

## **YOUTH AGING OUT SURVEY ISSUE: EMPLOYMENT**

What employment services (counseling, training, and placement) are available that target youth?

### **Arizona**

Employment readiness and related needs are incorporated into each youth's transition or "independent living" plan. Youth are referred for participation in local employment programs, mentoring, skills training and other activities (through schools, clubs, community) to enhance their preparedness for employment and career. Contract life skills trainers often assist youth with employment readiness and job search. Vocational Rehabilitation counselors have also assisted eligible youth in this area.

### **Colorado**

State-wide there are Workforce Centers/1 Stops that provide employment services for youth and several have separate youth outreach centers that are youth-friendly/accessible.

[www.e-colorado.org](http://www.e-colorado.org) is a noteworthy on-line resource that list job fairs, employment tools, Governor's Summer Job Hunt, peer mentoring/coaching, and a new Youth Net link that has resources for youth with disabilities.

Chafee provides services and educational and training vouchers (ETVs).

### **Connecticut**

The DCF and the state are very proud of our programming around youth employment. This is one of the first areas where state agencies partnered to enhance services. DCF, DOL, DOE, the workforce boards and private partners began with strong communications on these needs and services, made our youth a priority population for services and ultimately received funds and created a Work To Learn program. This continues to be an area where additional funds and support staff have been requested to expand and solidify services. DCF received a Jim Casey grant to operate two sites and have added a third site in 2006. We have requested a budget option for a fourth site to begin in the fall of 2007. Approximately 300 youth can receive services from these programs.

### **Delaware**

Some IL agencies have Employment and Education Specialists (EES) who work with the youth on an individual basis to assess skills and interest. The EES helps youth create/update resumes and facilitates job search in the community. The EES provides job skills, soft skills, and social skills training, in both an individual and group setting. The EES also provides support to the employer and employee in an effort to increase changes of maintaining employment. Youth also participate in mock interviews. Youth with special needs are referred to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). Some youth participate in a program, Jobs for Delaware Graduates (JDG), in the high schools.

### **Indiana**

Indiana's IL program focuses on preparing youth for employment and assists in obtaining employment. Indiana also has a Job Works program that may provide training, guidance, and job placement for all youth in placement or low income families. Vocational Rehabilitation also provides job coaching for lower functioning clients.

## **Iowa**

*Iowa After Care Services Network:* Iowa's Aftercare Program, serving former foster care youth between the ages of 18 and 21, focuses, among other things, on employment as a key component that a youth's self-sufficiency plan. The plan must address the youth goals and supports provided by the advocate. Employment or attending school is required for the PAL stipend (described below):

- ❑ *Preparation for Adult Living [PAL]:* Aftercare participants who left foster care after May 1, 2006, were at least age 18, and have a high school diploma or GED may be able to qualify for a monthly stipend to live in an approved living arrangement such as former foster parents, in an apartment or a college dorm. PAL participants must be attending college, be in a work training program or be working. Regular meetings with Self Sufficiency Advocates are required.
- ❑ *Education & Training Vouchers:* Tuition, books and other related expenses may be covered by ETV through the Iowa College Student Aid Commission. ETV can pay up to \$5000 per year through age 23 towards university, community college or trade school education. The Legislature is considering tuition waivers for children in foster care.

*Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative:* Iowa is currently participating in the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, with the ultimate goal of increasing opportunities for successful transition to self-sufficiency, particularly educational and employment to youth, who are in or were in foster care between the ages of 14 and 23. Polk County (Des Moines and surrounding suburbs) is the project site and the Youth Policy Institute of Iowa administering the initiative. It is IDHS's goal to advocate for best practices learned from the initiative on a statewide basis.

## **Maine**

Jobs for Maine's Graduates (JMG) unique combination of program components reconnects students to the educational process. We follow each individual's progress as he or she successfully graduates and pursues continued education, a military career, and/or becomes a member of the workforce. By enabling our students to more fully realize their potential, we benefit all of Maine and its communities.

