Building a Holistic System of Support and Advocacy for Transition Aged Youth
Appropriate Front Door Policies Critical to Meeting the Needs of Older Youth

• TAY youth are more likely to be characterized as “runaways” and not receive appropriate interventions – including prevention services and entries to foster care.
  o This is especially true of older African-American youth
• Investigations and diversion are often done without youth input.
  o Appropriate question should be running away from what?
• Getting this wrong has dire consequences for both the youth and the system resulting in increased trauma and high TAY homelessness numbers
• Must not lose consideration of the well-being of the youth.
TAY Homeless and “Running Away” from Abuse

88% of Homeless Youth Report Experiencing Physical, Emotional and Sexual Abuse Prior to Becoming Homeless
Out-of-Home Care Prevents Worse Outcomes

• It is estimated that there are 1.6 million youth ages 12-17 experiencing homelessness without a parent or guardian. Most have suffered maltreatment and/or persecution in their home but were not removed by CPS. They would almost certainly be better supported in foster care.

• Findings from recent CalYOUTH study: “About two-thirds of young people “agreed,” “strongly agreed,” or “very strongly agreed” that they were lucky to have been placed in foster care. About 55 percent of youth “agreed,” “strongly agreed,” or “very strongly agreed” that they were generally satisfied with their experience in foster care.”
National Update on State Participation in Extended Foster Care

• About 2/3 of the states have implemented extended foster care programs in some form.
  
  o **EFC** = extended court jurisdiction, provisions of placement/living arrangement, case management, services, health insurance

• Of the states that have extended foster care, 24 states draw down IV-E funds.

• Many states, especially those that do not have EFC, provide an enhanced aftercare system that includes monthly living stipends, case management, and other support services and benefits.

• CA, IN, and VA currently allow youth from the juvenile justice system to opt into extended foster care.
Core Principles of an Effective Extended Care Service System

• More than extending foster care for 3 years – redesign the system to address the unique needs and challenges of young adults
  
  o Youth who are 18 or older are legal adults
  
  o Young adults must have room to explore options and make mistakes
  
  o Increase levels of responsibility and independence while still providing financial and emotional support
  
  o Focus is on improving outcomes and fostering permanent connections
A Model Extended Care Service System Includes Aftercare Services Designed for Transition Aged Youth (18-26)
Key Components for Eligibility for Extended Foster Care

- Design to be as inclusive as possible
  - Opt-out program. Every youth when an order for foster care on his/her 18th birthday is in extended foster care.
  - Re-Entry. No limitations on the number of times a youth can opt out and then opt back in.
  - Participation requirements. Intended to allow substantial majority of youth to meet participation requirements.
Develop Placement Options to Support Transition to Independence for NMDs

California created two “Supervised Independent Living Settings” (“SILS”) just for non-minor dependents:

- Supervised Independent Living Placement (SILP)
- Transitional Housing Placement-Plus Foster Care (THP+FC) Program
Re-Entry: Returning to Extended Foster Care

Eligible nonminors (ages 18 until 21) can request the court to re-open their court case.

Youth re-entering will be assigned a worker, appointed an attorney and overseen by the court.

Re-entry is voluntary but eligible youth have a right to request re-entry as long as they intend to meet the participation requirements & it is in their best interests.

Eligible youth can re-enter unlimited times if under statutory age limits.
Different Paths for Re-entry

Original legislation provided re-entry for NMDs under order for foster care placement on 18th b-day *WIC 388(e) (most common scenario)*

**New:** Subsequent Legislation Expanded Re-entry:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligible youth with relative guardian &amp; non-related legal guardians or adopted who experiences the death of a legal guardian or adoptive parent(s) <em>WIC 388(e)(1)</em></th>
<th>Eligible youth whose former guardian or adoptive parents no longer provide ongoing support to, and no longer receive payment on behalf of, the nonminor <em>WIC 388(e)(1) (new as of January 1st, 2015, AB 2454)</em></th>
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*WIC 388(e)(1)*
Focus on Subgroups

• Expectant and Parenting Youth
• Youth with disabilities
• Youth with immigration issues
• Youth who are CSEC (commercially sexually exploited children)
• Youth involved in the juvenile justice system
Up to 71% of young women in foster care are expected to become pregnant while in extended foster care\(^1\)

What is in place to support them?

- Additional/increased monthly payments
- Shared Responsibility Plans
- ILP geared towards parenting youth

\(^1\) Alves, Jourdain & Mejia. Fostering Connections for Parenting Foster Youth (2012).
Youth under the jurisdiction of the delinquency court (“wards”) are eligible for extended care if there is an order for foster care at age 18.

