions.

Mallon's (1998) research on the needs of LGBT youth in out-of-home placements told the stories of 54 youth interviewed. They described incidences of being beaten, raped, physically abused, ignored, coerced, attacked, taunted, evicted from placement, belittled, forced into aversion therapy, and called derogatory names by peers, foster parents and group home staff, because of their known or perceived sexual identity. Consequently, some youth try to hide their sexual identity, or try to pass as straight, to avoid these abuses (Richardson et al., 2005).

Courtney et al. (2005) found that 15% of 321 former foster youth reported being LBGTQ. In fact, approximately 20% of the females and 10% of the males in the study reported being of a sexual minority.

Lenz-Rashid (2005) found that thirty-four percent of 104 homeless former foster youth reported being LGBTQ. Although the study utilized a non-random sample, the high percentages of LGBQ former foster care youth raises the question as to whether these young people receive adequate support while in and upon exiting foster care. These foster care youth might, in fact, have fewer housing options after exiting care

than heterosexual youth as a result of not feeling supported by their family of origin or friends regarding their sexual orientation, or not comfortable with 'coming out' as gay, lesbian, or bisexual (Remafedi et al., 1992).

By not receiving emotional and social support around their sexual orientation, or by being stigmatized or victimized, these youth might experience increased mental health and substance use issues. These issues could affect their transition into adulthood, as well as their ability to obtain and retain employment and housing.

Substance use

There is little empirical research examining the substance use habits of current and former foster care youth. Of the research available, there are vast differences in outcomes due to sampling, methodology, and instruments. A limitation to the studies below is that outcomes were not distinguished among placement types.

Between 1998 and 1999 Kohlenberg, Nordlund, Lowin, and Treichler (2002) interviewed 231 foster youth anonymously by phone and asked about their substance use. The results showed that foster youth were more likely than adolescents living with their parents to have "lifetime use" and "use within 6 months that constitutes a DSM III substance abuse diagnosis or a current need for treatment." However, foster youth had less "past year" and "last 30 day" use than adolescents housed with parents.

Courtney et al. (2005) found that 15% of 321 former foster youth had a lifetime

diagnosis of Substance Abuse and 5% had a diagnosis of Substance Dependence (based on the CIDI). Additionally, 14% have a lifetime diagnosis of Alcohol Abuse. Alcohol and Substance Abuse were more prevalent among males than females. Seven percent had received substance abuse treatment in the last year. Courtney et al. (2004) interviewed 732 youth leaving foster care with a median age of 17 and found that 11% reported alcohol abuse symptoms, 3% reported alcohol dependence symptoms, 5% reported substance abuse symptoms, and 2.3% reported substance dependence symptoms.

Similarly, English et al. (1994) used case record review and phone interviews with caregivers to explore the substance use behaviors among 464 youth in care. Alcohol use by the youth was reported among 16% of the cases, while drug use was disclosed by approximately 15%. An enormous limitation to this study is that caregivers were surveyed, and not the youth themselves.

Morehouse & Tobler (2000) examined the frequency of substance use among 132 adolescents currently living in residential facilities; foster homes, facilities for juvenile offenders, treatment centers for adolescents with psychiatric problems, and correctional facilities. The participants in the program were high risk, multi-problem, and inner-city youth, primarily of African-American and Latino decent (Morehouse et al., 2000). Of those surveyed, 45% reported using alcohol, 45% using marijuana, and 3% using cocaine in the prior 30 days.

Lenz-Rashid's (2005) study of 104 former foster youth ages 18 to 23 found that 46%, reported some alcohol or illicit substance use in the 30 days prior to the intake being conducted.

Incarceration

Courtney et al. (2005) found that of the 321 youth who had aged out of care and now had a median age of 19, 34% had been arrested, 17% had been convicted of a crime, and 24% had spent at least one night in jail, prison, juvenile hall, or other correctional facility since the last interview for the study (when the participants had a median age of 17).

Spatz-Widom (1991) explored the role of placement experiences, in relation to adult criminal, delinquent, and violent criminal outcomes, of a sample of 772 juvenile court cases of child abuse and neglect from the late 1960s. The mean current age of the subjects was 25.69 years (SD = 3.53) and the majority of them (85%) were between the ages of 20 and 30 at the time of the study. It was found that children with no history of care or a history of only foster care had lower rates of any type of arrest than youth placed in group home care or in probationary placements. Therefore, "what have often been viewed as negative (criminal) outcomes of foster care may be due to the confounding influences of a small fraction of children in foster care who have early involvement in criminal activity" (p. 204). This study illustrates that it is not accurate to assume all foster youth are at higher risk of future incarceration; it is important to distinguish between youth who are in care due to abuse or neglect and those youth who are in care because of abuse and neglect and as a result of

their delinquent behavior (Spatz-Widom, 1991).

While the national and state research have been the focus of this study up until this point (see Table 1 for summary of outcomes), it is also important to examine the specific current services available in the San Francisco Bay Area. This is the focus of the next section.

Table 1
Recent Studies on Youth Aging Out of Foster Care

| Outcome Area | Study | Findings |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Homelessness | California Department of Social Services (2002) | 65% of California youth needed affordable housing at the time of emancipation |
| | Courtney et al. (2004) | 25% of foster youth experienced homeless for at least one night (n=732) |
| | Courtney et al. (2005) | 14% reported being homeless for at least one night since leaving care (n=321) |
| | Pecora et al. (2003) | 22% were homeless for at least one night after leaving care (n=659, average age at interview was 24.2 years) |
| Employment | Courtney et al. (2005) | 47% reported being unemployed at the time of the interview and 84% reported making less than \$9.00 hour when they did have work (n=321) |
| | Barth (1990) | 53% of foster youth reported having serious money troubles (n=55) |
| | Goerge, Bilaver, Lee, Needell, Brookhart & Jackman (2002) | 23% did not find employment 13 months after leaving care in California (n=2824) |
| | Pecora et al. (2003) | 84% reported being employed full or part-time after leaving care (n=659) |
| Education | Courtney et al. (2005) | 36% did not have a high school diploma or GED achieved, 7.9% were enrolled in 2- year college, and 3.8% were enrolled in 4- year college 2 years after leaving care (n=321) |
| | Pecora et al. (2003) | 85% had achieved a high school diploma or GED, 21% had achieved a 2-year degree or certificate and 1.8% had achieved a bachelor's degree after leaving care (n=659) |
| Financial Self-Sufficiency | Courtney et al. (2005) | 36% of former foster youth had received food stamps at some point since emancipating, 22% were currently receiving food stamps and 15% reported being hungry. 17% of the parenting former foster youth were currently receiving TANF (n=321) |
| | Pecora et al. (2003) | 33% had household incomes at or below poverty level. Also, 17% were currently receiving cash assistance and 33% had no health insurance |

| Outcome Area | Study | Findings |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mental Health | AFCARS (2003) | 80% of youth in foster care have received services for mental health issues during placement |
| | Pecora et al. (2003) | 54% have a mental health diagnosis after leaving care (n=659) |
| | Courtney et al. (2005) | 12% and 10% had a lifetime diagnosis of PTSD and Major Depressive Disorder respectively (n=321) |
| | Needell et al. (2002) | 62% had received mental health service prior to emancipation (n=10,228) |
| Substance Use | Courtney et al. (2005) | 15% had a lifetime diagnosis of Substance Abuse and 5% had a diagnosis of Substance Dependence (based on the CIDI). Additionally, 14% have a lifetime diagnosis of Alcohol Abuse (n=321) |
| | Courtney et al. (2004) | 732 youth leaving foster care with a median age of 17: 11% reported alcohol abuse symptoms, 3% reported alcohol dependence symptoms, 5% reported substance abuse symptoms, and 2.3% reported substance dependence symptoms |
| | Morehouse and Tobler (2000) | 45% reported using alcohol, 45% using marijuana, and 3% using cocaine in the prior 30 days (n=132, youth were in care) |
| | Kohlenberg et al (2002) | Foster youth more likely than adolescents living with their parents to have "lifetime use" and "use within 6 months that constitutes a DSM III substance abuse diagnosis or a current need for treatment," BUT have less "past year" and "last 30 day" use than adolescents housed with parents. (n=231) |
| Incarceration | Courtney et al. (2005) | 34% had been arrested, 17% had been convicted of a crime, and 24% had spent at least one night in jail, prison, juvenile hall, or other correctional facility since leaving care for 2 years (n=321) |
| LGBTQ Youth | Courtney et al. (2005) | 15% of the former foster youth reported being LBGTQ (20% female and 10% males) (n=321) |
| | Lenz-Rashid (2005) | 34% of the homeless former foster youth reported being LBGTQ (n=104) |

Description of Bay Area Interventions

The previous sections have examined what is currently known about the various outcomes for youth aging out of the foster care system at both the national and State of California levels. It provides an important foundation for examining the current services available for this population. This section describes the independent living, housing, employment, mental health, and educational services available in twelve Bay Area and surrounding counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, Sonoma and Stanislaus. The data were gathered through interviews with program administrators of Independent Living Skills Programs, community-based organizations, and private foundations and endowments, along with a review of program materials from community-based organizations.

This section is divided into an overview of program components and a description of selected innovative services and cross-agency collaborations. The next main section contains a summary of current gaps in service and recommendations for Social Service and Child Welfare Directors to address these gaps.

It is important to note that there are limitations to this study. For example, one large area missing from this analysis is the families' perspective of services.

Independent Living Skills Programs

A monograph was completed in 2001 by the Bay Area Social Services Consortium (BASSC) that examined the

needs of youth aging out of the foster care system and the Independent Living Skills Programs (ILSP) that assist youth with their transitions to independent living (see Rashid et al., 2001). The policy monograph was based upon a review of the national research and policy literature to identify what is known about this population of young people, and what county social service agencies were doing to address their needs. Specifically, qualitative interviews were conducted with nine county ILSP Coordinators to explore what services were available to youth between the ages of 16 and 21. The counties included in the study were: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and Sonoma.

The main outcomes of this study illustrated seven specific challenges: 1) Strengthening ILSP recruitment and retention, 2) Increasing support for ILSP from foster care providers, 3) Addressing the need for housing, 4) Serving the special needs of youth, 5) Clarifying the role of counties in serving out-of-county youth, 6) Enhancing database systems, and 7) Pursuing further research. BASSC workgroups were convened in February, 2003 to more thoroughly examine these challenges.

Since the 2001 monograph there have been few significant changes to county ILSP services in the Bay Area. For example, Santa Clara County now more fully contracts out its ILSP services with other community-based organizations. Other counties have developed Youth Speaker's Bureaus to educate those involved in child welfare and the general population, about their unique needs

(e.g. Contra Costa). A few other counties have created ILSP Advisory Boards to oversee services and program models (e.g. Alameda).

However, one significant change in Bay Area ILSP services has been an addition of a youth health clinic within the Alameda County ILSP services. The ILSP Teen Health Center is located in the same building as the regular ILSP services and serves foster youth ages 15 ½ to 21. Lastly, Contra Costa has recently developed an Emancipation Resource Binder to assist youth as they leave the foster care system (to be discussed on page 38).

Housing

There are a variety of housing models available for youth who have aged out, or are about to age out, of the foster care system in the San Francisco Bay Area. Some are for underage youth, ages 16 to 19, and others for young adults ages 18 to 21 or 18 to 24. However, it is important to note that most counties do not have every housing model to serve youth aging out and some programs do not serve out-of-county youth. The following sections describe these various housing service models and funding sources.

Transitional Housing Placement Program (THPP)

The Transitional Housing Placement Program (THPP) is a California state-funded program that enables youth ages 16 to 18 years old to live in a Community Care Licensed placement while still in foster care. The goal of THPP is to help participants emancipate successfully by providing a safe

environment for youth to practice the skills they have learned in their county Independent Living Program (childsworld, 2005).

THPP participants may live alone, with departmental approval, or with roommates in apartments and single-family dwellings with regular support and supervision provided by THPP agency staff, county social workers, and ILP coordinators (childsworld, 2005). Support services may include regular visits to participants' residences, educational guidance, employment counseling, and assistance with reaching emancipation goals outlines for participants' transitional independent living plans (if used), the emancipation portion of the youth's case plans.

While each county has its own policies, at a minimum, applicants must be at least 16 years old, and not more than 18, unless they are in all probability going to finish high school before their 19th birthday. They must be in out-of-home placement under the supervision of the county department of social services or the county probation department, and actively participating in ILSP. The Bay Area, and surrounding, counties that have approved THPPs at the time this report was published are: Alameda, Contra Costa, Monterey, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Sonoma, and Stanislaus.

Some THPPs are structured as group home, or "communal living" situations where the youth live together in a large house or building. The participants typically share a kitchen, bathrooms, and communal living rooms. Often these programs have paid social work, or counseling, staff that supervise the

facility 24 hours per day. Other THPPs in the Bay Area may have a "host" adult supervising the program site in the evening and weekend hours. These adults reside in the home with the youth and may have other jobs during the regular work week. The host adults may or may not pay rent to the THPP. Case management is a requirement in both of these types of THPP housing models.

Other THPPs are modeled after a "scattered site" setting where youth, ages 16 to 19, live in studio or shared apartment situations. These scattered site models, like the communal living models, also have to adhere to Community Care Licensing regulations in order to remain licensed with the State of California. However, the licensing regulations are not as strict as the traditional group home housing model. For instance, 24 hour staff supervision is not required. See Table 2 on the next page which illustrates all of the THPP programs offered in each county.

Transitional Housing Program-Plus (THP-Plus)

THP-Plus was established with the passage of California Assembly Bill 427 (in 2001) to provide funding for safe, affordable housing and supportive services to emancipated foster youth, at least 18 years old, through their 24th birthday. In October, 2005 California Assembly Bill 824 was signed into law by the Governor which allows former foster youth up to age 24 to be served; previously youth were only eligible up until their 21st birthday. The maximum time for THP-Plus participation is 24 months.

The THP-Plus funds are State of California dollars and the current funding has been appropriated at \$1.368 million in the fiscal year 2004. However, counties can only access the state funds by providing a 60% non-federal match. In addition, counties must submit a plan detailing how local, community-based providers will be certified, as well as establish what the monthly payment rate to providers will be. Nine counties have submitted THP-Plus plans to the state and have received approval for implementation. It is important to note that if all nine counties with approved plans were to implement THP-Plus in fiscal year 2005, the projected cost to the state would exceed \$2.4 million (well above the budget for FY 2004). There are currently only three Bay Area counties, Alameda, San Francisco and Santa Cruz, that have accessed state THP-Plus funding for four programs; First Place Fund for Youth, Tri-City Homeless Coalitions' Project Independence, Larkin Street Youth Services' LEASE Program, and Santa Cruz County's ILSP Housing Program.

It is important to note the cumulative cutbacks in state/local funding in recent years and how this change has resulted in very limited opportunities for counties to invest in non-mandated programs/services.

Participation in THP-Plus is subject to the availability of safe and affordable housing, the availability of community-based program providers, and the 60% county funding match. Programs certified under THP-Plus regulations are designed to provide safe residence and allow participants a maximum amount of independence and self-sufficiency. Acceptable residential units include

apartments, single family dwellings, condominiums, college dormitories, and host family models. See Table 3 on page 23 which illustrates all of the THP-Plus programs in the Bay Area.

