
ADVOCATE ALLEY

Volume 4, Issue 9

September 2010

Just because everything is different doesn't mean anything has changed. -Irene Peter

Dear Advocates,

The dust is beginning to settle and the boxes are mostly unpacked! We are very excited to be in our new location at:

945 South Main Street, Suite 107
Salinas, CA 93901

We hope that you will all come to visit soon! If you turn on Romie Lane off of S. Main, you will find a parking lot behind the building. When you enter the atrium, you'll find us in Suite 107, which is directly to your left. Our email and phone contact info has not changed, so you should have no trouble contacting whichever of us you need.

Eventually, our new space will allow for a dedicated activity room separate from our training room, as well as two small conference rooms for advocates to use to review files, meet with other professionals or hang out with their CASA youth. We are still waiting on a few fairies to arrive with goodies that will make these rooms complete. If you or someone you know may be one of those fairies, please feel free to pass this wish list along:

Conference room furniture
Flat screen TV
DVD/VHS Combo

Also, please stay tuned, as we plan to have an office warming event in the near future. Information will be forthcoming...

With gratitude,
Michelle Arnold
Program Manager

Getting to the Heart of What Matters in Your Life

This is what the Sandy Brewer Show is all about!

Experience the powerful voice of Human Behavior and Relationship expert, Sandy Brewer, PhD, as she provides empowering perspectives about life's everyday challenges. Sandy gets right to the heart of what matters in your life answering questions with wisdom, blunt pragmatism and humor laced with a 'been there—done that' kindness.

Have a question about fears for the future, wounds from the past, or concerns in the present? Award winning author, speaker and counselor for over 33 years, Sandy Brewer is the one to ask. No subject is off limits.

Get your answers on the dynamic Sandy Brewer Show
Saturdays, 4 to 5 PM on KRXA 540 AM
Call in during the show at 831-899-KRXA / 831-899-5792.
Also streamed on-line at www.SandyBrewerShow.com beginning Sept. 4th.

Sandy is the author of the book "Pursuit of Light" that is available in our Continuing Education library. Listening to Sandy's show can count for CE credit as well. Let us know if you tune in!

Props to our creative CASAs! One of your fellow advocates recently gave her child a great emancipation gift: a P.O. Box. As you know, many of the youth you work with live somewhat transient lives and unfortunately this does not always end when they age out of the system. A P.O. Box is a wonderful gift as it provides the youth with a permanent address. What a practical present.

Another useful gift to give your aging out teen is stationary with stamps. Or even just stamps. Maybe not the most exciting gift in the world, but let's face it, stamps are a necessity.

We love to hear from you so we can spread the word about your good ideas. Don't keep them to yourselves!

Students have to be present and engaged in order to learn, but thousands of students are academically at risk because of extended absences. Attendance Counts is a national and state initiative that aims to ensure every school in every state not only tracks chronic absence data for individual students but also intervenes to help those children and schools.

Learn more at:

www.attendancecounts.org

Advocate Birthdays



We would like to wish the following advocates a very happy birthday during the month of September...

Jane Doud	9/1
Marje Perkins	9/1
Vicki Nohrden	9/2
Denise Estrella	9/5
Matt Jones	9/6
John Kennedy	9/10
Fred Salazar	9/15
Richard Allen	9/17
Barbara Hays	9/21
Robert Moody	9/26
David Maradei	9/27
Ken Graeber	9/28
Miguel Mejia	9/28
Kathi Wojtkowski	9/29

Continuing Education Webinars

WIRED TAT Webinar Series: "It Takes a Network": The Power of Cross-System Collaboratives for Youth

Webinar hosted by Workforce3

August 25, 2010

This webinar will highlight successful cross-system networks that have organized to better meet the needs of disadvantaged and disconnected youth. We will hear from seasoned intermediary organizational leaders at local, regional, and state levels who will discuss what catalyzed their collaboration, what they have accomplished, and how they continue to sustain their efforts. Featured speakers include several Intermediary Network members: Nevada Ready for Life, San Diego Workforce Partnership, and Workplace Learning Connection.

Click here to register:

<http://www.workforce3one.org/view/5001022246006012820/info>

When One Size Doesn't Fit All:

Practice and Policy Implications for Subgroups of Transitioning Foster Youth

Webinar hosted by Chapin Hall

August 25, 2010

Information on the characteristics and needs of former foster youth making the transition to adulthood is sorely needed to assist states as they decide whether and how to implement the Fostering Connections Act's older-youth provisions. Join a discussion on the policy implications of this research and how states, communities and service providers can best serve groups whose dissimilar needs clearly call for distinct sets of services and a nuanced approach to policy and practice.