Employment Trust Inc. in partnership with the Maine DHHS/OCFS, Annie E. Casey Foundation, and Casey Family Services youth presently or formerly in the Maine foster care system will be provided initial and transitional employment opportunities.

The Maine Department of Labor's Career Centers are the place to resources to help train workers and other information youth need to compete in today's economy. Through the Career Centers youth and young adults can:

- Receive help with job search and resume writing techniques, interviewing tips and many other employment services;
- Get their skills and abilities entered into a database at the Career Center and matched to employers' job openings;
- Receive help in finding employment, access training opportunities and preparation for a job search;
- Find information about financial aid, schools, apprenticeships, and on-the-job;
- Get information on starting and running one's own business;
- Receive information on career exploration, part-time jobs, volunteer work, and youth programs.

Maine Pre-Apprenticeship Program (MAP) engages eligible businesses interested in working with Maine Youth. Youth go through two years of customized high school academics coupled with 1000 hours of on-the-job training during the junior and senior years. Upon graduating, culmination is permanent employment and matriculation into the Maine Apprenticeship Program with the possibility of

progressing through an Associates Degree program or the Associates Degree in Applied Science in a Trade or Technical Occupation program (TTO degree). Application is made through the local Maine Career Centers.

The Maine Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) works to bring about full access to employment, independence and community integration for people with disabilities.

### **Minnesota**

The states workforce centers have WIA funding as well as state funding to target disadvantaged youth, including youth in foster care.

### **Mississippi**

There are continued efforts to help identify ways youth can receive education, training and necessary services to obtain employment. In August of 2005 and August of 2006, the Mississippi Department of Human Services, Division of family and Children's Services held a Computer Training Camp through a contract with Instructional Access, Inc. This Computer Camp activity provided a state of the art computer training with state of the art equipment to enhance the skills of those youth in foster care and those who qualified for the ETV Program. There were 36 youth participants for the first training and 36 for the second computer training. There have been 72 youth who have participated with this training.

Another service available to youth is the utilization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program. The program targets WIA-eligible public high school seniors, to include foster youth who are on track to graduate in the spring. The projected outcomes include the achievement of a diploma, proficiency in life and employment skills that were documented as deficient at the beginning of the program, and placement in post secondary education, qualified apprenticeship, employment or the military for all participants. The same goals, expectations and projected outcomes will apply to the upcoming program year. All WIA-eligible youth desiring employment are individually assessed through the WIN Job Centers to determine employability and compatibility with the desired occupation and employers. Individuals may receive placement assistance, access to various skills-enhancing workshops, on-the-job training or Work Experience programs.

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The newly funded ETV Program, that covers post-secondary educational needs and vocational programs, is a key source for Mississippi's youth. This provides additional options to youth to help receive education or training to help find employment. The upgraded stipend amounts to assist our youth as they transition towards self-sufficiency were approved in April of 2006. The roll out of the upgraded stipend amounts were introduced to field staff in the form of a bulletin effective April 1, 2006. The following stipends were upgraded and/or added to assist with financial needs and encouragement to continue with their educational efforts, which will prepare them for better employment opportunities and better salaries.

### **Missouri**

All youth should have a minimum of a GED as an overall goal. Many efforts were made to help youth gain job training and work experience this year. Youth received job training, job mentoring and placement, and social support. Various community members representing their professions were used as guest speakers. Graduates of life skills training return to the program to serve as paid interns, class co-facilitators, office assistant and serve as tutors, mentors, and chaperones in activities with younger foster children. CD staff including case managers and ILP Specialists referred youth to Job Corps, Americorps, and all branches of the military. Missouri's Workforce Development also offers five Job

Corps centers that Missouri youth can attend. Three are located in Missouri. Job Corps is a residential education and employment training program. It provides vocational and academic skills to young adults between the ages of 16 and 24. The program provides youth accepted into the program with room, board, and spending money while they learn. Job Corps is committed to providing a safe environment for its students to ensure they acquire the skills and preparation they need to succeed in the workplace. Missouri Mentoring Partnership (MMP) sites implement structured work site and community-based mentoring. MMP staff provides resource coordination for participants and volunteer mentors recruited from the community. Mentors provide positive role modeling, friendship and guidance around employment and parenting issues to youth who are entering the workplace or have become parents. The objectives of MMP are to encourage continuation of education and to provide employment opportunities enhanced through mentoring.