Table 2. Transitional Housing Placement Programs (ages 16 to 19)

| <u>County*</u> | <u>Name of Program</u> | <u>Program Model</u> | <u>Youth served</u> |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Alameda (450) | Bay Area Youth Centers | Apartment | 12 |
| | Youth for Change in our Midst | Apartment | unknown |
| | Youth Project | Home | 7 (females) |
| Contra Costa (250) | Families First FFA | Home | unknown |
| Monterey (unk) | Central Coast Youth Foundation | Home | unknown |
| | Peacock Acres | Home/Apt | 12 |
| Napa (115) | Home Base | Apartment | unknown |
| | Rainbow House (pregnant teens) | Home | 6 |
| San Francisco (150) | MAC Children and Family Services | Home | unknown |
| San Mateo (70) | YFES THPP | Home | 6 |
| | Transitional Housing Project (East Palo Alto) | Home | 12 |
| | Your House South | Home | 6 |
| | MHC Homes | Home | 12 |
| Santa Clara (450) | Bill Wilson Center | Home/Apt | 11 |
| | Star Transitional Housing | Home | unknown |
| Sonoma (50) | True to Life Children's Services (Sebastapol) | Host homes | 15 |

* No programs in Marin, Solano, or Stanislaus counties

Table 3. Transitional Housing Program-Plus (ages 18 to 24)*

| County** | (estimated # of youth aging out each year) | Name of Program | Slots |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Alameda (450) | 35 | First Place Fund for Youth | 32 |
| Alameda (450) | 35 | Project Independence | 32 |
| Contra Costa (250) | 15 | First Place Fund for Youth (in Alameda, but serves CC youth) | 15 |
| San Francisco (150) | 21 (plus 10 with First Place Fund for Youth) | Larkin Street Youth Services' LEASE Program | 21 (plus 10 with First Place Fund for Youth) |
| Santa Cruz (25-50) | 5 | Transitional Living Program | 5 |
| San Mateo | 2 | Jeremiah's Promise | 2 |

*All are current scattered site apartment models
 **No services in Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Mateo, Solano, or Sonoma

Below is a description of the variety of models that THP-Plus program can have:

- Apartment – studios
 - Youth lives in studios by themselves
- Apartment – shared 2 bedrooms
 - Youth share apartment units with other youth in the THP-Plus program

Some studios and 2-bedroom apartments are located in the same apartment complexes, while others are scattered throughout a city or in various cities. Larkin Street Youth Services' LEASE THP-Plus program hold the master lease on each studio apartment, but First Place Fund for Youth (FPPFY) does not. When the master lease is not held, the youth are able to reside in the same unit after the 24 months of the program if they can pay the rent on their own. Therefore, depending on the host agency, youth can sometimes choose to stay or not stay after their program obligation has been fulfilled. Both FPPFY and LEASE have current waitlists.

Federal HOME Funds

One community-based organization serving former foster youth has accessed partial funding through the Federal HOME Funds Program. HOME is authorized under Title II of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act and provides formula grants to States and localities that communities use—often in partnership with local nonprofit groups—to fund a wide range of activities that build, buy, and/or rehabilitate affordable housing for

rent or homeownership, or provide direct rental assistance to low-income people.

HOME is the largest Federal block grant to state and local governments designed exclusively to create affordable housing for low-income households. Each year it allocates approximately \$2 billion among the States and hundreds of localities nationwide. The program was designed to reinforce several important values and principles of community development:

HOME funds are awarded annually as formula grants to participating jurisdictions. HUD establishes HOME Investment Trust Funds for each grantee, providing a line of credit that the jurisdiction may draw upon as needed. The program's flexibility allows States and local governments to use HOME funds for grants, direct loans, loan guarantees or other forms of credit enhancement, or rental assistance or security deposits. Specifically, the City of Fremont accessed federal HOME Funds for three years to support the Tri-City Homeless Coalitions' Project Independence housing program for youth ages 18 to 23 (see page 46).

Table 4. Federal HOME Funds

| <u>County</u> | <u>Name of Program</u> | <u># Youth served</u> |
|---------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Alameda | Project Independence* | 32 |

*Also uses THP-Plus monies

Housing Authority Funding

There is one county in the Bay Area, Alameda, currently using Housing Choice Voucher Program, or "Section 8"

housing vouchers to provide housing for former foster youth. These vouchers are funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and offer a rental subsidy for low income individuals.

The Alameda County Housing Authority sets aside Section 8 housing vouchers for 20 former foster youth ages 18 to 21 (up to their 22nd birthday). All rules and regulations of the Section 8 program apply. This Alameda County program is named the "Youth Self-Sufficiency Program" and is designed to assist former foster youth with education, employment training, financial literacy training, and employment. Case management services are also a part of the Youth Self-Sufficiency program, but those services are funded from an external grant. The case manager makes periodic home visits to ensure youth are following their lease agreements, understand their responsibilities, and are maintaining their units appropriately. Youth participants are also required to work with Alameda County ILSP's Housing Specialist for move in assistance. The Youth Self-Sufficiency program is a unique choice for youth with mental health issues or other disabilities and who qualify for SSI. Thirty percent of their SSI check would go to rent, and they are able to keep the rest for living expenses.

Once youth are stabilized in the housing voucher program they are automatically enrolled in the county's "Family Self-Sufficiency" program, which is a five year program. After youth join in the Family Self-Sufficiency program, they are eligible for the escrow component of the program, where money is set aside, from the county, for participants who

increase their income from employment during the program. This escrow component can become substantial over time; youth can save anywhere from \$6,000 to \$20,000 to put towards home ownership or higher education. This program may offer a long-term permanent housing option for former foster youth.

The Kern County Housing Authority, located in central California, has worked with the Kern County Human Services Department to develop a transitional housing project for 14 youth ages 18 to 22 who have aged out of the foster care system. The funds to purchase the \$266,000 apartment complex came from the Community Development Department and the Human Services Department has committed \$10,000 annually for three years for operating costs. The apartment has eight 2-bedroom apartments; seven will be used for the youth and one for the building manager. The complex offers basic appliance, air conditioning, cable access and a small backyard for each apartment.

Youth can stay for up to two years and to qualify youth need to be employed or attending school and have a part-time job to pay rent (30% of their income).

Transitional Living Programs (TLP)

Transitional living programs are yet another community-based intervention utilized to assist the population of former foster youth as they age out of the child welfare system. These programs can offer employment, educational, and independent living skill support in addition to housing.

Funding for TLP can be varied; it is important to note that these programs do not receive THP-Plus or THPP funding from the State of California. In 1988 Congress recognized that the general population of homeless youth and young adults (some with a history of foster care) needed longer-term supportive housing and created the Transitional Living Program (TLP) for Older Homeless Youth. The program was developed under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB), and was a part of the amendments to the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA), Title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974. The first Transitional Living Program was funded by FYSB in 1990 (ACF, 2001).

Through FYSB's Transitional Living Program, programs that are funded provide longer term residential services to homeless youth ages 16 to 21 for up to eighteen months. The goal is to assist homeless youth and young adults with housing so they are more equipped to make a successful transition to independent living. TLP grantees are required to provide safe and stable living accommodations, basic life-skill training, interpersonal skill building, educational opportunities, substance use prevention and treatment interventions, mental health support, and medical care, as well as assistance with employment preparation and vocational training.

Applicants typically receive five-year grants and can apply for up to \$200,000 per year (for a total of \$1 million for the entire grant period). All applications are reviewed by peer panels. TLP also offers funding for 'new start grants'; in

2003 there is \$7.9 million available for up to 42 new start grants (ACF, 2003). However, there is a 10% matching requirement with TLP funding. This matching requirement may make it difficult for new and perhaps smaller non-profit agencies to develop transitional living programs, especially with the difficult state of the economy and the threat of a decrease in available private and public funds (i.e. from cuts to state and local budgets and the freezing of endowment and foundation funds).

Additionally, some Transitional Living Programs are funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Supportive Housing Program. The Supportive Housing Program is authorized by Title IV, Subtitle C, of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987, as amended. It is designed to promote, as part of a local Continuum of Care strategy, the development of supportive housing and supportive services to assist homeless persons in the transition from homelessness and to enable them to live as independently as possible. Funding from HUD can cover program costs, as well as rental subsidies for when participants leave the program for permanent housing options.

For example, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors authorized, in July 2005, \$180,000 to subsidize rent for foster youth who are working and/or going to school for 30 hours per week. As of January 2006, 20 youth are in apartments of their own. The program initially provides 100% of rent for six months, then decreases the amount by 25% for each of the following six-month periods.

In addition to funding transitional housing for former foster youth, it is imperative that transitional living programs be directly linked to employment services such as job-readiness classes, career mentoring, and employment development. Homeless transitional youth, and former foster youth, often need assistance with preparing for employment, and by offering them housing with a comprehensive employment program they may be able to learn the variety of skills necessary for a successful transition into adulthood.

The structure of TLPs for former foster youth in the Bay Area is varied. Some programs are staffed 24 hour per day, and others are not. Each community-based agency takes on a different level of liability with its staffing model. Additionally, the supportive services are also diverse for Transitional Living Programs. Some programs may focus on other specific needs such as mental health and services for individuals with a history of incarceration. These programs may serve former foster youth, but do not primarily or specifically serve these young people. Additionally, some programs serve pregnant or parenting transitional youth.

Lastly, there are other transitional housing programs for adults over the age of 18 that former foster youth can may be eligible for. In fact, there are many programs like this in San Francisco County (e.g. La Amistad, Clara House, Richmond Hills, Ashbury House, Cameo House). However, these program may serve individuals who are 20, 30, or 40 years old. As such, these programs will not be discussed specifically for this

report. See Table 6 on the next page for an illustration of available transitional living programs for transitional youth who are in need of housing.

Permanent Housing

There are a few permanent housing options for youth who have aged out of the foster care system. Coolidge Court is a permanent housing project for 18 transitional youth with mental health issues, located in Oakland (Alameda County). Approximately 80% of the residents have a history of foster care. The program is co-ed and residents have 340 sq. foot studio apartments. The program offers mental health support, groups, and independent living skills training. The agency is funded by HUD.

Ellis Street Apartments is a program of Larkin Street Youth Services in San Francisco County and was developed in collaboration with the Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation (TNDC). Ellis Street houses 24 homeless young adults (some with a history of foster care) in studio apartments and offers supportive services such as case management, employment services and residential guidance. Referrals typically come though Larkin Street Youth Services' case management programs.

Table 5. Permanent Housing Options

| <u>County</u> | <u>Name of Program</u> | <u>Youth served</u> |
|---------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Alameda | Coolidge Court | 18 |
| San Francisco | Ellis Street Apartments | 24 |

Table 6. Transitional Living Programs (ages 18-21 or 18-24)

| <u>County</u> (est # of youth emanc per yr) | <u>Name of Program</u> | <u>Type of youth</u> | <u># Youth served</u> |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Contra Costa (250) | Care Program | DP | 5 |
| | Pride and Purpose (2 sites) | HL | 12 |
| | Public Health Services Homeless Program | HL | 6 |
| Marin (7) | Hamilton Housing Program | HL | 4 |
| Monterey (unknown) | Unity Care | DP | 6 |
| Napa (115) | Home Base (apartments) | HL | unknown |
| | Rainbow House (preg/parenting) | HL | 6 |
| San Francisco (150) | Ark House* | HL | 15 |
| | Avenues to Independence* | HL | 15 |
| | Crossroads* | MH | 10 |
| | Gastinell's Supportive Housing | MH/HL | 8 |
| | Guerrero House* | HL | 20 |
| San Mateo (70) | Daybreak (ages 16 to 21) | HL | 10 |
| Santa Clara (450) | Bill Wilson Center (includes preg/parenting clients, programs are both home/apt models)* | HL | 40 |
| | Unity Care | DP | 12 |
| Solano (80) | House of Joy* | DP | 12 |
| Sonoma (35) | Tamayo House | HL | 24 |

* Mental health placement

HL: All homeless transitional clients (includes DP)
 DP: Past juvenile justice/child welfare dependent clients only
 MH: Mental health placement clients
 * Supervised 24 hours

Education

Chafee Grant for Higher Education

In 1999 the Foster Care Independence Act was signed into law (P.L. 106-169), replacing the former Independent Living Initiative established in 1986. It was called the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (Chafee Act), named after Senator Chafee of Rhode Island, a long-time advocate for children who are victims of abuse and neglect. The Chafee Act allots \$140 million to ILP services and requires that former foster care youth likely to remain in care until their 18th birthday be served until 21 years of age. The law was later amended to authorize Congress to appropriate up to \$60 million for payments to states for post-secondary educational and training vouchers of up to \$5000 for youth likely to experience difficulty during the transition to adulthood after the age of 18 (Courtney et al., 2005, p. 4).

The California Student Aid Commission oversees the California Chafee Grant Program (also known as the Educational Training Voucher Program), which is subject to the availability of federal funds each year. The current academic year 2005-2006 has been fully funded. However, this year the grant will not be given out to students until late December-early January. Consequently, this Fall many students are just surviving financially and are patiently waiting their award.

In order to receive the \$5,000 per academic year award youth have to be enrolled half-time and must maintain satisfactory progress in their program of choice. The grant does not need to be paid back and can be used for rent, transportation or child care costs. To be eligible, youth have to have qualified for foster care between the ages of 16 and 18 and can not be over the age of 21. Also, youth do not qualify if they were placed with kin.

Students can apply on-line at the www.chafee.csac.ca.gov website, but they must be enrolled in an accredited college. There is also an opportunity for foster youth and providers to offer feedback to the Chafee Grant for Higher Education program on-line.

Guardian Scholars Programs

Started in 1997 at California State University at Fullerton, Guardian Scholars Programs were developed to assist former foster youth who are attending post-secondary education. The programs have been specifically developed to fit the needs of undergraduate students who were formerly in foster care to ensure they have high retention and graduation rates, as well as positive experiences while in college.

As of November 2005 six Bay Area colleges and universities have begun Guardian Scholars Programs: San Francisco State University, San Jose State University, UC Santa Cruz, Stanford University, Cal State East Bay, and Heald College in San Francisco. The programs are funded internally or through private foundation and endowment grants and offer a variety of on-campus supportive services, as well as scholarships.

School District Foster Youth Programs

The California Department of Education's Foster Youth Services (FYS) programs provide support services for foster youth who suffer the effects of displacement from family and schools, and multiple placements in foster care. All counties in this study currently have at least one FYS program (i.e. East Contra Costa, Oakland, and San Francisco Unified School Districts).

The FYS program services are to assist these youth with mental health, placement, and other types of advocacy. Social workers are to coordinate counseling, tutoring, instruction, mentoring, vocational training, and emancipation services. Some also run support groups for students in foster care.

It is not known how many youth are served in school district FYS, nor is it known how many schools districts in each county have comprehensive programs. Lastly, it is unknown how well FYS services are working for foster youth, especially older youth in care, as no outcome studies have been conducted. Clearly, more empirical research on this intervention is needed.

Employment

Employment training models for former foster youth are varied throughout the Bay Area. Most ILSP programs offer employment training either in-house (i.e. San Francisco or Alameda County ILSP) or contracted out (i.e. Community Solutions in Santa Clara County or Community Counseling in Santa Cruz).

There are some community-based organizations such as Richmond Youth Works, and the Youth Employment Partnership and Pivotal Point in Oakland that offer employment training services to the general population of at-risk transitional youth, of which former foster youth can participate.

Additionally, there are other community-based providers, such as Larkin Street Youth Services, Bill Wilson Center and Covenant House Oakland that provide employment training for homeless transitional youth. Youth with a history of foster care and are homeless are eligible for these services.