In addition, once youth have met the terms of their probation, they are eligible to continue receiving services under new jurisdiction: transition jurisdiction.

Court may also assume transition jurisdiction upon re-entry to foster care.
Transition Jurisdiction (WIC 450)

- **What?** Allows for former wards to continue receiving extended foster care once they’ve met terms of probation, but legally treated as dependents of the court, not wards.

- **Why?** Incentive for youth to take advantage of extended benefits after probation without remaining “delinquents.”

- **How?** Court determines if terms of probation met and modifies jurisdiction.

- **Who supervises?** Probation or child welfare – county option.
Special Population: Youth with Disabilities

Extended Foster Care offers new opportunities to assist youth with disabilities.

- Regional Center/SSI recipients are eligible for EFC
- CA requires SSI applications for all potentially eligible youth between 16.5 – 17.5, and AB 12 requires that SSI eligibility be maintained using workaround until youth exits extended foster care
- Extended care allows for time to ensure youth assessed for appropriate supports (IEP, SSI, Regional Center, etc)
- Allows for time to make meaningful transition plan to adult services
Special Topics: College Students

California College Pathways

- Supports campus networks of programs for foster youth
- Provides training and technical assistance for emerging and established campus programs
- Advocates for policies and regulations to improve higher education outcomes for foster youth
- Collaborates to create a more seamless pipeline to college for K-12 foster youth

Visit the California College Pathways website at: www.cacollegepathways.org
Build an expansive array of community based mental health services under the EPSDT entitlement with additional state funded services directed toward housing and case management when possible.

Develop specific transition planning protocols that guide actions that needs to occur:

| Screening and application for SSI, Medicaid, subsidized housing, SNAP, TANF, etc | Screening and assistance in applying for establishing eligibility for crucial “adult” disability system benefits | Develop transition planning protocols that include who is responsible for crucial tasks, such as filing an SIJS petition. | Create protocols that include screening youth for juvenile records and provides assistance in applying for expungement or sealing where eligible. |
Know Before You Go App

Available for Android and Blackberry too.

Quickly find services across L.A. County.

A wide variety of resources.

Over 600 resources for youth!

Food
Housing
Health
Learn / Work / Fun
Independent Living
Extended Foster Care / A...
Youth Friendly Placement Overview

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO
Supervised Independent Living Placement

What is a SILP?
A SILP is a placement that you find. You decide where you live and who you live with. There is no caregiver, but it still has to be approved.

Who are SILPs for?
The SILP is designed for young adults (ages 18 to 21) who are ready to live on their own with limited financial and emotional support. Good candidates for a SILP should be able to:
- Pay all their own bills and manage their own money
- Find a safe, secure place to live
- Be ready to live independently

How do I choose a SILP?
A lot of places can be SILPs: houses/apartments, dorms, rooms for rent, living with a relative or close friend. When you are deciding, you should consider:
- Can you afford the housing? You don’t want to have to move often, or get evicted.
- Is the housing safe?
- Talk to people you trust about the pros/cons of your options.

*Note: Living with your biological parents is not allowed as a SILP.
Youth Friendly Reentry Letter

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Re-entry: Coming Back into Foster Care

A new law called the California Fostering Connections to Success Act (AB12/212/1712) has made important changes to foster care. Now that your case is closed, you have the option to come back into Extended Foster Care. If your case was open with DCFS, you will come back under dependency jurisdiction. If your case was open with probation, you will come back under transition jurisdiction.

Who is eligible to re-enter foster care?

- You must be under an order for foster care placement with an open case on your 18th birthday.

- You must be younger than 20 in 2013 or younger than 21 in 2014.

What is extended foster care?

It is foster care for young adults. Youth under extended foster care are entitled to housing and help that will prepare you to live on your own, including learning to manage finances, support to go to school, assistance finding a job, etc.

How do I ask the court to re-open my case?
Take Aways......

“About two-thirds of young people “agreed,” “strongly agreed,” or “very strongly agreed” that they were lucky to have been placed in foster care. About 55 percent of youth “agreed,” “strongly agreed,” or “very strongly agreed” that they were generally satisfied with their experience in foster care.” CalYOUTH Study

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<th>Varied stakeholders may come to the table with different directives, concerns or challenges but most importantly – we are at the table because of the youth!</th>
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<tr>
<td>When there is conflict - refocus on the youth.</td>
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<td>Inclusiveness – both in planning for extended foster care and in setting eligibility criteria</td>
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<td>Be Patient</td>
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