### **Nebraska**

Nebraska has a contract with Job Corps to provide services for juvenile justice state wards. Also as part of the Multi Agency Task Force on out of home care we connect with the Nebraska Department of Education to support youth working on Graduate Equivalent Diplomas. This process also helps to identify the likelihood of the type of employment youth may be entering when leaving state custody and helps us to refer the youth to adult programs that can be of assistance.

Services that specifically target youth would be those that you fund mostly through Chafee, or those funded through Dept. Of Labor through Work Investment Act (WIA).. At the age of 19, young people are eligible for any of the adult services out there. Community action agencies often provide case management services where they are focusing on assisting individuals and families address barriers to self-sufficiency. We have nine agencies in NE that cover every county of the state.

### **New York**

Each year the Adolescent Services Resource Network (ASRN), four regionally based centers that provide training and technical assistance on adolescent issues to local districts and voluntary agency staff working with youth in foster care, sponsor training and technical on employment issues. ASRN also partners with the OCFS Office of Workforce Development on training on employment issues.

OCFS provides 20 internship opportunities for foster youth. Youth must be in foster care and currently enrolled in college.

Although WIA programs serve the general population which include foster care youth, some WIA funded programs in NYS target services to foster care youth.

The Administration for Children and Families (ACS) in New York City and the Department of Youth and Community Development partner to encourage local workforce areas to focus on special populations, such as foster care youth.

The Passport to Success program, a collaboration between USDOL, OCFS, ACS and two community based organizations Arbor and The Door, provides a workforce development program in NYC specifically for youth aging out of foster care.

The Work Appreciation for Youth (WAY) Program in Dobbs Ferry, NY is a nationally known workforce development program model. Way starts with a program of sequenced work experiences beginning with unpaid chores, progressing to paid jobs, and then to regular jobs in the community. WAY Scholarship involves a 5 year commitment from the agency and the youth. Prior to being discharged from foster care, participants promise to stay in school, work part-time, and save for future education. The agency promises to match each youth's savings up to \$500 a year and to provide a personal mentor (a paid,

professional counselor) who will be a stable adult in the youth's life, helping the youth set and reach his/her goals.

Youth Advocacy Services has a career advocacy program that targets foster youth in NYC.

Local youth bureaus sponsor youth development and employment activities.

### **North Carolina**

In addition to county-based efforts to expose youth to the world of work, WIA programs in the state do give preference to out of school foster youth. Also Vocational Rehabilitation, Goodwill and other targeted employment programs help youth and young adults with disabilities. Some local businesses have worked with county Departments of Social Services to give preference to teens in foster care, and some have provided apprenticeships for youth exploring employment options. Vocational interest testing and career exploration are typical subjects in LINKS programming.

### **North Dakota**

Workforce Investment programs, Job Corp, Independent Living Program, Vocational Rehabilitation.

### **Ohio**

The local workforce investment local one stops are a great resource for employment, training, and placement (with employers). Local children services agencies are encouraged to work together to develop service systems that will meet the needs of youth in care. An example of this collaboration can be found between local children services agencies and the local Workforce Investment Act (WIA) boards. Strong working relationships have been developed between these entities in many counties. Also, ODJFS and WIA state staff have begun providing assistance to local agencies on how they can best work together and develop good service plans for youth in care and for youth who have recently emancipated. This will continue over time as needed by local agencies. All county directors have been encouraged to spread the word to our emancipated youth and agency personnel that service young people about these available resources and services

Also, Ohio has been working to develop strategies to serve the neediest youth and develop state and local infrastructure systems through the Shared Vision for Youth initiative. Ohio has been able to provide vision and focus to implement programs to service the neediest youth. The local WIA participating areas have supported the project by identifying intersections for services by working with their local youth councils and community stakeholders to support the youth as they return to the communities. Ohio is committed to serving the neediest youth and working at the state and local level to develop an infrastructure to support the most challenged youth to become economically self-sufficient.