Mental Health

EPSDT

Federal Medicaid law establishes a list of health care benefits and services that state Medicaid programs must furnish. Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) program services are federally mandated for beneficiaries who are under the age of 21. The EPSDT program is a part of the Child Health and Disability Prevention Program. In the State of California, current and former foster youth are eligible for EPSDT services until age 21, which include health screening, vision, dental, and hearing services as well as treatment that is necessary to "correct or ameliorate defects and physical and mental illnesses and conditions discovered by the screening services, whether or not such services are covered under the State plan." (Siegel, 2004, p. 1).

Counties may use EPSDT funding for a variety of services for current and former

foster youth. Some counties utilize EPSDT monies by offering mental health services on-site. For example, Solano County has an on-site mental health clinic that serves foster youth under the age of 21, as well as a youth drug treatment clinic. San Francisco County's Community Behavioral Health Services also offers mental health services and support through its 'Transitional Youth Services Team' for youth ages 16 to 24.

Other counties utilize EPSDT services for youth by referring them to community-based organizations that can offer therapeutic out-patient services *specifically* tailored for former foster youth such as Westcoast Children's Clinic and Fred Finch's Transitions Program.

Westcoast Children's Clinic in Alameda County has a Foster Youth Development Program which specifically serves youth who are preparing for emancipation. Youth enter the program between ages 15 and 16 ½ and are eligible to receive services until age 21. There are four components to this program: 1) A unique psychological assessment which is driven by the youth's own curiosity about their mental health issues, 2) Intensive case management/therapeutic contact, 3) Weekly social groups, 4) and Mentoring with mentors from Holy Names College. The program is currently EPSDT-funded.

Fred Finch's Transitions Program is for at-risk transitional youth from Alameda County who often have had a history of foster care. It is a clinical case management program that also includes therapy. Independent living and self-advocacy skills are also taught in the

program. Not all participants have been in residential programs at Fred Finch. The program is EPSDT-funded and there is a wait-list for this program.

A Home Within, located in San Francisco County, is dedicated to providing long lasting emotional and mental health supportive networks for young people in foster care. Therapists offer their services free of charge and are committed to working with the young people long-term.

In Santa Cruz County EPSDT monies are utilized to offer supportive services, in addition to housing, for former foster youth until their 21st birthday. This county stated it is perhaps too dependent on EPSDT monies, but needs them to be able to buy things for the housing program. Another concern was that youth have to have a mental health diagnosis that is documented by a licensed clinician, and a 10% match is required by the county to receive funding.

Other Mental Health Services

San Francisco and Stanislaus counties are the only two counties in the Bay Area that have transitional housing programs for young adults suffering from mental health issues. The San Francisco programs, Crossroads and Gastinell's, both offer supportive housing for 18 months. Residents of Crossroads have to have a mental health diagnosis and must be receiving or eligible to receive Supplement Security Income. The program has a contract with San Francisco County's Behavioral Health Services. Gastinell's program was supported by a grant from the San

Francisco Department of Human Services.

In Stanislaus County, the Visions Program of Families First offers transitional housing for approximately 20 young people ages 18 to 21. The program is funded by county mental health monies.

Other Major Bay Area Initiatives

This section describes how counties, foundations, and other non-profit agencies are working collaboratively to create systemic-level changes for youth aging out of care. Each of the various major Bay Area initiatives is described; a more detailed description of some of the initiatives is available in the Appendices.

Family to Family

This program was developed by Annie E. Casey in 1992 to address the growing challenges in the nation's child welfare system. It is a nationwide child welfare and foster care reform initiative which provides principles, strategies and tools designed to help states and local child welfare agencies achieve better outcomes for children and families. The program is a public-private partnership between Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Stuart Foundation, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, and the California Department of Social Services. Currently 24 of 58 counties participate in Family to Family. Four core strategies of the program are:

1. Recruitment, development and support of resource families for foster care

- a. Finding and maintaining foster, adoptive and kinship families who can support children and families in their own neighborhoods
2. Building community partnerships
 - a. Establishing a range of relationships and collaborative models with community based organizations in neighborhoods where referral rates to the child welfare system are high
3. Team decision-making
 - a. Fostering placement decisions made by a team of individuals: foster parents, child welfare workers, birth parents and community based service providers
4. Self-evaluation
 - a. Collect, analyze and interpret data about child and family outcomes to explore where progress has been made and where challenges still exist

California Connected by 25 Initiative (formerly called "Foster Youth Transition Initiative")

This initiative supports a small cohort of California Family to Family counties in building a comprehensive continuum of services that support foster youth who are aging out of care and transitioning to adulthood (ages 14 to 24 years). It was commissioned by the Youth Transitions Funders Group and is an initiative that is

broader than just child welfare. The foundations involved in California Connected by 25 are: the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, the Stuart Foundation, and the Charles M. Schwab Foundation.

The initiative funds five California counties: Alameda, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Stanislaus and Fresno and each county received \$300,000 as a base grant to develop self-assessments. In addition counties can receive \$10,000 per year to create youth savings accounts.

California Connected by 25 emphasizes the main areas to be addressed to help youth with the transition to adulthood. These areas are:

- Employment/ Training/ Post-secondary education
- Financial competency/security
- Housing
- K-12 Education
- Lifelong connections/ Personal and social asset development
 - Permanent connections
 - Mental health support

Additionally, the infrastructure of each county's child welfare agency is also to be evaluated with this initiative. See Appendix for a more full description of the program.

California Permanency for Youth Project (CPYP)

Started in January 2003, this project operates under the Public Health Institute. The project's goal is to achieve life-long permanent adult connections for youth in foster care. The objective is to build an awareness among child welfare workers and

administrators, legislators, and judicial representatives about the strong need children and older youth in foster care have for permanent connections. Additionally, the project is working towards improvements in policy and administrative practices regarding permanency.

The tasks of the project are to: 1) Develop a Permanency for Youth Task Force, 2) Provide technical assistance to county child welfare agencies (Bay Area counties are Alameda, Contra Costa, and Monterey, San Francisco, San Mateo, Sonoma, and Stanislaus) 3) Provide a training curriculum on permanency to all county child welfare agencies, 4) Hold a national convening on permanency, 5) Develop documents to increase awareness around the issue of permanency, and 6) Conduct a formative evaluation of each county's implementation process. This project has been funded by the Stuart Foundation, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation and the Zellerbach Family Foundation. See Appendix for a more full description of the program.

Family Finding

Family Finding was created by Kevin Campbell, a Vice-President at EMQ, a community-based organization in Santa Clara County, which is an intensive relative search program used to enhance permanent connections for foster youth. It begins with an investigation for names in child welfare case files and then leads to comprehensive internet searches to find family members who may be willing to house, or become social support for foster youth. Santa Clara County is developing its own Family Finding Unit in the Department of

Children and Families. EMQ has its own Family Finding unit and is developing protocol to work with Santa Clara County child welfare workers.

Gateway for Disadvantaged Youth Project

This project involves the Bay Area counties of San Mateo, Alameda, and Contra Costa. It is focused in the area of workforce development and involves local community colleges, local Workforce Investment Boards, and other public funders.

The project works with 80 at-risk youth per county over two years (40 per year), but some youth do not have a history of foster care. Youth participate in 14 weeks of intensive learning on a community college campus. They learn communication skills, remediation study skills, career exploration skills, and a full orientation to college. After participating in the project they will have received 12-14 college credits and will already be enrolled. They will also be eligible for a full financial aid package and, if they are former foster youth, will be eligible for the California Chafee grant. See Appendix for a more full description of the program.

Fostering the Future Fund

This is the latest initiative by the Center for Venture Philanthropy, located in San Mateo County. The goal of this project is to improve outcomes for youth aging out of foster care (including kin care) in East Palo and Redwood City. Community-based organizations that will pilot the project will use 'Asset-Based Coaches' to work with the adolescent foster youth individually (it

will be piloted in East Palo Alto and Redwood City). These coaches will act as advocates, mentors and case managers with the youth.

The community-based organizations funded for this project will focus on outcomes related to academic performance, parenting skills for caregivers, self-advocacy skills for youth and their caregivers, and the development of permanent relationships for youth, and the improvement of independent living skills as youth transition to adulthood. This is a six-year, \$2 million fund. A number of non-profit and public organizations in San Mateo County are collaborators on this initiative.

Foster Youth Housing Initiative (FYHI)

Supported by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the James Irvine Foundation, the Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation, and the Sobrato Family Foundation, this new initiative promotes housing opportunities for former foster youth in all Bay Area counties. Assistance with housing advocacy is provided (with building owner and real estate associations), as well as information for youth about the housing rental process.

In 2006 the FYHI will fund programs at a total of \$1.425 million. Funding has been recommended for the Bill Wilson Center (Santa Clara County), Center for Venture Philanthropy (for Edgewood and Youth and Family Enrichment Services in San Mateo County), Fred Finch Youth Center, First Place Fund for Youth, and Tri-City Homeless Coalition (Alameda and Contra Costa counties), and Larkin Street Youth Center (San

Francisco County). A total of 385 emancipating foster youth will be served, along with 50 children of foster youth. Funding will also be used a leverage to access other funding streams such as THP-Plus dollars, HOME Funds, and other community foundation monies. See Appendix for a more full description of the initiative.

California Youth Connection (CYC)

The California Youth Connection is made up of current and former foster youth who use their experiences in the child welfare system to improve foster care, educate the public and policy makers about their unique needs, and change the negative stereotypes many people have about foster youth (CYC, 2005). The first five chapters of CYC were founded in 1989 on the concept of youth empowerment. Members identify local issues, learn about the legislative process, and use community organizing techniques to create real and lasting change in the child welfare system that directly impacts current and former foster youth.

CYC's philosophy is that foster youth, as recipients of child welfare services, are the leading experts in the child welfare field and need to have input in the decisions made about the foster care system (CYC, 2004, p. 1). There are CYC chapters throughout the state including: Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara and Stanislaus counties in the Bay Area and surrounding counties.

Honoring Emancipated Youth (HEY)

Honoring Emancipated Youth (HEY) is a coalition of current and former foster

youth, public and nonprofit agencies in the Bay Area dedicated to improving opportunities for youth leaving the foster care system. HEY members envision that all San Francisco youth exiting the foster care system will have access to a regional continuum of housing and support services that enable them to become successful, self-sufficient adults.

HEY was started by United Way of the Bay Area as a community-based, collaborative response to the challenges facing foster youth leaving the system. Our mission is to engage current and former foster youth and the public, private, and nonprofit sectors in: strengthening the capacity of San Francisco's foster care system to successfully transition youth to adult independence; increasing housing options and services; and developing mechanisms for integrating services through advocacy, organizing, education, and youth empowerment strategies. To accomplish this mission, our approach is one of partnership and collaboration. HEY is comprised of more than thirty partner agencies and supported by two full-time staff members. Through small committees comprised of youth and adults, we work to raise public awareness, increase service coordination, and promote effective public policies that support youth and young adults as they exit the foster care system. By harnessing our collective strengths, HEY has the unique capacity within the San Francisco community to increase awareness of the ongoing needs of foster youth and to advocate on their behalf, ultimately making a greater policy impact than any single agency could achieve on its own.

HEY plays an important role in the overall system of services for

emancipated foster youth in the San Francisco Bay Area. We are grounded in the principle of youth engagement and empowerment. HEY believes that true collaboration requires more than contractual agreements; it requires an authentic commitment to creating a network of supports to create better outcomes for youth. With that in mind, HEY partners with both public and private agencies to develop effective, concrete strategies to support youth after they leave foster care.

Alameda County Foster Youth Alliance (FYA)

The Alameda County Foster Youth Alliance (FYA) is a coalition of service providers and community organizations committed to ensuring that Alameda County youth “aging out” of the foster care system have access to a regional continuum of housing, employment, education, health care and support services that enable them to thrive as self-sufficient adults. FYA promotes a seamless system of services in Alameda County and the Bay Area through maximum coordination, strong advocacy and strategic resource development. FYA promotes programs and legislation for transitioning foster youth and for increased resources at the county and state level. It facilitates inter-agency communication, locally, regionally and beyond, as well as provides professional development trainings and networking opportunities for direct service providers. Additionally, the agency provides important information to members and interested parties, and technical assistance to other communities seeking to implement a model for collaboration. Lastly, it builds regional collaborations to improve outcomes for transitioning foster youth.

FYA member agencies are: The First Place Fund for Youth, Alameda County Independent Living Skills Program, Independent Living Skills Auxiliary, Alameda County Foster Parent Association, Community Colleges Foundation, West Coast Children’s Clinic, Bay Area Youth Centers, Covenant House California, Project Independence of the Tri-City Homeless Coalition, The Casey Family Program, California Youth Connection, Pivotal Point, National Youth Law Center, Fred Finch Youth Center, DreamCatcher Youth Shelter, Alameda County Interagency Children’s Policy Council, The Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, Alameda County Office of Education Foster Youth Services, and the Oakland Unified School District Student Services.

Campaign for Safe Transitions

HEY and FYA have both collaborated to develop the ‘Campaign for Safe Transitions: Housing for Former Foster Youth.’ The Campaign was formed to ensure all former foster youth will have access to support and housing to transition safely to adulthood. Without support and housing, youth are less likely to complete their education, find and retain adequate employment, or successfully transition to adulthood and independence.

The current goals of the Campaign are to: 1) Restore state funding for Transitional Housing Placement Plus (THP-Plus) to \$10 million per year, 2) Inform and educate counties and eligible youth on how to access these resources, and 3) Create legislation to sustain these resources and make adjustments in county matches and eligibility to more

truly meet the needs of youth leaving the foster care system.

Emancipation Resource Binder

Contra Costa County has developed an innovative Independent Living Skills Graduation Binder. The concept was developed by the county's Employment and Human Services Department staff, along with members of the ILSP staff and emancipated youth. The Binder is given to all foster youth who become 18 years of age, graduate from the program, and age out of the foster care system. There are valuable resource materials in the Binder that can assist youth with housing, employment, educational support, medical care, and advocacy.

The Binder also contains a passworded-CD with all of their important documents such as birth certificates, school transcripts, and medical information. Additionally, it contains gift cards for clothes, groceries, and household items to assist youth with the transition from care.

Early Start to Emancipation Preparation (ESTEP)

ESTEP is a program to assist younger foster care youth (ages 14 and 15) who will most likely remain in care until the age of 18. The program, coordinated through the Community College Foundation, is to prepare younger foster youth for graduation from high school, and assisting them with economic, personal and social well-being goals. The program combines in-home assessments, tutoring, mentoring and field trips to reduce the youth's sense of isolation and remove the potential barriers they may face while pursuing their emancipation, academic and

personal goals. There is a retention rate of 80% for youth in the ESTEP program.

The California state budget for ESTEP for 05/06 is \$2.4 million and is financed by 54% federal and state ILP funds and 46% State Specialized Care Incentive Assistance Program (SCIAP) funds. There is no net county cost. The program was piloted in Los Angeles County in 1996. Sacramento County joined as an ESTEP county in 2003.

Sacramento ESTEP involves a combination of home visitation, youth assessment, skill building, one-on-one tutoring/mentoring, life skills education, hands-on experiential activities, and follow-up support for both the youth and adult caregiver. Youth are met in their homes by caring Transitional Preparation Advisors (TPA) who introduce the program and conduct overall assessments. The TPA helps the youth define the steps necessary for emancipation and helps the youth create an emancipation contract (CCF, 2005).