Click here to register:

<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/155807329>

**2nd Annual
Teddy Bear &
Kids Safety Fair**

Teddy Bears with Heart provides bears to first responders and other agencies that work with children in crisis.

Come join in the fun and help us raise money to purchase needed bears!

We have given over 2,800 bears in the last two years! We need your support to continue this endeavor!

Where: Keller Williams
26200 Carmel Rancho Blvd.
Carmel

When: September 18, 2010

Time: 10 am—5 pm

Booths: CDF, Monterey County Sheriff's Office, Carmel Police Department, Pacific Grove Police Department, CHP, Family 2 Family & More!

This organization provides bears to CASA throughout the year. This should be a fun event, whether you choose to attend with your CASA youth or on your own.

**WILLY WONKA
& THE CHOCOLATE
FACTORY**

Book by Roald Dahl
AUG 19 - SEPT 26
OUTDOOR FOREST THEATER

Pacific Repertory Theatre has been kind enough to donate 20 tickets to this event. Call or email Michelle ASAP if you would like to attend with your CASA youth.

Dependency to Delinquency

This short video gives an overview of the stages of delinquency court, providing a great intro into the “600” world. If you are an advocate whose child has become a part of delinquency, this will describe some of the lingo and gives an idea of what to expect. The length is only 13 minutes, but you can earn .5 CE credits for watching!

Go to <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp/family/deling/>
Scroll down to Juvenile Delinquency Court Orientation Video and click play!

THP-Plus in FY 09-10: Serving Youth in Uncertain Times

The recently completed fiscal year was one of the most challenging yet for THP-Plus, with the program receiving a \$5 million budget cut, reducing annual funding from \$40.8 million to \$35.8 million.

Please join us for an informational web seminar on *Wednesday, September 8th from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.* to learn about the impact of this reduction on counties, THP-Plus providers and youth participants. This information will be drawn from the recently completed 2009-10 THP-Plus Annual Report. Web seminar participants will include representatives of the California Department of Social Services, who will discuss the impact of the budget reduction and provide the latest information about THP-Plus in the FY 10-11 state budget. Also presenting will be Sara Kimberlin, doctoral candidate at University of California at Berkeley and author of a soon-to-be released policy brief that provides our first-ever statewide outcome data for THP-Plus.

To register, click [HERE](#) If you have any questions or difficulty registering, please contact Olivia at olivia@johnburtonfoundation.org or at 415-348-0099. You can earn 1 CE credit for participating.

RESOURCES FOR YOUTH

Annie E. Casey Foundation Releases 2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book (*Philanthropy News Digest July, 2010*)

This latest data report from the Annie E. Casey Foundation provides an analysis of children's issues from poverty, mortality, teen pregnancy, education, and employment for 2008. To download your copy: http://www.aecf.org/%7E/media/Pubs/Initiatives/KIDS%20COUNT/123/2010KidsCountDataBook/AEC197_book_final3.pdf.

Back to School? Get the Career Development Guidebook

Get all the information you need to make the best educational choices in preparation for life after high school and career readiness. Get your copy of the Career Development

Guidebook: <http://www.newwaystowork.org/documents/ytatdocuments/CareerDevGuidebookJUNE2009%282%29.pdf>.

Beyond Emancipation: Updated Edition of Resource Guide for Youth in Transition (*From Beyond Emancipation July, 2010*)

The Summer/Fall 2010 Edition of Beyond Emancipation's *Resources for Youth In Transition* is available now. To get your copy: http://www.beyondemancipation.org/downloads/RYT_Summer%202010_Fall%202010.pdf.

The Caregiver's Guide

Looking for resources to help your youth succeed? Get your copy of the "Caregiver's Guide" a composite of resources available to assist you: <http://www.newwaystowork.org/caregiverguide.pdf>.

INFORMATION TO SHARE

Assembly Bill 12: California Fostering Connections to Success Act Passes in the Senate

On August 12, 2010, the California State Senate Appropriations Committee passed Assembly Bill 12 off of suspense on a vote of 11-0, with 4 Republicans and 7 Democrats supporting the bill. Among other things, AB 12 provides the option to extend participation in foster care to the age of 21. From here, AB 12 moves onto the full Senate, which must vote on it before the end of August. Following this, it will proceed to Governor Schwarzenegger, who has until the end of September to sign or veto the bill. To learn more about AB12, go

to: <http://www.cafosteringconnections.org/pdfs/AB%2012%20Fact%20Sheet-03.10.pdf>

House Resolution 1855: The SECTORS Act Passes in the House

On July 21, 2010, the the U.S. House of Representatives passed the SECTORS Act (HR 1855) on a unanimous voice vote.