### **Tennessee**

Tennessee participates in several employment training and educational programs. No formal partnerships are in place at this time. However, by working in conjunction with the Department of Labor, Workforce Development, we are able to offer increased services to our youth.

### **Virginia**

The local departments of social services (LDSS) assist foster care youth in job readiness, job search, job placement and retention, training, and/or services necessary to obtain employment. In addition, some LDSS have partnered with Workforce Investment Act agencies/Career Centers to help youth develop job readiness skills. Other LDSS have collaborated with local businesses to provide job training, employment skills and work experiences.

### **Washington**

Washington State's contracted Independent and Transitional Living programs provide an array of employment services:

- i. coach youth on activities related to employment readiness, interviewing, resume writing and appropriate dress.
- ii. assist youth in gaining and retaining employment
- iii. assist youth in obtaining or securing items needed in order to gain or maintain employment
- iv. incorporate employment services into employment modules and workshops offered to youth in the program.

Washington State's contracted Independent and Transitional Living programs collaborate with various employment agencies (youthsource, worksource, etc) in each of their local areas to provide employment services to foster youth.

YouthSource and State Employment Security Agencies work with youth to provide access to employment services.

At what point are youth connected to these services, and how long can they utilize them?

### **Arizona**

Older youth in care are connected to these services based on individual need and as scheduled in their individual case plan. Through the state Chafee program, aftercare services are available which are designed, in part, to assist with employment related goals and service needs. Youth may access this service until age 21. Local workforce programs may be accessed much further into adulthood.

### **Colorado**

Youth are usually connected with these services when they receive an Independent Living Plan at 16 years of age (If in care) or Chafee plan

Emancipated from care youth are eligible for Chafee services until age 21 years

### **Connecticut**

Youth can become involved in programming at age 14.

### **Delaware**

Services are available to youth who have aged out of care. The JDG program is offered to high school students, grades 9 -12; DVR gets involved during the student's senior year in high school

### **Indiana**

Youth are connected to these serves beginning at age 16.

### **Iowa**

DHS Transition Planning Specialists identify youth in care and initiate the transition planning process when the youth reaches the age of 16 or when they enter care if they enter after 16. The Transition Planning Specialist guides the youth, parent, the case manager, and other supportive persons to develop a transition plan. Transition Planning Specialists make the transition team aware of available employment/educational supports and resources for youth in care. The goals of the youth transition team are included in a written Transition Plan. The Transition Plan is a required part of the caseworkers case permanency plan for every youth over 16 years of age in care. The Transition Planning Specialist is, therefore, involved to help determine needs for the youth who age out of foster care. Before the age of

17.5, all youth in care are required to have a transition plan, which addresses such areas as significant relationships, mental health, housing, employment, and educational needs.

Youth in foster care may remain in care until the age of 18. Youth who have not completed a GED/diploma are encouraged to remain in care voluntarily to do so or until the age of 20. Youth have the opportunity to participate in Iowa's aftercare program, referred to as the Iowa Aftercare Services Network when they leave foster care at the age of 17.5 or older (More on Aftercare above).

### **Maine**

JMG provides services to youth in many of Maine's Middle Schools and High Schools. Students can participate throughout the school careers once accepted in the program.

Most employment programs and services are available to youth beginning at age 15. Many of these are available to youth and young adults through age 21. The Career Centers are a resource to all Maine citizens.