The program provides foster youth with an individual personality inventory to help them choose meaningful careers, and introduction to community college and other educational resources. Through workshops and experiential activities, ESTEP builds the youth's self-esteem and the ability to improve school performance, establish positive relationships, locate employment resources, learn budgeting skills, identify supportive adults and develop appropriate forms of communication (CCF, 2005).

The following section describes the major gaps in service and recommendations for counties.

Gaps in Service and Recommendations

Before examining the gaps in service, it is important to note that Social Service and Child Welfare Directors should know exactly how many youth age out of the foster care system each year in their county. Most counties have rough estimates, but little is known about these young people in terms of their needs, presenting issues, strengths and experiences. Having relatively accurate estimates could better assist in planning for services internally, and with community-based organizations.

After conducting qualitative interviews with key constituents serving youth aging out of the foster care system in the Bay Area, many different service needs were found. Constituents included administrators of community-based programs, county child welfare workers, and private foundation and endowment staff. The following sections describe the current gaps in services and policy.

Early Discharge of Foster Youth

In California, the majority of emancipation discharges from the child welfare system occur at 17 and 18 years old (87%) (Needell et al., 2002). These discharges have frequently occurred because these youth had not achieved, nor were they expected to achieve, their high school diploma and would be turning 18 years old. These young people were often then forced, by the juvenile courts, to emancipate from the foster care system even if they were working on a non-traditional high school proficiency certificate such as the General Educational Development (GED) Test plan or other California

High School Proficiency Examination (CHSPE).

In the past, most Bay Area county child welfare, probation, and juvenile justice staff were unclear about how to define "pursuing high school diploma." Many of these workers were not advocating as strongly with juvenile judges and attorneys that these young people should be able to stay in foster care.

However, in October 2005 the California Governor signed SB 1633 which now extends foster care benefits to youth who are seeking a high school equivalency certificate up until their 19th birthday. Although this new law is progress towards decreasing significantly early emancipation, some new problems arise. The main problem with this law is that some foster youth, who are in jeopardy of not graduating from traditional high school, may be required to leave the high school setting to pursue a GED or CHSPE when they may not want to – in order to be able to stay in care until age 19. It is unclear how this may affect thousands of older foster youth's educational rights.

A second issue with SB 1633 is that 19 years old is the required age of emancipation. Other large California counties, such as Los Angeles County, enable child welfare workers to advocate for youth to stay in foster care until age 21. In fact, Los Angeles County actually pays the foster care benefits for youth to stay in care until age 21 if they are working towards a high school diploma or a non-traditional high school proficiency certificate such as the GED or CHSPE. However, at present no Bay Area counties have taken such

supportive measures to support youth in care until age 21.

Two other populations significantly at risk for early emancipation are undocumented immigrant youth and youth with mental health issues. It is not known how each of the Bay Area counties handle the emancipation of these youth, who are often not likely to earn enough academic credits for a high school diploma or don't have the educational skills to pass the GED or CHSPE exams.

It is imperative that the social service/child welfare and judicial branches Bay Area counties postpone premature discharge of older foster youth. Consequently, counties should develop creative ways to allow youth to stay in foster care housing and earn academic credits even if they are far from achieving enough high school credits for a diploma. This begins with having many individuals involved in the discharge meetings and development of discharge plans. Those who should be included are: child welfare workers/probation officers, judges, CASA workers (often older youth do not have CASA representation), biological parents, and the youth themselves. Emancipation decisions should not just be made by a single social worker. Lastly, judges should be trained to help to standardize emancipation decisions in counties. This is especially true in counties with a rotating juvenile judiciary.

It is important to note that the counties need to pay all county dollars to keep a youth in foster care past their 18th birthday, if the youth will not graduate with a high school diploma prior to their

19th birthday. The costs are very real and could be very expensive. The average cost for a youth in a regular foster home is about \$6000.00 a year and could be up to \$80,000 if the youth were in a level 14 placement. Due to the AFDC regulations, this could be an all county cost. This cost does not include social worker or court costs.

Recommendation: Social Service Directors can ensure that Child Welfare Directors and local juvenile judges re-define how "educational plans" are classified by the courts. Once a consensus definition is reached, this information can then be passed on to child welfare workers as they advocate for youth to continue to stay in care. This advocacy can perhaps affect emancipation timelines affecting youth as they prepare for aging out of the system. Additionally, this advocacy can also affect youth's educational rights, which coincides with California Youth Connection's 2004 Fall Conference Report (recommending that foster youth are informed about their educational rights and resources that exist).

Increasing Support for Housing Interventions

Scattered site THPP models offer higher-functioning youth ages 16 to 19 the opportunity to learn the tangible independent living skills in a safe environment where they can make mistakes. Some THPP scattered site models have not received referrals from county social workers. It is hypothesized that the reservation is based on the scattered site structure. That is, "a scattered site THPP model gives up the illusion of control that group home care may have." Another

THPP administrator stated, "youth who can live on their own are not being identified, and consequently there is a lack of internal county referrals from long-term placement social workers." Transportation is also an issue for the young people living in a scattered site model; the youth cannot have a car, but can have driver's license.

In terms of services for youth who have already emancipated from the child welfare system, THP-Plus has many barriers. The first is the required 60% county match. Most counties have not yet identified funding options to fulfill this requirement, which creates a significant gap in service for housing providers. Alameda County utilized external foundation grants to fulfill the match and was able to access THP-Plus monies for two private non-profits to offer THP-Plus housing. However, foundation monies are tenuous and therefore a more stable funding source is necessary. San Francisco and Santa Cruz counties are the only other Bay Area counties that have utilized THP-Plus funding by providing the county match themselves.

Additionally, more THP-Plus housing models are necessary to meet the diverse needs of youth emancipating from the child welfare system. A scattered site THP-Plus model is often preferred to a shared or communal housing model because individual youth issues can be addressed. Youth can learn more hands-on skills in a safe environment. Youth may be more willing to seek services in this type of model due to increased freedom and not feel like being a program. This may be especially true for youth who have had a history of group home placements.

However, in a scattered site model there is often no or little feeling of community, or a feeling of being a part of something. Additionally, a scattered site model has increased liability and 'damage control' so many community-based providers are hesitant to create housing using this model. Lastly, private landlords may be difficult to work with to secure housing, even when a community-based agency holds the master lease.

Other THP-Plus housing models are currently not being utilized. For instance, caregiver models may keep youth in care longer, while offering permanent connections. In fact, Stanislaus and Fresno counties are considering using THP-Plus monies to continue foster care payments while a former foster youth is pursuing college or transitioning to employment. Caregiver models could be significantly less expensive than other housing models, which could be less of a financial burden on counties, while at the same time working towards permanency.

There is also a vital need for more permanent housing models. Only a few agencies in the Bay Area offer permanent housing for former foster youth. For example, Fred Finch's Coolidge Court in Alameda County allows youth to stay as long as they need to. Other types of permanent housing include Section 8 Housing Authority options. Additionally, more long-term housing options that extend beyond 18 months (perhaps to two or three years) are needed.

The last area of housing is related to pregnant and parenting foster youth. Bill Wilson Center in Santa Clara County, First Place Fund for Youth in Alameda County, and Rainbow House in Napa County are the only housing services providers for pregnant/parenting transitional youth. Unfortunately, single mothers of transitional age may need more intensive support and encouragement for pursuing their education and/or employment training. Although some ILSP programs offer child care subsidies (such as Alameda County), there are few resources for these young people and their children.

Recommendation: Since it has been difficult for some THPP scattered site models (for 16 to 19 year olds) to have county social workers refer their clients, it may be important to examine in-care THPP models. That is, perhaps training foster parents or group home staff in an ILSP curriculum. Directors should work with service providers to encourage step-down THPP models (e.g. Peacock Acres in Monterey and Bay Area Youth Centers) which prepare older foster youth for emancipation first in a communal setting and then in scattered-site apartments.

There should be increased state-match funding under the THP-Plus model, for youth who have already emancipated from the child welfare system. This corresponds with CYC's 2004 Fall Conference Report which recommends that state legislators should be educated on the importance of changing to 100% state funding for THP-Plus to meet with need for housing. Utilizing external, private foundation grants to complete the county match to access THP-Plus monies is not sustainable for the long-

term. Social Service Directors may be able to examine current budgetary options for providing a partial match for community-based organizations to be able to offer more THP-Plus housing options for youth who have aged out. Or, Directors could examine using THP-Plus monies for in-house services, such as Santa Cruz County.

Social Service Directors and Child Welfare Directors could work together to develop a THP-Plus Caregiver Model for housing youth who have already aged out. These youth could continue to live with foster parents or in other host home situations. This type of housing service could also be offered to pregnant and parenting former foster youth.

Social Service Directors could also partner more closely with the County Housing Authority to explore Section 8 housing options for youth to possibly emulate Alameda County's Youth Self-Sufficiency Program for transitional foster youth. This partnership could also explore copying Kern County's DHS and Housing Authority development of its own transitional living program. The Social Service and Housing Authority Directors could work collaboratively with the local Re-Development Agency to find funding for infrastructure and program costs.

Employment Training Interventions

Child welfare workers can refer youth to employment training programs, but there is usually no guarantee of a job upon completion. Some interviewees reported that many youth come to employment training with little or no basic job skills (phone etiquette, decision making, time management) and they often struggle

with staying enrolled. Training programs may not be based on curriculum that is developmentally appropriate, programs may be difficult to access, and some providers have reported that training staff sometimes do not show up for trainings (i.e. little accountability).

Many programs assisting former foster youth in Bay Area counties are often geared towards adults through the local WIB. This may be difficult for adolescents and young adults as they are developmentally different than adults who are learning employment skills or searching for employment. Transitional youth are still navigating the move to adulthood and are learning to separate and individuate. Consequently, training curriculum and interventions may need to be unique for these young people.

Also, existing employment programs are often hard to access, are full, or start up at various times when youth may not be ready. Sometimes programs require a level of commitment of the youth that is too intensive such as a 40 hour training program over one week which may be difficult for youth to get to every day by public transportation. General accessibility, especially for youth in rural areas and areas with little public transportation, may also contribute to their lack of participation in employment training.

Other gaps are that there are no standardized employment training curriculum models between counties, no comprehensive mentoring components, and no job developers to assist youth with finding and retaining employment.

However, there is one exception where San Mateo County assigns two full-time Education and Employment Specialists in their multi-disciplinary Child Welfare Adolescent Services Unit. Youth are seen one-on-one to develop educational and vocational plans.

Lastly, employment training programs are often geographic-specific. That is, certain programs will only serve youth from certain parts of counties, not matter how helpful or effective the services are. This can leave out a percentage of youth who may benefit from such services.

Recommendation: Social Service Directors could work with Child Welfare Directors to examine the best practices of teaching employment skills. Perhaps a one-stop model of employment services is not conducive for these youth while they are still in care. Directors could explore a hybrid model of services whereby foster parents and group home staff are trained in a standardized employment training curriculum (that is developmentally appropriate), especially for disconnected youth who may not ever access community employment training programs or ILSP employment training. For example, Larkin Street Youth Services offers a Job Readiness Preparation class for homeless transitional youth that has been empirically tested. Incentives could be provided to caregivers for training youth through additional Chafee program funding.

Mental Health Needs of Youth

Many provider interviewees reported that transitional youth with varying degrees of mental health issues are often difficult to work with as they are already

negotiating a transitional time (i.e. they want autonomy and are legally able to have it).

Many youth aging out of foster care do not have significant cognitive deficits, and therefore do not qualify for Regional Center services. However, mild cognitive deficits may prevent these young people from completing their educational goals, completing employment training, or attaining and maintaining employment. Even assessment of these transitional youth is difficult. There is often a need for neuro-psych testing once youth age out of care, if they were not tested while in care. Many service providers expressed a difficulty in working with these young people who have "fallen through the cracks" with mild to moderate mental health issues. Child welfare staff and youth caregivers (e.g. foster parents, group home staff, and kinship providers) should be trained to more thoroughly assess for these issues in order to provide the best prevention and treatment options possible.

Youth with more significant mental health issues (i.e. those that cannot sustain employment) may not be receiving the referrals they need for residential services. Many youth who leave care with a "severely emotionally disturbed" label (not a DSM-IV diagnosis) and problematic symptoms/behaviors may need more support with housing. It is unclear whether these young people and their child welfare workers are aware of how to access housing that accepts shelter plus care vouchers. Additionally, some services providers interviewed for this report stated that it is unclear whether

there are even enough shelter plus care vouchers available in their county.

Also, there are few housing services for former foster youth on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) due to more significant mental health issues. As stated in the housing section, there are only two Bay Area transitional living programs that currently serve transitional former foster youth with mental health issues and one only serves females. Another permanent supportive housing program in the Bay Area, Coolidge Court in Oakland, serves transitional aged youth with mental health issues.

Additionally, it is currently not known how Proposition 63 monies are going to be utilized for former foster youth. Many counties have developed Transitional Aged Youth committees during the planning process for Proposition 63, however housing appears to be a significant gap in service for former foster youth with mental health issues.

Recommendation: Social Service Directors can work with Directors of Mental Health and Child Welfare to examine options to fully utilize EPSDT monies internally. This could be done by developing a Transitional Youth Mental Health Team, such as in San Francisco and Solano Counties, to assist youth with the transition from children's mental health services to adult life, with mental health services if needed. This team can assist with wrapping youth in services and making referrals so all the burden of transition does not fall on the individual child welfare worker. This is especially true for youth who do not qualify for Regional Center services.

Social Service Directors could also make certain that Prop 63 monies are utilized for transitional youth for such services as residential, transitional living. This recommendation coincides with CYC's 2004 Fall Conference Report which suggests that mental health dollars from Prop 63 be used for mental health support for foster youth in transitional housing programs, after leaving care.

However, since there are such few transitional mental health housing programs available, Social Service Directors could work with adult mental health residential providers to explore options for transitional youth. When these youth are eventually able to access residential treatment for mental health issues, they should receive developmentally-appropriate services. Adult residential program staff should be trained in and sensitive to the specialized developmental needs of youth between the ages of 18 and 24. These young people (often just beginning to cope with the fact that they have a mental health issue) may have different needs than older adults who have been living with mental health issues for decades.

Training should be provided in crisis intervention and identification of mental health challenges for caregivers (i.e. foster parents, kinship providers and group home providers) and could be in the form of a facilitated training, or perhaps through a resource guide.

Lack of Independent Living Skills

There were significant discrepancies when discussing independent living skills with service providers. Most THPP providers who serve youth in scattered site apartment models while

still in care stated the youth in their programs tended to have a reasonable amount of basic independent living skills. These responses may be due to selection bias – these programs tend to accept youth who can function in less supervised and more independent settings.

However, many providers who serve youth who have already aged out of the foster care system, and those who serve youth in THPP communal settings reported that they observed little or no independent living skills of the youth in their programs. One provider stated, "I often haven't seen a difference between 10 year olds and 17 year olds." Some providers thought the lack of independent living skills was because youth may be institutionalized and used to having things done for them in foster homes and group homes. Or, they thought it was perhaps because youth have not had many real life experiences.

Some providers reported that there may be a difference in ILSP skills depending on the type of placement a youth had. For example, some stated that they believed that youth who are placed in foster care placements may have lower independent living skills than youth placed in group homes. Some providers noticed a huge variation in functioning level of youth based on placement type.

Another gap in service related to ILSP is the low retention rates of youth in ILP workshops. This may inform the child welfare system that independent living skills may be more effective being taught on site in the housing program where the youth are placed. This also may affect the fact that service providers stated that it was hard to engage youth in

attending ILSP because they are tired of programs.