Members on both sides of the aisle recognize the need to address skill mismatches in the labor market. To learn more about the SECTORS Act, go to: <http://www.nationalskillscoalition.org/federal-policies/sector-partnerships/>.

Students Spend Summer Structuring a Future

Tenth graders from the Harmony Magnet Academy of Engineering in Porterville, California, have spent their summer interning at Mangini Architecture Associates where they've learned about architectural design and have even taught the full-timers how to use Revit, the new 3d design software that is quickly becoming the industry standard. [Watch the ABC News feature on their experience.](#)

New Transitional Housing in San Francisco made possible by Organizational Partnerships (*From HEY Newsletter August, 2010*)

After months of planning, the non-profit developer Community Housing Partnership, Larkin Street Youth Services, and the City Office of Housing will take the historical [King Edward II hotel](#) at 3155 Scott Street/Lombard and turn it into 24 studio apartments for "at risk" transition-age youth, many of whom are aging out of foster care and/or are at risk of homelessness.

To learn more go to: <http://www.heysf.org/yes-to-transitional-age-housing-in-safe-communities-5288.html>.

Students raised in foster care to get priority housing at California universities

Experts say stable residency is crucial for students just out of foster care, who may have nowhere to go during school vacations. A new law requires public colleges to accommodate them year-round.

larry.gordon@latimes.com Copyright © 2010, [Los Angeles Times](#)

It can be lonely spending the summer in a mainly vacant college dormitory. But it's a worthwhile tradeoff for Daysi Espinoza, who's grateful to have a room at Cal State Fullerton to call home. For Espinoza and hundreds of other former foster youths attending California's public universities, dorm rooms provide a much-needed stable residence. While classmates can retreat to childhood bedrooms and their families' embrace, these students are often on their own and want to stay in their dorms during vacations. "It's definitely important," said Espinoza, 19, who lived in foster homes through most of middle school and high school. "Personally, having guaranteed housing has helped me so much."

State universities are paying much more attention these days to the academic, financial and housing needs of the relatively small group of former foster youths who are enrolled there. About 700 are enrolled at UC campuses and 1,200 in the Cal State system, plus several thousand at community colleges who might transfer to those four-year schools, estimates show. More schools are allowing — and paying for — those students to live on campus year-round. A recently enacted state law, which is expected to have a major effect in the fall, requires that all Cal State and University of California schools give former foster youth priority for campus housing, even if dorm space is limited. Universities also must work toward providing housing without vacation interruptions. The law aims to avert homelessness and couch-surfing among students who are emancipated from the system at 18 and no longer eligible to live in state-supported foster homes. While some former foster children can stay with relatives and friends during college vacations, "the vast majority of our youth have nowhere else to go," said Jenny Vinopal, who runs programs for former foster youths in the Cal State system and is an official with California College Pathways, an organization that seeks to boost college attendance among foster youth statewide.

The prospect of guaranteed housing will send an encouraging message to younger foster teens that "if I work hard in high school, I can get my college education and have a place to live," she said. Some government-supported transitional housing is available for former foster children. But young people can only stay in those homes for two years and the locations are not always conducive to college life. Some private foundations and charities, including the YWCA in Santa Monica, provide housing for such students, but space is limited. "The fact is that foster youth are, in effect, children of the state and we are not good parents once they are 18," said Assemblywoman Nancy Skinner (D-Berkeley), who wrote the university housing law. The track record of foster teenagers in higher education is grim. Only about 10% attend college and less than 3% earn a bachelor's degree, according to state statistics. Even though financial aid is available to cover their college expenses, many have erratic high school educations from being moved frequently among foster homes and can't meet four-year university requirements.