### **Minnesota**

Youth are referred to workforce centers by county social service staff as appropriate for the youth's situation.

### **Mississippi**

Youth are eligible for Independent Living Services based on the following criteria:

- Youth in care ages 14 until their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday are eligible for all Independent Living Services except for criteria placed on the Educational and Training Voucher program;
- Youth who leave custody ages 18 to their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday are eligible for Aftercare services until their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday;

Youth who enroll in post-secondary educational and vocational programs may be eligible based on the criteria detailed in the Educational and Training Voucher (ETV) Program section, which will allow for support services up until their 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

### **Missouri**

Youth can be connected to these services as early as 14 and can utilize them until the age of 21.

### **Nebraska**

This may vary from program to program across the state. We provide grant funds. Any program serving adults generally begins at age 19, there may be some that serve youth, especially those focusing on youth transitions. Each program would have discharge planning and criteria for length of services.

### **New York**

It varies from program to program. Youth may continue to be served by WIA funded programs until they reach their goal. The WAY involves a 5 year commitment.

### **North Carolina**

Ages 16-21<sup>st</sup> birthday.

### **North Dakota**

The typical age is 21.

### **Ohio**

Youth can be connected to these services as early as 16 and the services may be utilized through the age of 21.



**Tennessee**

Youth are connected to these programs as early as they can be identified.

**Virginia**

In Virginia, youth begin receiving these services at age 16 and can continue until age 21.

Effective June 1, 2007 the eligibility age to receive independent living services was lowered to 14.

**Washington**

Washington State's contracted Independent and Transitional Living programs are required to provide each youth in their program with information on how to access the array of employment services offered through the Workforce Investment Act programs. Youth can be enrolled in these programs at age 15 through 21.

Does your state agency partner with other agencies to provide enhanced services in terms of employment counseling, training, and placement, and if so what are these partnering relationships?

**Arizona**

The state has an active Shared Youth Vision state team that has developed a pilot project through the federal initiative to focus on the employment readiness and needs of youth in two of Arizona's rural communities. In addition to the pilot project, the state team is working to integrate expedited processes for engaging youth in care into workforce readiness services and opportunities statewide in order to adequately prepare older youth to transition to sustaining, career level employment.

The state supports a partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) where VR counselors are co-located in two local offices. This partnership allows for expedited referral, eligibility determination and service delivery.

**Colorado**

Yes, primarily we have a representative serve on the State Youth Council of the State Workforce Development Board as part of our partnership in shaping youth employment practices

**Connecticut**

Yes. See answer #1.

**Delaware**

Yes. Department of Labor, Delaware Skills Center, Wilmington Job Corps, Opportunities Center, Inc., DVR, Elwyn Inc., Challenges Program

**Indiana**

Indiana's IL program focuses on preparing youth for employment and assists in obtaining that employment. Indiana also has a Job Works program that may provide training, guidance, job placement for all youth in placement or low income families. Vocational Rehabilitation also provides job coaching for lower functioning clients.

**Iowa**

The Department of Human Services partners with Iowa College Student Aid to offer funding and support to youth who age out of state paid foster care or who were adopted from state paid foster care after 16. This program is referred to as the Education and Training Voucher:

*Education & Training Vouchers:* Tuition, books and other related expenses may be covered by ETV through the Iowa College Student Aid Commission. ETV can pay up to \$5000 per year through age 23 towards university, community college or trade school education. The Legislature is considering tuition waivers for children in foster care. The ETV program is exploring on campus programs that enhance existing student services by connecting students with on campus mentors, tutors, and faculty and staff in addition peer support.

### **Maine**

A memorandum of agreement between the DHHS Office of Child and Family Services, the Department of Labor, Bureau of Employment Services, and the Program Manager for the Maine Youth Opportunities Initiative was signed in February 2005. The intent of the agreement was to work more collaboratively and closely to ensure that teens and young adults in care were receiving the full benefit of the services offered. A recent development for the Department of Labor is to increase the opportunities for older youth in care to participate in apprenticeship programs.