Recommendation: Directors could work with Child Welfare Directors to examine other models of teaching independent living skills (not a one-stop service, but within the placement), develop an ISLP curriculum that could be taught to foster parents and group home staff to provide youth with tangible, real life experiences. Outcomes of such interventions should be examined.

Social Service Directors could work with Child Welfare Directors to examine the need for a small satellite program for ILSP in hard to reach areas in the county. Also, not every county in the Bay Area offers Aftercare services for youth who have aged out of the foster care system. Social Service Directors should work with Child Welfare Directors to examine the possibility of implementing an in-house Aftercare Program to ensure youth are making a smooth transition to adulthood, which may be especially important for youth who are not accessing adult mental health services, and still connected to a system of care.

Geographic Location of Sites

The geographic location of ILSP, employment training, and mental health services can significantly affect whether a youth will choose participate in such services. Recruitment of youth from "geographically remote areas" (i.e. southern Alameda County or southern Santa Clara County) may make it difficult for youth to access services. However, even though the need may be less, these young people should receive accessible services.

Substance Use

Substance use support is needed as a percentage of youth in foster care, and those aging out, have substance use issues. Youth often self-medicate after leaving care, especially if they not linked with adult community mental health services and may no longer be receiving psychotropic medications. Clearly, more information is needed about the substance use behaviors of current and former foster care youth.

In March 2004, the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration released a \$100 million competitive grant for the Access to Recovery (ATR) Program. The ATR program is a Presidential initiative to allow people in need of substance abuse treatment to make individual choices in their path to recovery that reflect their personal values. The Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs (ADP), in collaboration with a stakeholder workgroup, designed California's ATR application. In August 2004, California was awarded \$7.6 million annually for three years for the California Access to Recovery Effort (CARE) program.

The overall goals of the CARE program are to: 1) Reduce California's youth treatment gap, 2) Ensure individual consumer choice, 3) Expand the number and types of youth service providers from which youth may choose, and 4) Promote safe and effective approaches for youth. Currently, only Los Angeles and Sacramento counties have accessed CARE funding for local community-based organizations. More information on CARE is available at the website

<http://www.californiacares4youth.com/about.html>.

Recommendation: Counties should develop an instrument, or use a standardized instrument, to fully assess for substance use of youth in foster care since many youth may self-medicate and substance abuse issues may be ignored or mistaken for mental health issues. Caregivers should also be provided training on how to assess for substance use issues early. Additionally, Social Service Directors should work with county substance use services to access CARE program funding from the state.

Education

Adolescents in foster care often experience multiple placements while still in care and have difficulty achieving the academic credits they need in order to graduate. These young people may be left behind because of a lack of advocacy from the school and child welfare settings.

Some interviewees reported that non-public schools should not be held to a lower educational standard. These schools receive public monies, and therefore must adhere to the same academic standards and testing as regular schools. This will better prepare foster youth for adulthood and higher education. Although some school districts now have specific services for children and youth in foster care, overall, many providers reported that the kindergarten through 12th grade educational system is not close to where it needs to be for foster youth in terms of advocacy and understanding of these youth's challenges.

Also, the local Guardian Scholars Programs have received some support from ILSP Coordinators in terms of providing funding for summer housing, but other coordinators have not been forthcoming with what other monetary support is available for youth as they age out and attend college. California Youth Connection's 2003 Fall Conference Report recommends that each county hire a foster youth higher education specialist to assist students in the process of going to college and to act as an advocate during the transition to college. This individual could work with ILSP Coordinators to ensure youth are receiving every funding and support opportunity available to them. Additionally, CYC's 2004 Fall Conference Report recommends that foster youth be informed of the educational resources available to them so they can advocate for their needs.

Recommendation: Work with local school superintendents to offer more supportive foster youth programs such as been in the Oakland Unified School District's Social Services for Foster Youth Program. These programs can educate teachers and school administrators on the unique needs of these young people.

Lack of social support

As aforementioned in this monograph, social support is very important to youth aging out of foster care. They often report not feeling as being a part of something, especially for those youth with no family connections. However, individuals offering informal social support to these youth can assist with teaching and modeling independent living skills, and can also assist youth

when in a crisis (i.e. if they lose their housing or employment).

Social support can also be more formal. For example, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA workers) can offer support as youth leave the system and could even become an informal support network for youth for the first few years after leaving care. County child welfare agencies tend to have CASA workers assigned to children and younger adolescents, but these workers could also be incredibly beneficial to transitioning youth. There should be an increased focus on providing CASA workers for older adolescents in foster care. In fact, the California CASA Association will be developing materials to train local CASA agencies on how to recruit CASA workers for older youth in foster care. Mentoring is also a component to social support that is vital for youth aging out of care. Mentors can be focused on providing career support, or can be more for social support.

Social support is also very important for LGBTQ youth. In CYC's 2003 Fall Conference Report it is recommended that counties: 1) establish an LGBTQ specific unit within the child welfare department, 2) evaluate all foster care and group homes for LGBTQ sensitivity, 3) avoid placing LGBTQ youth in homophobic placements, 4) have social mixers that provide the opportunity for LGBTQ youth to interact, 5) encourage a particular focus on resources for LGBTQ foster youth in rural areas where there may be much less tolerance, information and services available than in urban areas, and 6) create a statewide database of LGBTQ friendly placements.

Recommendation: Social Service Directors should work with Child Welfare Directors to institute a Family Finding Program or unit within child welfare services. Also, as CYC recommends in its 2003 Fall Conference Report, that AB 408, which requires social workers to ask youth about important relationships, including siblings, and take action to support those relationships, should be fully implemented. CYC also recommends that all social workers must ensure that foster youth are provided with sibling's contact information as required in the emancipation checklist.

Additionally, directors can work with CASA to expand services to older youth in foster care. Also, directors can work with collaborating with local mentoring programs to match youth with mentors even while still in care. Lastly, the specific needs of LGBTQ youth need to be evaluated and addressed.

Rights of Foster Youth

Many community-based service providers are not aware of what the child welfare system offers after youth leave care, and the youth often do not know what they are entitled to. For example, providers interviewed for this study reported not knowing all of rights that former youth have such as: access to their foster care or legal/probation records after leaving care, what type of monetary or other support (i.e. computers or vouchers) from ILSP for education or needs with transition, or their rights with being able to contact members of their family of origin (i.e. siblings) to re-connect youth.

Recommendation: All child welfare workers who work with older youth in care should be trained in the rights of foster youth in general. These workers should also fully understand all of the various services available to youth after they leave the foster care system. This may be even more imperative for child welfare workers in counties where ILSP services are contracted out to a community-based organization. Counties should also implement a mandated Emancipation Conference where the youth chooses his or her participants, and all aspects of emancipation are covered. Youth could receive all necessary documentation, information on their rights, and have a transition plan presented at this conference.

Pursuing Further Research

It is imperative that counties know exactly how many youth age out of foster care each year and what their specific needs may be. Further research should be conducted on the outcomes of, and client satisfaction of, community-based organization services. Some agencies have conducted thorough research on best practices, but many have not. As such, it is not clear how effective these services are with meeting the needs of youth aging out of care. Another area of research relates to more disconnected youth. These are young people who may not have any family connections, may not be accessing ILSP while in foster care, or may have more serious mental health issues. A broader understanding of why these youth may not access ILSP may inform the child welfare community about how best to reach these young people, who more often than not, end up homeless,

incarcerated, pregnant, or hospitalized for mental health issues.

Recommendation: Social Service Directors should work directly with local social work professors to institute a comprehensive research plan. These individuals can secure funding for such research from local private foundations or public grants.

Another significant recommendation for further research is for each county to develop a Peer Review Team. This team could be foundation-funded and would evaluate each county's unique local service delivery system for youth aging out of foster care. Every county has different needs and priorities for how external funds could help improve their system of care for assisting youth with the transition to adulthood.

The following tables illustrate the variety of Bay Area County Services and Initiatives currently available for youth aging out of care. The estimated numbers of youth aging out of each county are listed below each county. However, it is important to remember that these are merely estimates.

Then, on page 54 this report's recommendations are listed with barriers as well as specific county action steps. Programmatic and regional policy recommendations are separated for each type of intervention for this population.

Many of these recommendations will require coordination with federal, state, and local agencies which share responsibilities for different aspects of the foster care system. Additional financial resources are required for many of the reforms identified in this

report in order to bring these promising practices up to scale or system-wide implementation in most California counties.

Bay Area County Services and Initiatives Matrices

Housing

| | <u>Alameda</u> (300*) | <u>Contra</u> <u>Costa</u> (200) | <u>Marin</u> (7) | <u>Monterey</u> (unk) | <u>Napa</u> (115) | <u>San</u> <u>Francisco</u> (150) | <u>San</u> <u>Mateo</u> (70) | <u>Santa</u> <u>Clara</u> (140) | <u>Santa</u> <u>Cruz</u> (20) | <u>Solano</u> (80) | <u>Sonoma</u> (50) |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| THPP (16-18) | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X | | | X |
| THP+ (18-24) | X | X | | | | X | | | X | | |
| Federal Home Funds | X | | | | | | | | | | |
| Housing Authority | X | | | | | | | | | | |
| Transitional Living Prog | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X |
| Permanent Housing | X | | | | | X | | | | | |

*Estimated number of youth aging out of care each year

**Will open in June 2006 with funding from Stuart Foundation for 60% county match

Education

| | <u>Alameda</u> (300) | <u>Contra</u> <u>Costa</u> (200) | <u>Marin</u> (7) | <u>Monterey</u> (unk) | <u>Napa</u> (115) | <u>San</u> <u>Francisco</u> (150) | <u>San</u> <u>Mateo</u> (70) | <u>Santa</u> <u>Clara</u> (140) | <u>Santa</u> <u>Cruz</u> (20) | <u>Solano</u> (80) | <u>Sonoma</u> (50) |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Guardian/ College Scholarships | X | X | | | | X | | X | X | | |
| School Dist. FYS Program* | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |

* Not known if in every school district

Independent Living Skills Program (ILSP) Services

| | <u>Alameda</u> (300) | <u>Contra Costa</u> (200) | <u>Marin</u> (7) | <u>Monterey</u> (unk) | <u>Napa</u> (115) | <u>San Francisco</u> (150) | <u>San Mateo</u> (70) | <u>Santa Clara</u> (40) | <u>Santa Cruz</u> (20) | <u>Solano</u> (80) | <u>Sonoma</u> (50) |
|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| One site model | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X |
| Multiple site model | | | | | | | | X | | | |

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

| | <u>Alameda</u> (300) | <u>Contra Costa</u> (200) | <u>Marin</u> (7) | <u>Monterey</u> (unk) | <u>Napa</u> (115) | <u>San Francisco</u> (150) | <u>San Mateo</u> (70) | <u>Santa Clara</u> (140) | <u>Santa Cruz</u> (20) | <u>Solano</u> (80) | <u>Sonoma</u> (50) |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Transitional Youth Svcs (within county mental health) | | X | | | | X | X | | | X | X |
| Trans. Youth Housing | | | | | | X | | | | | |
| Outpatient CBOs: FY-specific svcs* | X | | X | | | X | | X | | | |
| Sub. Use Treatment (< 18 yrs)** | X | | | | | X | | | | | |

*Fred Finch's Transitions Program and Westcoast Children's Clinic (Alameda) and A Home Within (SF) and Behavioral Health Systems Services (ages 0-15) and Transition Age Youth Program (ages 15-25) in Santa Clara County

**Not foster youth specific (Thunderroad in Oakland and Walden House in SF)

County, Foundation, and Other Initiatives*

| | <u>Alameda</u> (300) | <u>Contra</u> <u>Costa</u> (200) | <u>Marin</u> (7) | <u>Monterey</u> (unk) | <u>Napa</u> (115) | <u>San</u> <u>Francisco</u> (150) | <u>San</u> <u>Mateo</u> (70) | <u>Santa</u> <u>Clara</u> (140) | <u>Santa</u> <u>Cruz</u> (20) | <u>Solano</u> (80) | <u>Sonoma</u> (50) |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Family to Family | | X | | | | X | | X | | X | |
| California Connected by 25 | X | | | | | X | | X | | | |
| California Permanency for Youth Project | X | X | | X | | X | X | | | | X |
| Family Find | | X | | | | | | X | | | |
| Gateway Project** | X | X | | | | | X | X | | | |
| Fostering the Future Fund | | | | | | | X | | | | |
| Foster Youth Housing Initiative | X | X | | | | X | X | X | | | |
| Calif. Youth Connection Chapter | X | X | | | | X | X | X | | | |
| Honoring Emancipated Youth (HEY) | | | | | | X | | | | | |
| Alameda Cty Foster Youth Alliance (FYA) | X | | | | | | | | | | |
| Emancipat. Res. Binder | | X | | | | | | | | | |

* This is a broadly simplified view of initiatives, some initiative include housing programs

**Santa Clara and Stanislaus to be funded in 2006

A Call to Action:
Programmatic and Regional Policy Change

Challenge 1: Early discharge of Foster Youth – Education

| Program/ Policy | Barriers | Action Steps |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| California SB 1633 - extends foster care benefits to youth who are seeking high school equivalency certificate up until their 19 th birthday | <p><i>Regional Policy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of information disseminated to child welfare workers SB 1633 was passed in October 2005 • Some child welfare workers, attorneys, and judges may require foster youth, who are in jeopardy of not graduating from high school by age 19, to leave high school to pursue GED preparation | <p><i>Regional Policy Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Welfare Directors should examine child welfare and juvenile court practices with regard to requiring youth to leave high school to pursue a GED (i.e. what are the educational rights of these foster youth?) |
| Extend foster care benefits until age 21 (such as Los Angeles County) | <p><i>Programmatic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County would have to fund the benefits from internal county dollars <p><i>Regional Policy Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge about the county cost of NOT housing youth until age 21 (i.e. incarceration costs, hospitalizations, homeless services, etc.) | <p><i>Programmatic Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer foster care benefits to youth accessing full-time educational plans (i.e. 2 or 4-year college, vocational training) <p><i>Regional Policy Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in empirical research examining these costs on a county by county level |

Challenge 2: Increase Housing Interventions

| Program | Barriers | Action Steps |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| THPP (16 to 19) | <p><i>Programmatic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of referrals to community-based organizations with THPP scattered site models • Lack of foster parent (i.e. In-Care) THPP models | <p><i>Programmatic Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate child welfare workers to refer appropriate youth • Pilot In-Care Model and train foster parents in ILSP, so they can offer comprehensive THPP services |
| THP-Plus (18 to 24) | <p><i>Programmatic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of current community-based organizations to house THP-Plus programs • Lack of information to providers that in October 2005 AB 824 was signed into law enabling providers to serve former foster youth until age 24 <p><i>Regional Policy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% county match required to access 40% state THP-Plus funding | <p><i>Programmatic Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with community adult housing providers to examine opportunities for offering THP-Plus housing to 18 to 24 year olds • Work with current THP-Plus providers to ensure they are serving up to age 24 <p><i>Regional Policy Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with HEY and FYA to modify state legislation to reduce county match • Work with local foundations/endowments to help provide match • Collaborate with other state and federal housing or mental health agencies to provide the county match (CYC recommended in 2004 Fall Conference Report) |
| Federal HOME Funds | <p><i>Programmatic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No collaboration with county child welfare or CBOs in establishing relationships with cities to access Federal Home Funds (only Alameda County utilizes these funds with 2 different cities – Fremont and Livermore) | <p><i>Programmatic Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring together CBOs and city officials to examine funding opportunities for offering housing to 18 to 24 year olds via Federal Home Funds <p><i>Regional Policy Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emulate Tri-City Homeless Coalition's model and approach to working with city officials |
| Permanent Housing | <p><i>Programmatic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of current community-based organizations offering permanent housing programs for transitional youth | <p><i>Programmatic Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with County Housing Authority to develop "Youth Self-Sufficiency" type program (like in Alameda County) |