### **Minnesota**

Minnesota is partnering with several agencies as part of the federal Shared Youth Vision initiative. Minnesota has received notice that we will be receiving funding to go forward with an initiative to help youth identify career opportunities and employment assistance specific to their region. See the below link to the Shared Youth Vision site in Minnesota. <http://www.deed.state.mn.us/youth/SYV/SYV.htm>

### **Mississippi**

MDHS/DFCS is the agency responsible for administering the Chafee Foster Care Independent Program (CFCIP) and the Educational Training Vouchers (ETV) Programs. The Independent Living Program utilizes a contracting agency, Southern Christian Services for Children and Youth (SCSCY). The contractor provides a wide array of independent living services in the PREPARE Program, which stands for Providing Resources, Education and Preparation to Adolescents Reaching Emancipation (PREPARE).

The mission of the Independent Living Program is to provide youth and young adults in care with an array of services and resources to assist and guide them in making a successful transition to become independent adults. The Independent Living Program (ILP) helps adolescents acquire basic life skills in their progress toward self-sufficiency. The following is a list of the goals in the CFSP and a brief description of progress.

The Independent Living Specialists employed by the contractor each conduct Independent Living Skills Groups which cover various topics for achieving self-sufficiency. These topics provide skills training, which is a nationally recognized, Ansell-Casey Life Skills curriculum, approved by DFCS, to participating youth based on assessments, personal contact, the Independent Living Plan Study and the Transitional Living Plan Study. The curriculum now contains eight modules. The titles of the modules are: Community Resources and Transportation, Communication Skills and Social Development, Employment, Money Management, Decision Making and Study Skills, Housing, Daily Living Skills, and Self-Care. These modules address the five (5) areas of development identified by the Youth Development and Youth Leadership in Programs Organization. The five areas identified are Working, Learning, Thriving, Connecting, and Leading.

### **Missouri**

The Missouri Mentoring Partnership (MMP) provides funding to community partnerships to implement structured work site and community-based mentoring. When youth are referred they must complete a 20-30 hours (based on the youth's learning capacity) job readiness training. The curriculum focuses on "soft skills" training, resume preparation and mock interviewing. Once the youth passes the job readiness training, they can begin their job search and then a job mentor is assigned.

## **Nebraska**

### **New York**

DOL

OMH

Workforce Investment Boards and Youth Councils

Youth Bureaus

SED/Community Colleges/BOCES

Council on Child and Family Child Caring Agencies

Workforce Development Professional Associations

National Youth Employment Coalition, New York Association of Training and Employment

Professionals

Community Based Organizations

### **North Carolina**

Yes. See #1 above.

### **North Dakota**

See above.

### **Ohio**

Collaboration can be found between local children services agencies and the local Workforce Investment Act (WIA) boards. Strong working relationships have been developed between these entities in many counties.

### **Tennessee**

A memorandum of Understanding has been executed with the Department of Labor, Workforce Development which provides access to all services available at any of their 16 full service locations.

### **Virginia**

**The Virginia Team for Youth**, an interagency team which includes Departments of Social Services Independent Living Program, Correctional Education, Juvenile Justice, Education, Rehabilitative Services, Job Corps and the Virginia Employment Commission Workforce Investment Act Youth Services Program, has developed an active network to provide “transitional services to employment” for the neediest youth in Virginia. In the past year, 10 regional forums were provided for the youth workers, transitional specialist, and case managers from various agencies and organizations. As a result, meaningful relationships have been established which have increase awareness, utilization, and sharing of resources for transitional services for youth.

### **Washington**

The local contracted Independent Living and Transitional Living collaborate with the local employment offices to provide employment services to youth at the local level.

Name and contact information of state individual regarding employment issues?

### **Arizona**

DES/DCYF Independent Living Coordinator

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### **North Dakota**

There is no specific contact.

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