Challenge 3: Develop Creative ILSP and Employment Training Interventions

| Program | Barriers | Action Steps |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Develop County In-home ILSP (for youth who do not want to or cannot access a one site ILSP) | <p><i>Programmatic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training foster parents and group home administrators can be time consuming (cost-benefit analysis has not been conducted) and coordination of funding may be a barrier <p><i>Regional Policy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of ILS programs using evidenced-based practice curricula (especially for employment training) | <p><i>Programmatic Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use ILSP funding to give foster and group home providers a stipend to participate in training of how to teach independent living skills to older foster youth • Conduct empirical research/youth evaluations to ensure training occurs (youth outcome and satisfaction data can be collected) <p><i>Regional Policy Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a training program (possibly in collaboration with the Bay Area Academy) to train foster parents, kin providers, and group home administrators on a successful evidence-based practice model of ILSP |
| Develop County Satellite ILSP or contract out for Satellite program | <p><i>Programmatic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overhead costs • No empirical outcome research on contracted ILSP services | <p><i>Programmatic Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot contracting out ILSP to community-based organizations (use ILSP funds to do so) • Conduct research/youth evaluations to ensure training occurs (youth satisfaction data can be collected) |
| Employment Training Programs | <p><i>Programmatic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside of ILSP, employment training programs are typically 40 hours over one week and a one site model (no job placement or retention services) | <p><i>Programmatic Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In ILSP, replicate Project Self-Sufficiency model (pilot program to serve older foster youth) of Youth Employment Partnership in Alameda County and Hire UP Program of Larkin Street Youth Services in San Francisco County (empirically-tested evidence based prac model) |

Challenges 4 and 5: Address Mental Health and Substance Use Needs

| Program/Policy | Barriers | Action Steps |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| EPSDT/ Proposition 63 | <p><i>Programmatic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear how each county uses EPSDT funding for mental health services for current and former foster youth • Lack of Transitional Youth Services (TYS) in adult county mental health programs (only in Solano, SF, and San Mateo) | <p><i>Programmatic Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Welfare Directors and Mental Health Directors should work collaboratively to develop a comprehensive plan to best use EPSDT and Proposition 63 monies for transitional youth (especially those with a history of foster care placement) • Implement YYS in adult county mental health to meet the unique needs of these youth |
| Mental health housing | <p><i>Programmatic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of mental health transitional housing for 18 to 21 year olds (only 2 counties thus far) | <p><i>Programmatic Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with community adult housing providers to replicate Fred Finch's Coolidge Court model to 18 to 24 year olds |
| Substance use assessment | <p><i>Regional Policy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of empirical research examining substance use of foster youth – no assessment tool utilized by any child welfare agency | <p><i>Regional Policy Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in empirical research examining substance use of older foster youth (i.e. replicate Washington State Dept Social and Health Svcs by Kohlenberg et al., 2002) |
| Substance use treatment | <p><i>Programmatic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of housing options for current and former foster youth with substance use issues (only 2 sub use residential treatment models in the Bay Area for youth under age 18) • Lack of transitional youth substance use treatment housing programs • No counties accessing state CARE funds (only Sacramento and Los Angeles) | <p><i>Programmatic Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with group homes to provide sub use treatment model (replicate Thunderroad or Walden House youth services) • Work with adult sub use housing providers to provide transitional youth residential services • Work with county substance use directors to access CARE program funds for community-based organizations to access for substance abuse services for youth |

Challenge 6: Improve Educational Outcomes

| Program | Barriers | Action Steps |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Foster Youth Services (FYS) Programs | <p><i>Programmatic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge about how FYS are serving foster youth and the effectiveness of FYS | <p><i>Programmatic Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure child welfare workers know local FYS workers • Work collaboratively with FYS programs to ensure older youth's needs are met (i.e. access to transcripts, advocacy, etc), conduct research |
| Transition to Higher Education | <p><i>Programmatic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear what funding is available for youth as they transition to college/ vocational training | <p><i>Programmatic Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have ILSP Coordinators develop policies available to youth and service providers that clearly stipulate what funding is available |

Challenge 7: Increase Social Support

| Program | Barriers | Action Steps |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Family Find | <p><i>Programmatic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a Family Find Social Work Unit may be logistically difficult given the structure of a child welfare agency | <p><i>Programmatic Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replicate Santa Clara County's Family Find Social Work Unit |
| CASA for older youth | <p><i>Programmatic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of recruitment of CASA workers to work with older foster youth (yet, California CASA is developing materials to train local CASA agencies on how to recruit CASA workers to work with older youth under a Stuart Foundation grant) | <p><i>Programmatic Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Welfare Directors should work with local CASA agencies to develop a strategic plan to recruit CASA workers to work with older youth in care (adequate training of workers is imperative) |
| LGBTQQ Youth | <p><i>Programmatic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of services for LGBTQQ youth <p><i>Regional Policy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge about estimates of LGBTQQ youth in care | <p><i>Programmatic Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institute all CYC recommendations for serving LGBTQQ youth (see page 48 of report) <p><i>Regional Policy Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in empirical research examining estimates of LGBTQQ older foster youth |

Challenge 8: Educate Foster Youth about Their Rights and Privileges

| Program | Barriers | Action Steps |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Emancipation Resource Binder (ERB) | <p><i>Programmatic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of information by youth and community service providers about the full rights and privileges of current and former foster youth (i.e. access to child welfare and probationary records, contact with siblings, funding and other support, etc.) | <p><i>Programmatic Change</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an Emancipation Resource Binder (replicate Contra Costa's ERB), which includes firm county policies with regards to funding opportunities (i.e. Emancipated Youth Stipends, computers, vouchers, etc.), including those available from ILSP |

Challenge 9: Pursue Further Research

| | Barriers | Action Steps |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Develop a <u>Peer Review Team</u> to thoroughly examine each county's service delivery system | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of funding for Peer Review Team (PRT) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with private foundations to help provide funding for PRT |
| Collect data on how many older youth age out of care each year in each county and what their needs are | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of empirical information, lack of longitudinal data • Lack of funding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in research examining the estimates of youth aging out of care and use School of Social Work professors to conduct research and secure funding |
| Evidence-based and strengths-based practice (especially with ILSP and community based organizations) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of empirical information, lack of longitudinal data • Lack of funding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct empirical research on effectiveness of ILSP and other community based organizations and use School of Social Work professors to conduct research and secure funding |

APPENDIX

California Connected by 25 Initiative Overview **October 2005**

The California Connected by 25 Initiative (CC25I) supports a small cohort of California counties in building a comprehensive continuum of services that support foster youth who are transitioning to adulthood, ages 14 to 24 years. The CC25I is supported by the Annie E. Casey Family to Family Foundation, the Charles M. Schwab Foundation, the Stuart Foundation, and the Walter S. Johnson Foundation.

The CC25I is a fifth strategy under the California Family to Family Initiative. Counties participating include: Alameda, Fresno, San Francisco, Santa Clara and Stanislaus. The Initiative seeks to answer the following:

1. How are we partnering with local workforce investment boards, businesses, institutions of higher education, and community partners to create sector specific training and career pathways that link older foster youth with jobs in growing industries?
2. What partnerships have we formed with public and private housing providers to expand supportive housing options for foster youth?
3. How are we working with the local school districts to improve educational outcomes for foster youth?
4. How are we developing lifelong relationships between foster youth and caring, committed, loving adults?
5. How are we partnering with public agency and community-based organizations to build personal and social assets for foster youth that support positive physical, psychological, emotional and social development?
6. How do we provide young people with successful financial literacy skills?
7. How do our core training programs empower families, youth, foster parents, group homes, foster family agencies, kinship families, guardians, and agency staff to meet the needs of emancipating foster youth?
8. How is the Independent Living Skills Program (ILSP) integrated within all levels of our agency? Are ILSP services accessible to all foster youth?

CC25I Grant Funding

Counties can receive up to \$300,000 over three years to implement plans developed through self-assessments, in addition to \$10,000 per year to create youth savings accounts.

CC25I Focus Areas

- Employment and Training
- Financial Competency and Security
- Housing
- ILSP Integration
- K-12 Education
- Postsecondary Education
- Workforce Development
- Youth Asset Development
- Youth Permanence

CC25I Bay Area County Plan Vignettes

San Francisco:

With over 200 youth emancipating each year over the next two and a half years, San Francisco is working closely with One Stop Career Centers to bring a more supportive youth focus to the Center's job readiness and placement services. Through the work of a youth employment specialist and employer wage subsidies, San Francisco hopes to place 150 youth in jobs.

Stanislaus:

Stanislaus County is developing a career pathways pilot program in partnership with its local community college and Workforce Investment Board. Up to 40 disadvantaged and emancipating foster youth will participate in the career pathways project where they will access the education, supports, and financial resources they need to successfully complete the certificate programs in the local construction, health and food processing industries.

Alameda/Santa Clara:

Alameda and Santa Clara Counties joined the Initiative in the summer 2005. Both counties are in the process of finalizing their local plans.

Gateway Project for Disadvantaged Youth Overview

The Gateway Project is designed to create a pathway to community college and career for disadvantaged youth and adults. Based in a partnership comprised of Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), community colleges, nonprofits, and local industries, the Gateway provides intensive college preparation and support leading to enrollment in a community college degree program or shorter-term post-secondary training. Both pathways lead to jobs in high wage, high growth industries such as bio-tech, health care and construction.

The Gateway Project has two components:

PHASE I: 3-month community college “Bridge” provides intensive skills development in English and math, career orientation, and social support services, as well as a financial aid package and a transition to further education and training. Under the Bridge model, students are enrolled in college and receive 12 college credits. The program is designed as a learning community for a cohort of students who move through the program together. College faculty jointly design an integrated learning model. To help address barriers often hampering student success, the Bridge is designed to include an in class counselor in addition to the college instructor. Students completing the Bridge are counseled on an education and career plan, with a direct connection made to Phase 2 training.

PHASE 2: Bridge graduates move directly to a certificate or Associates degree program in the host or other community college, or enroll in WIB-sponsored short-term post-secondary training leading to jobs in high wage, high growth careers. WIBs support Bridge graduates until they are placed in fulltime jobs.

The Bridge strategy is as much a structural and financial model for a gateway to college as a specific program design. Under the model, Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and post-secondary resources are integrated to fund the additional costs of creating a learning community that combines intensive instruction and social support.

Six counties are participating in the Walter S. Johnson Foundation-supported Gateway Project. Contra Costa, San Mateo, and Alameda counties have each received \$200,000-\$225,000 grants. Fresno, Stanislaus, and Santa Clara counties will likely be funded in 2006.

Fresno, Stanislaus, Santa Clara, and Alameda child welfare agencies are seeking to make the Gateway their main college access/workforce development strategy for emancipating foster youth. These four counties belong to California Connected by 25—the WSJF/Stuart/Casey/Hewlett/ Schwab-funded initiative for improving the successful transition of foster youth to adulthood.

The Gateway helps foster youth succeed in higher education. Former foster youth are significantly underrepresented in college and vocational training. A recent national study

found that only 8% of former foster youth enrolled in a 2-year college and only 4% were enrolled in 4-year a college.

Core Gateway Project features:

- Partnership of community college(s), WIB, social service agency and/or community based organization;
- Target at least 40 students per year;
- Target disadvantaged and transitioning foster care youth (ages 18-24);
- Identify regional high-wage high-growth career pathways leading to employment;
- Plan to sustain Bridge program model with combination of local formula funding (i.e. FTES, WIA, social services);
- A Bridge program of 14-18 weeks that includes:
 - A learning community of approximately 20 students
 - Integrated course offerings and student support services
 - Dedicated, in-class counselor
 - WIA case management and supportive services
 - 12 (or more) college credits
 - Financial aid for all eligible applicants
 - Leads to 10th grade English and math skills
 - Career orientation and opportunities
 - Individualized Education Plan
 - Certificate awarded for bridge completion
 - Transition to identified post-secondary career pathways through enrollment in short-term post-secondary pathways, certificate or degree programs.

California Permanency for Youth Project (CPYP)

The California Permanency for Youth Project (CPYP), a project of the Public Health Institute, started in January 2003 as a result of a five year grant awarded by the Stuart Foundation. This grant has since been extended through 2009.

Project Vision:

To achieve permanency for older children and youth in California so that no youth leaves foster care without a lifelong connection to a caring adult

Project Objectives:

1. To increase awareness among the child welfare agencies and staff, legislators and judicial officers in the state of the urgent need that older children and youth have for permanency
2. To influence public policy and administrative practices so that they promote permanency
3. To assist fourteen specific counties and the private agencies with which they work to implement new practices to achieve permanency for older children and youth.

Project Activities:

The Permanency for Youth Task Force

The Task Force is a statewide group with broad representation, including public and private organizations, youth and funders.

Task Force objectives are:

1. To facilitate collaborations between public and private agencies to achieve permanent lifelong connections for youth in the system
2. To create opportunities for key stakeholders (who affect outcomes for youth in the system):
 - a) To realize the need for permanent lifelong connections for youth
 - b) To understand that it is possible to achieve these connections
3. To identify and overcome structural barriers (within the system affecting youth) that prevent achieving permanent lifelong connections
4. To promote public relations, education and advocacy efforts that will address the needs of youth for permanent lifelong connections.

In November 2003, CPYP received a grant from the Walter S. Johnson Foundation to pursue the partnership objectives of the Task Force. The grant supports the work of three workgroups addressing issues of partnership between public child welfare agencies and a) the courts, b) group homes and c) adoption/family foster agencies. The groups will make recommendations on how effective partnerships can accomplish improved permanency outcomes for foster youth by November 2005.

Technical Assistance to Counties

The project has been working with four counties, San Mateo, Alameda, Stanislaus, and Monterey, to develop programs to achieve permanency for more youth. The project has been a) providing these counties with technical assistance over two and a half years to help them develop youth permanency practice in their counties and b) will document significant lessons about implementation useful to the field. Each county has developed a youth permanence plan that includes the following target areas: administrative practices, permanency practice, identification of project target group, staff development, partnerships, and integration with other initiatives.

Now that these four counties are now finding permanent connections for an increasing number of their young people, the CPYP will be assisting ten more counties starting in the spring of 2005 and continuing through 2007. These new counties are: Contra Costa, Fresno, Humboldt, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo and Sonoma.

Training

A curriculum called "Preparing Youth for Permanent Family Connections" has been developed with the support of Zellerbach Family Foundation for use by California counties and is available to all public child welfare agencies and their partners as of April 2005 through the Child welfare Training Academies around the state. In conjunction with the California Youth Connection (CYC) and the Bay Area Academy, the project supported the development of "Digital Stories" on permanency by current and former foster youth which are available from CPYP and can be used in training.

Convenings

As a part of the development of CPYP project, a national convening was held in April 2002 to explore the issues of permanency for youth. Subsequently, national convenings have been held in 2003, 2004 and 2005. Plans are underway for 2006.

Documents

To increase awareness of the issue, the project has developed three documents:

1. ***Model Programs for Youth Permanency.*** A report on nine exemplary permanency programs throughout the U.S. and explanation of the critical elements of such programs.
2. ***Youth Perspectives on Permanency.*** An exploration of youths' perspectives on permanency through a focus group process in partnership with the California Youth Connection (CYC).
3. ***A Call to Action: An Integrated Approach to Youth Permanency and Preparation for Adulthood.*** A joint publication with Casey Family Services, this document addresses the complex needs unique to adolescents in foster care.

Evaluation

To measure results, CPYP is gathering data over time from workers in each county on the young people being targeted for youth permanency services. In addition, the project is doing a formative evaluation of each county's implementation process that will inform the field of strategies for implementation and change.

Website

The project website is www.cpyp.org . Convening summary reports, CPYP documents, and digital stories are on the website, along with other interesting youth permanency materials. Some materials can be downloaded. Hard copies of CPYP documents and VHS copies of digital stories are available free of charge at (510) 268-0038.

Foster Youth Housing Initiative (FYHI)
July 2005

Goal: Help former foster youth obtain and maintain permanent housing

Objectives:

1. To provide transitional and permanent housing options for at least 150 former foster youth;
2. To support transition services for former foster youth which promote their educational, economic, and career development;
3. To increase the supply of permanent, affordable housing for former foster youth by at least 40 units;
4. To promote policy, funding, and system changes which assist foster youth in obtaining and maintain housing; and
5. To increase the level of public and philanthropic resources supporting housing and supportive services for Bay Area foster youth.

Guiding principles:

- Housing and services need to be responsive to the developmental level of youth rather than their chronological age.
- A continuum of housing options (transitional, permanent, scattered-site, congregate, etc.) is necessary to meet the individual needs of former foster youth.

Project Description:

Funding will be provided at three levels: direct services, capacity building, and systems change. Funding distribution will be approximately 70% for direct services, 20% for capacity building, and 10% for systems change.

The Initiative will serve youth from throughout the Bay Area (Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Counties) although direct services funding will not necessarily be provided in each county.

Direct Services:

The bulk of the funding will be awarded to nonprofit organizations to provide housing and services that help youth obtain and maintain housing. The goal of this funding is to house and support former foster youth who are homeless and in need of housing through the use of existing transitional and permanent housing units. Housing types will include congregate and scattered-site models. Although the Initiative funding is concentrated on the housing part of the projects, grantee partners will also provide the necessary range of employment, education, and other supportive services that help youth to become self-sufficient.

Select nonprofit organizations with track records in serving youth and providing housing will be invited to. At least 150 youth will receive direct housing and supportive services through these projects.

Capacity Building:

Funding will be awarded to the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) to provide convening, training, and technical assistance support for organizations housing former foster youth. The goal of this funding is to help increase the availability of more housing units for former foster youth in the future.

CSH will work to link developers and providers to work on creating new units of permanent housing for former foster youth. The grant funds will provide for CSH staff and/or consultants to provide technical assistance and linkage services. The majority of the grant funds, however, will be re-granted by CSH to specific housing projects for pre-development, feasibility, and other capital needs. CSH will also convene key stakeholders from around the Bay Area to develop a regional plan for housing foster youth and determine initial advocacy priorities. At least 40 new units of housing will ultimately be created as a result of the capacity building funding.

Systems Change:

Funding will be reserved for advocacy and public policy change work. Priorities for this work may include prevention and discharge planning; fair housing laws; forging connections with adult services; securing new funding streams including the expansion of THP+; and increasing the age limit for existing foster youth funding. Through CSH's regional convening and planning work, systems change objectives will be determined. Then, one or more nonprofit organizations will be selected to move the regional agenda forward. Greater program flexibility and increased public funding are potential goals of the systems change work with specific objectives to be determined through the regional planning process.

Funding Partners:

Hewlett Foundation \$750,000 for two years committed
Schwab Foundation \$600,000 for two years committed
Irvine Foundation \$500,000 for two years committed
Sobrato Foundation \$200,000 for two years committed

Total funding of \$2,050,000 for the two-year grant period.

Funding Distribution is projected as follows:

\$1,350,000 will be awarded through invitation for direct services;

\$400,000 will be awarded to CSH for capacity building and re-granting;

\$200,000 will be awarded for systems change work;

\$100,000 will be reserved for Initiative coordination, convenings, and evaluation.

Foster Youth Housing Initiative Direct Service Proposal Summaries

Overview

Site visits and due diligence have been conducted with a number of Bay Area agencies with experience serving former foster youth AND providing housing and other related supportive services. Six were invited to submit full grant proposals to the Foster Youth Housing Initiative. Proposals were reviewed by Consultant and Irvine Foundation, and applicants were asked to provide follow-up information to clarify portions of their projects. At this point, we recommend funding for six projects:

- Bill Wilson Center, Santa Clara County
- Center for Venture Philanthropy (Edgewood & YFES), San Mateo County
- Fred Finch Youth Center, Alameda County
- First Place Fund for Youth, Alameda County & Contra Costa County
- Larkin Street Youth Center, San Francisco
- Tri-City Homeless Coalition, Alameda County

The projects represent a diversity of target subpopulations, locations, housing typologies, and supportive services. Through this Initiative, over 385 emancipating foster youth and 50 of their children will be helped to obtain and maintain permanent housing and move toward financial self-sufficiency.

Programs funded through the Initiative provide transitional housing (both scattered-site and congregate), permanent supportive housing, and permanent scattered-site housing. All projects provide intensive case management and life skills for youth – usually at least once per week. Some have stronger links to vocational and employment training and placement (Larkin Street), while others emphasize housing youth enrolled in community college programs (Bill Wilson, CVP). Some specialize in pregnant and parenting teens (First Place), while others focus on youth with multiple disabilities (Fred Finch).

\$1,425,000 is requested in funding. The vast majority of the funding requests are for housing subsidies of varying types and lengths. The remainder is primarily for a total of 4 staff positions – 2.5 Case Managers and 1.5 Housing Specialists –to work with the additional youth. Organizations are also allowed to use up to 10% of the funds for administrative costs.

All of the proposals include the use of existing, and sometimes new, funding sources in order to make the projects work. In several instances, FYHI will specifically leverage other dollars such as HOME, Robert Wood Johnson, THP+, & community donations that might not have gone to the projects otherwise.

FYHI Project Summaries

Bill Wilson Center's Connect to Permanent Housing Program (\$200K)

For over 20 years, Bill Wilson has provided transitional housing and services for former foster youth and served as one of the County's Independent Living Skills providers since 1987. Through this Initiative, Bill Wilson proposes to increase the time (currently 18 months) of its transitional housing program by up to two years for youth enrolled in 2-4 year college programs. They also wish to provide move-in costs, emergency financial assistance, and shallow rent subsidies (of up to one year) for selected parenting and single youth as they exit the transitional housing program. In addition to providing housing – initially through small apartment buildings owned by Bill Wilson and then through scattered-sites in the community – they will provide case management, independent living skills, financial planning, vocational and educational assistance, child care referrals, and substance abuse counseling. Over 50 youth and 10 of their children will be served. FYHI Funding is primarily requested for rental subsidies and emergency financial assistance.

First Place Fund for Youth's Supported Housing Program (\$200K)

Since 1998 time, First Place has been providing housing and supportive services for youth age 16-23 aging out of foster care. First Place proposes to increase its program by over 40 additional youth and 12 of their children per year through their scattered-site rental housing model. Approximately 75% of the units will be in Alameda County and 25% in Contra Costa County. In addition to the rental subsidies, youth will receive weekly in-home case management, life skills, and economic literacy training, transportation assistance, and links to education, employment, childcare, and health resources. The program lasts for up to two years, and FYHI funds will serve as a match toward THP+ and Robert Wood Johnson funding. FYHI funding is primarily requested for rental subsidies.

Center for Venture Philanthropy's Fostering the Future Initiative: Youth & Family Enrichment Services and Edgewood's Kinship Program (\$200K)

Formed in 2004, the Fostering the Future Initiative brings together two nonprofit agencies (YFES and Edgewood) that have extensive experience in serving foster youth populations with other key local nonprofit and government organizations to help youth successfully transition into independent living. They propose to provide housing advocacy services to help over 200 youth and 20 of their children aging out of care find permanent housing and to provide financial assistance for at least 30 of these youth to help them leave kinship care. Youth will receive supportive services include case management, an asset coach, an Individual Development Account, legal services, and links to employment and education. Over 75% of the youth are expected to be enrolled in community college, and most are from Redwood City and East Palo Alto. The program lasts for up to 2 years and FYHI funds will help to leverage funds from the

County of San Mateo and private donors. FYHI funding is primarily requested toward a full-time Housing Specialist and move-in assistance.

Fred Finch Youth Center's Coolidge Court ***(\$225K)***

Fred Finch has been providing permanent supportive housing for mentally disabled young adults exiting the foster care system since 1998. Coolidge Court provides 18 studio units of congregate housing in Oakland and proposes to expand services for each of these youth as well as increasing the number of youth served by at least 6 per year, for a total of 30 disabled youth. By hiring a Case Manager and a half-time Housing Specialist and offering financial assistance in the form of move-in costs and shallow-rent subsidies, they will assist and incentivize youth who are able to move from their program into more independent, scattered-site apartment housing. Supportive services include living skills, counseling, and access to an array of external training, education, medical, and psychiatric services. FYHI funding is requested primarily for staffing costs and move-in assistance.

Larkin Street Youth Services' LEASE Program ***(\$300K)***

Larkin Street provides a continuum of housing and supportive services for homeless and runaway youth and young adults. Since 2002, Larkin Street's LEASE program, in collaboration with the Department of Human Services ILP and First Place, has been providing housing and services specifically for youth aging out of the foster care system. Larkin Street proposes expanding its LEASE program by one Case Manager to serve 30 youth, all of whom will be housed in scattered-site apartment units in San Francisco. Initiative funds will be also be used to make the LEASE program more flexible by adding a shallow rent subsidy program for youth needing less intensive financial assistance or for youth requiring aftercare assistance. All former foster youth in LEASE will receive comprehensive supportive services including intensive educational and employment assistance through Larkin's HIRE UP program. FYHI funding is requested primarily for rental assistance and staffing.

Tri-City Homeless Coalition's Project Independence ***(\$300K)***

Since 2001, Project Independence has been providing housing and support services for 25 emancipating foster youth at a time. Tri-City proposes to expand the program to serving 35 youth and 10 of their children and also to extend the program for 25 participants who need more time (about 50% of the youth) from 2 years to 2.5 years through shallow rent subsidies. In addition to scattered-site housing, Project Independence provides case management, life skills training, mentors, and connections to other community resources. Through this proposal, Tri-City will also hire an additional case manager to increase its work on assisting youth achieve their employment and educational goals and enhancing their financial literacy. FYHI funding is requested primarily for rental assistance and staffing.

Description of Bay Area Housing Programs

Alameda County

Bay Area Youth Centers – THPP

- For 16-19 years olds
- Contracted through Alameda County, serve Alameda County youth and Mendocino County youth (contract with Medi-Cal)
- Capacity for 12 youth
- Scattered site apartments (1 3-bedroom, 1 2-bedroom in same building and another 3 2-bedrooms in another building)
- No 24-hour supervision
- Offer case management and individualized independent living skills training
- Groups are offered every other week (therapeutic and lifeskills)
- Outcomes in last 18 months
 - 5 graduated from the program (2 did not complete the program)
 - 2 college dorms, 1 THP-Plus program, 1 Job Corps, and 1 independent apartment
 - 4 emancipated with high school diplomas
 - 4 were employed at the time of emancipation
 - 4 had between \$2000-\$5000 in emancipation savings accounts a the time of discharge, 1 had \$900

Coolidge Court (Permanent Housing)

- Run through Fred Finch in Oakland, but program is its own 5013-C
- Permanent housing for transitional homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless, youth between the ages of 18 and 24
- Studio apartments (340 square feet) and a shared community space downstairs
- Residents need to have mental health issues and be eligible for Supplemental Security Income or have to pay the rent themselves (all but one resident are on SSI)
 - Residents pay 30% of their income towards rent for operating expenses and need to pay utilities themselves
- Most residents have an Axis I Diagnosis in the DSM-IV and are low income
- There is no medication monitoring in the program, and residents are required to pay rent/ utilities/ phone, do own laundry, and cook and clean their own studios
- Capacity for 18 residents, both male and female
- Groups are offered, tenant-led groups as well
- Independent living skills are taught on an individual basis

First Place Fund for Youth (THP-Plus)

- Emancipation Training Center
 - Targeting Supplement Security Income advocacy
 - Brokering affordable housing developers post-discharge
 - Youth have little ability to apply for apartments
 - Economic literacy program
- Supported Housing Program
 - 35 youth from Alameda
 - 15 youth from Contra Costa
 - Funded by THP+ monies (40% state, 60% county – paid for by private foundation monies)
 - Housing provided in Berkeley, Oakland, Hayward, San Leandro and Castro Valley
 - Shelters manage over-demand when FPFY is at capacity
- Collaborator with the LEASE Program (see below)
 - FPFY is a subcontractor of the LEASE program and houses 10 pregnant or parenting former foster youth ages 18 to 21 in the East Bay
 - Funded by THP+ monies (40% state, 60% county – paid for by SFDHS)
 - Flexible (used by Alameda County CBO) – resources are dispersed where the youth are, beyond a “county border” orientation
- Outcomes (a more thorough examination of outcomes can be requested with the Executive Director of First Place Fund for Youth)
 - 33% continued to live in FPFY apartments after exit
 - 14% had lived in a shelter or street after exiting
 - 93% had completed high school diploma or GED
 - 53% were enrolled in college or had completed a AA or BA degree
 - 43% were currently pursuing an AA, BA or vocational training
 - 43% were currently employed after exiting program
 - 90% were employed in the last 12 months (average employment of 7.6 months)
 - Average hourly wage was \$11.50
 - 33% received TANF, food stamps, or General Assistance
 - 7% had been hospitalized for a mental health issue
 - 7% were arrested or convicted after leaving First Place

Project Independence (THP-Plus)

- Run through the Tri-City Homeless Coalition (TCHC)
- 13 apartments (23 youth) in 3 separate complexes
- TCHC holds the master lease
 - Provides rental subsidies, 2 bedroom is usually \$1200-1300 per month, City of Fremont pays 47% of this for 2 participants; single mom with a child, 50% subsidy for 1 bedroom
 - City of Livermore will pay up to \$1025 per unit with Home Funds

- After 2 years, if good tenants, can maintain the regular unsubsidized rent, can turn lease over to the youth
 - Participants pay a gradually increasing percentage of the rent on their shared apartment, until upon graduation from the program they are able to sustain a market-rate rent
- In a \$1000 per month apartment, each person responsible for 19% of the rent (\$190 each)
- Partially uses Home Funds for federal housing subsidy (although not supposed to be used for 1 population)
- Also uses THP-Plus monies (but county could not buy in so uses Community Block Development Grant for services and salaries) that Walter S. Johnson Foundation paid for county buy-in
 - Drawed upon what they could honestly match
 - 18-21, but up to 24th birthday with private donations
- City of Fremont used Home Funds for 3 years and Community Development Block Grant for services and salaries for case management and administration
- New money from Livermore
- 90-95% of referrals come from ILSP
- Funding is strictly for Alameda County youth
- No economic literacy program like FPFY
- 2 year program, go to ILSP orientation and sell to youth
- \$500 security deposit, prepared to pay 1st months rent and living expenses
- Need to be ready to live on their own for PI
- Have to be employed part-time, or qualify for financial aid if in school
- Case management (1.5 hours per week) at their apartments
- Outcomes
 - 1st year 3 completed the program
 - 2004 3 completed
 - 2005 8 completed (know where all 14 are)

Youth Project (THPP)

- For females in foster care ages 17 to 19, opened in 2002
- Capacity for 7 females youth
- Case management and Program Director
- No 24 hour staff supervision, clients live independently
- Groups consist of community meeting, conflict resolution
- Must attend school or be in employment training (through Pivotal Point)
 - 6 months prior to discharge must look for a job
 - 4 months prior to discharge must be actively working unless college-bound
- Must attend ILSP
- Referrals: Alameda County ILSP, but will take other county's youth
- Funding
 - California THPP

Contra Costa County

Care Program (Transitional Living Program)

- Collaboration with the Interfaith Council and Catholic Charities of the East Bay
- Serves 5 former foster youth ages 18 to 23 in transitional living
- Communal living model (4 bedroom house in East Contra Costa County)
- Youth have work or be attending school
- 30% of income goes toward rent
- Youth can stay 18 to 24 months

Contra Costa Homeless Program Services – Division of Public Health (Tran Living Prog)

- Transitional Living Program for homeless young adults ages 18 to 21, can stay 18 months
- Run through the Division of Public Health
- Capacity for 6 youth, 4 of which have a history of foster care, no waitlist
- House located in El Sobrante
- Case management, 24 hour staff supervision, therapy (MFTI), lifeskills counselors
- 30% of income towards “rent” but get back when they exit the program
- Requirement to work and/or school
- Funded
 - Runaway Homeless Youth (RHY) Federal Program

Pride and Purpose (Transitional Living Program)

- Transitional Living Program for homeless young adults ages 18 to 21 (until 22nd birthday), can stay 18 months, opened in 2002
- Capacity for 12 youth (two sites 6 youth each) – one houses 6 females, another houses 6 males
- Work towards independent living skills (CA id, birth certificate, SS card, medical insurance, open bank account,
- Save \$200 in rent each months which they receive when they exit
- If in school full-time, don’t have to work
- Goal to reconnect with family members if possible
- Referrals: CC and San Francisco DHS, ILSP, social services
- Employment training through City of Richmond Youth Works
- Funded
 - Homeless Project out of San Francisco
 - CRYW for renting facilities

Monterey County

Peacock Acres (THPP)

- 12 youth can be served
- 2 housing models
 - Communal living with a house manager (adult with another job outside of the home), independent living skills taught on site, limited supervision
 - Studio apartments for higher functioning youth, on-site manager provides supervision, checks curfews and cleanliness
- Must be attending school; some youth working
- Does not have to be Monterey County foster youth
- Save 40% of income and ILSP matches up to \$500 per year
- Youth receive laptops and kitchen kits
- Bank of America will open savings accounts without co-signing
- Youth can stay in the scattered site apartment after graduating from the program if they can pay rent
- Outcomes (6 youth)
 - 1 graduated from high school, enrolled in college, working full-time
 - 1 youth received a full scholarship to Cal State Fullerton as a Guardian Scholar
 - 1 youth received a GED and is now a medical assistant full-time, enrolled in college to become an RN
 - 1 youth ran away, 1 youth discharged to mother's house, 1 youth discharged back to communal living THPP

San Francisco County

Avenues to Independence (Transitional Living Program)

- Transitional Living Program for homeless young adults ages 18 to 24 (up to 24th birthday), opened in 1996
- Run through Larkin Street Youth Services in San Francisco
- Capacity for 15 youth
- Referrals from LSYS, LYRIC, New Leaf, San Francisco ILSP, Ark House
- 1 case manager
- 24 hours per day staff supervision
- ILS through modeling by staff, clients also have community chores
- Must be employed 30 hours per week, but have to attend school outside of work
- Must pay "rent" where they save 30% of income with program which they receive back upon exit of program
- Referred to employment training at Larkin Street Youth Services' Hire UP program
- Some residents have mental health issues and history of foster care (about 50%)
- Funding

- HUD partially
- RHY Transitional Living Program funding
- Private grants

Crossroads (Mental Health - Transitional Living Program)

- Can serve up to 10 youth
- Co-ed facility
- Youth need to receive SSI or be eligible for SSI in order to move into program, and have Axis I or Axis II diagnosis in DSM-IV
 - Residents have to pay for Board and Care (\$877 per month)
- 24 hour staff supervision
- Serve youth ages 18 to 25 (examining up to 30)
- Have groups on site – therapeutic and community recreational
- Can stay 18 months, but is flexible
- Referrals from Transitional Youth Services in San Francisco County
- Refer out for therapy

Gastinell's Supportive Housing (Mental Health - Transitional Living Program)

- Can serve up to 8 youth in a single room occupancy setting in a residential neighborhood in San Francisco
- Serves youth ages 18 to 24 Funded by HUD monies
- Participants have to be female and homeless, with a verifiable history of foster care (could have been placed in any county)
- Can stay 6 years, but usually stay about 2 years
- No 24-hour supervision
- Groups are run on site
- Clean and sober program
- Licensed by the State of California
- Rent is 30% of income (target is \$266 per month)
 - Participants work or receive SSI to pay rent

Guerrero House (Transitional Living Program)

- Transitional Living Program for homeless young adults ages 18 to 24 (up to 25th birthday), opened in 1990
- Run through Catholic Charities in San Francisco
- Capacity for 20 youth, 50 person waitlist is usually full
- Referrals from LSYS, LYRIC, New Leaf, San Francisco ILSP, Ark House
- 2 case managers
- 24 hours per day staff supervision
- ILS through modeling by staff, clients also have community chores
- Group home youth do better, foster youth are worse
- 30 hour work week product (i.e. therapy, employment, school)

- 30% of income goes to program fees, residents must also save 30% of income with program which they receive back upon exit of program
- Referred to employment training at Larkin Street Youth Services' Hire UP program
- Some residents have mental health issues
- Have full Aftercare program
- Funding
 - HUD partially
 - Private grants
 - Department of Human Services

LEASE Program (THP-Plus)

- Run through Larkin Street Youth Services in San Francisco
- For youth who have emancipated from the San Francisco County foster care system
- The program serves up to 21 youth (along with 10 pregnant or parenting youth in collaboration with First Place Fund for Youth)
- Larkin Street holds master lease, but youth can take over lease
- 2 year program until 21st birthday (whichever comes first)
- Participants live in studio apartments
- Rent is 30% of income to program (minimum of 30%), rent is increased over time, and paid on the 1st and 15th of each month
- If attending school, has to be employed part-time. If not attending school, has to be employed full-time.
- Lifeskills workshops held 2 times per month
- 2 case managers, individual meetings with clients 1 time per week unless not working, then 2 times per week
- Referrals mainly from SF County Independent Living Skills Program
- Can have mental health and substance use issues, but not severe enough to prevent them from working or attending school
- Program provides food subsidy of \$100 per month, participants are slowly taken down to \$50 in 9 months
- Phone bill is participant's own responsibility
- Funding
 - THP-Plus through San Francisco County Department of Human Services
- Outcomes
 - 12 youth have exited between the program's inception in November 2003 until July 31, 2005
 - Six youth aged out of services (turned 21 years old)
 - Three reunified with family members
 - Three moved into shared housing and are living independently
 - Six left, but did not age out of services
 - Two moved out on their own to live independently

- Two could not adhere to program requirements and chose to leave
- One was discharged for not adhering to program requirements
- One was discharged for not occupying the unit due to incarceration

San Mateo County

Daybreak (Transitional Living Program)

- Transitional Living Program for homeless young adults ages 16 to 21 (up to 21st birthday), opened in 1990
- Run through Youth and Family Enrichment Services in San Mateo
- Capacity for 10 youth, can stay up to 6 months (house approximately 20% former foster youth)
- Referrals from outreach workers, schools, Santa Clara and San Mateo child welfare agencies
- 1 case manager and 1 program manager
- Residents must be enrolled in GED or high school if they do not have their high school proficiency
- Facility is closed from 8am-4pm Monday through Friday and 4-5pm on weekends
- 2 groups per week (1 therapeutic and 1 ILS-related), once per month there is an employment training group run through Peninsula Works, use Ansell-Casey Adams ILS assessment tool
- Aftercare is through ILSP
- 60% of income is saved while in the program, get all back when they exit the program
- Rent is subsidized after they leave (for up to \$1000 total)
- Funding
 - TLP – Administration of Children and Families (Federal)
 - County funding
 - Agency (YFES) funding
 - Community Development Block Grants (CDBG through HUD)

THPP San Mateo County – Redwood City

- Run through Youth and Family Enrichment Services
- Contracted through San Mateo County
- Capacity for 6 youth in Redwood City
- Scattered site apartment model (3 apartments, 2 bedrooms each) all in the same building
- No 24-hour supervision, but there are curfews and apartment checks
- Participants have to be in school or working towards their GED or need to be working

- Youth need to be accessing ILSP with San Mateo County
- Youth save 50% of earnings, open their own bank accounts, and can qualify for the THPP emancipation fund (\$100 per month)
- Aftercare is offered through YFES case manager
- Groups are held for employment training and community meetings

THPP San Mateo County – East Palo Alto

- Contracted through San Mateo County
- Capacity for 6 female youth in East Palo Alto
- Communal living site model
- No 24-hour supervision, but there are curfews and homechecks, do have sleep over staff, can go away for the weekend with approval
- Participants have to be in school or working towards their GED or need to be working
- Youth need to be accessing ILSP with any county
- Youth pay mock “rent checks” back to the house based on their employment pay
- Groups are held for employment training and community meetings
- Many wrap-around services available in the community

Foster Youth Stipend Program

- For up to 25 youth
- Rent subsidies for former foster youth
- \$180,000 funding from Board of Supervisors
- Run through YFES Aftercare case manager
- Serves emancipated foster youth ages 18-21
- Two year program
- Youth must be in school and/or work 30 hours per week
- Subsidy decreases from 100% to 25% over two years

Santa Clara County

Bill Wilson Center (THPPs and Transitional Living Programs)

- 3 Transitional Living Programs for *Single Young Adults* (ages 18 to 22)
 - Serve 5 youth each in a communal and scattered site apartment housing models (15 total)
 - Do not have to be former foster youth (although 50% are), can be out of county
 - Have to work full-time or part-time and be involved in education
 - Aftercare services are available including a rental subsidy or subsidized child care
 - Attend ILSP though Community Solutions (contractor for county)
 - Can stay 6 months to 3 years

- Can receive employment services and job placement through Employment Connection
- 5 Transitional Living Programs for *Parenting Young Adults* (ages 18 to 22)
 - Serve 22 youth total in communal and scattered site apartment housing models
 - Can serve up to 28 children in the programs (3-4 or 5-6 per program)
 - Do not have to be former foster youth (10% are), can be out of county
 - Have to work full-time or part-time and be involved in education
 - Aftercare services are available including a rental subsidy or subsidized child care
 - Attend ILSP through Community Solutions (contractor for county)
 - Can stay 6 months to 3 years
 - Can receive employment services and job placement through Employment Connection
- 2 THPP for *Single Young Adults* (ages 16 to 19)
 - Serve 11 youth total in a communal and scattered site apartment housing models
 - Communal living house in Santa Clara, 5 bedrooms (females only, can stay up to 3 years)
 - Triplex in Santa Clara with 2, 3-bedroom units and one unit for program monitor (co-ed, can stay up to 2 years)
 - Have to be youth in foster care or probationary placement
 - Participants pay 30% of income to “rent” but get back when they leave the program (also \$300 per month is saved from foster care payment)
 - Can receive employment services and job placement through Employment Connection

Unity Care (also in Monterey County) (Transitional Living Program)

- For emancipated foster and probation youth (in out-of-home placement at some point as a minor)
- Transitional housing for 18 to 21 year olds who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless
- Will house out of county youth
- Stay roughly 1 year
- Referrals from self, ILP, SS probation
- 2 houses in San Jose, and 1 in Monterey; 6 beds in each, 18 youth total; co-ed
- Not supervised 24-7, live in staff make sure no chaos, support at odd hours
- 3 case managers to make sure youth’s needs are identified and a transition plan is designed and implemented to meet those needs
- Regular landlord/tenant situation
- Security deposit is paid (ILP can help out with this)

- When a youth establishes an income, 30% towards rent, \$50 to groceries and household items (rent is given back but can only be used for independent living needs, check is cut to new landlord)
- Informal ILS workshops (if ILP eligible, must go unless working or attending school)
 - Job readiness
 - Educational assistance
 - Financial planning assistance
 - Housekeeping
 - Shopping
 - Meal preparation
 - Time management skills
- House meeting 1x per week
- Funded by HUD – Supportive Housing Program (SHP) covers staffing, Unity Care picks up the rest of costs
- ILP provides bus passes and a bicycle for each youth
- Outcomes
 - 5 have moved out (1 to Mexico, 1 left and returned, 3 are in independent rental situations)

Santa Cruz County

Santa Cruz Transitional Housing Program (THP-Plus)

- For emancipated foster youth (5 beds in 1 house) – contracted out through Santa Cruz Community Counseling (holds lease)
 - Currently in a scattered site model and hopes to continue to develop
 - Case management once per week
 - ILS Club – empower youth
 - Youth pay 25% rent (rest into savings account)
 - Partner with Santa Cruz Redevelopment Agency (owns houses and rents them at below market rate)
 - EPSDT individualized counseling for the youth and paid for housing in the past
 - Santa Cruz County doing a small match (\$24,000) effective 7/1/05
 - Partnering with the Santa Cruz Housing Authority (Temporary Section 8) for some youth ages 18 to 21 for 18 months, voucher for 18 months and get on regular list after that

Sonoma County

True to Life Children's Services (THPP)

- Can house 12 to 13 youth at one time
- Uses a communal living, scattered site apartment (1-2 youth only), and host-home models (1-2 youth only)

- Case management services are offered
- Host home model is for parenting, guides ILSP skills
- No 24-hour supervision
- Financial literacy training is provided

Transitional Housing Program – Tamayo House

- Both a transitional and permanent supportive housing program
 - Eligibility: men and women 18-24 who are homeless and low-income less than \$16,000 a year
 - Target population: former foster youth (all people may apply)
 - 24 beds: 4 shared rooms, 16 single rooms, all unfurnished
 - Unlicensed facility (must be 18 or legally emancipated)
 - Case management services including: information and referral, assistance with independent living skills, career counseling, household management and money management
-

Employment Programs for Former Foster Youth

Alameda County

Project Self Sufficiency

- Pilot project through the Youth Employment Partnership (YEP) in Oakland (18 month demonstration project, began in February 2005)
- Serves 80 wards (40 former foster youth, 40 probation)
 - Began to learn more about serving these youth with unique needs
 - Lessons learned to be incorporated into YEP's eleven other programs
- Funding through the Department of Labor Initiative (\$1 million)
- Lessons learned thus far:
 - Build relationships with group homes, foster homes, and residential mental health programs serving these youth
 - Continue to build relationships with child welfare workers and administrators to gather as much information as possible about each youth's needs (currently a trouble spot with administrators in Alameda County)

San Mateo County

- Provides two full-time employment services specialists for pre and post emancipated youth
- Serves 80 youth on average
- Funding source is Human Services and Workforce Investment Board
- Integral part of Adolescent Services Unit which consists of Child Welfare, ILSP, Aftercare, Permanence, Therapeutic Foster Care, and Absent Parent Search worker in addition to Employment Services. All are co-located as one department.

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