They can more easily enroll at two-year colleges, where they would also get housing priority under the new law. But only 11 of the state's 112 community colleges offer campus housing, and those schools are outside of big cities, officials report. Cal State Fullerton, Cal Poly Pomona, [UCLA](#) and UC San Diego are among several university campuses that already offer uninterrupted housing to students who were in foster care. Those accommodations sometimes came in response to lobbying from campus groups, known as Guardian or Renaissance Scholars, that were formed to help foster students graduate. UCLA junior Renee Tate recalled her panic in freshman year when she realized she might not have anywhere to live during winter break. An orphan, she did not feel she could return to Palmdale where she had lived in foster placement under the supervision of an older sister. UCLA officials put her in contact with the Bruin Guardian Scholars and allowed her to stay in the dorms year-round. Tate, a 20-year-old sociology major, said living on campus during vacations can be "so quiet that it sometimes creeped me out." But, she said, she's delighted to have the stability. "For right now, this is it, this is home" said Tate, who works on campus and takes summer classes.

Ex-foster students at all UC campuses will get housing priority starting this fall, according to Judy K. Sakaki, the UC system's vice president for student affairs. It may entail moving students to a single hall during vacations for efficiency and safety, or making different arrangements for meals. "This is a population that deserves our attention," Sakaki said. "They are just fantastic students who have overcome incredible odds." At Cal State Fullerton, which has a housing shortage during the regular school year, Espinoza and a roommate are the only occupants this summer in a comfortable four-person suite with a kitchen and a view of the campus arboretum. She has a few suitcases of clothes, some books and posters, a bedside Bible and a laptop. "I don't buy a lot of things since you don't know where you are going to move to," she said. When Espinoza was 10, she left her native El Salvador for California with her father, an American citizen. After about three years, she was placed in foster care. She lived in Arleta, her third placement, during high school and graduated with good grades. She'll soon start her sophomore year; most of her university costs are covered by financial aid and extra help from the Guardian Scholars.

A double-major in Radio-TV-Film and Spanish, Espinoza works in the housing office, takes world history classes this summer and dances with a salsa group. Her dorm room "just makes life a lot easier. Everything is so convenient," said Espinoza, a U.S. citizen who hopes for a career in Spanish-language media and dreams of one day bringing her mother to America.

Below is a letter from one of our CASA Youth who resides at Peacock Acres.
If you would like to contribute, you can stop by or mail your donations to:

Peacock Acres Inc.
838 S. Main St. Suite C
Salinas, CA 93901

For more information, contact Jen Saunders, Director of Development at Peacock Acres
at (831) 794-2300 or jennifer@peacockacres.org.

“Hard Work Pays off”

How often do you hear about a foster youth’s success story? Studies show that in the state of California 65% of foster youth end up homeless, 20% end up barely making it in life and the other 15% go to universities right after high school and become successful. My name is Juan and I am part of the 15% that have had a successful journey through foster care, and some of the reasons why I have been so successful are because I’m extremely hard working with a high level of perseverance, goal oriented and athletic.

Ever since I was a kid I have had to work for everything I’ve had, nothing ever came easy to me. For example, when I was eight years old I wanted a huge swimming pool that was \$100 and I knew my mom couldn’t afford to spend that kind of money on a pool, so I went out looking for a job that I got after job searching for two days as a bag boy at a local grocery store. Sure enough after a week of working there I had enough money to buy the humongous pool I really wanted.

Perseverance is a great characteristic to have and not many people have it. Im one of the few that has it and it is what keeps me going, it’s my light in the dark. For example, I did not get into foster care until the age of 12. When I became a foster youth I almost felt as if my life was over (not many 12 yr olds suddenly loose contact with their well loved mother) because I was lonely and scared to see the up coming future. At this moment my career goal perseverance kicked in and kept me going. I wanted to be a sheriff so bad that I was not going to let anything stop me from reaching that goal.

Along with my determination comes my goal orientation as well. Not many people can set an ultimate goal and break it down to many other smaller ones that lead to it and accomplish every single one of them. For example, my ultimate life goal is to become a Monterey County Sheriff. I broke that goal into smaller goals like finishing high school with a clean police record, and then going to San Jose state for my criminal justice bachelor’s degree. The final step would be applying for the job. So far I have been able to accomplish my goals and will to do so no mater what happens, I will keep going striving for more till the day I die.

There is one thing that has been extremely helpful making my high school journey a pleasant one, it keeps me getting up every morning wanting to go to school. This “thing” is sports. I love playing sports and staying active, not only do I love playing them but they keep me out of trouble as well. Therefore, getting a lettermen’s jacket will be the cherry on top for my sport experience. Even though I can’t afford it at the time, it’s something I really want and I’m determined to get. I would more than anything love some fanatical help, and that help would be greatly appreciated.

Thank You.

The “Yes” Fund

We often get requests to help fund different needs for our CASA youth. The “Yes” fund is our fund that is specifically dedicated for this purpose. We call it the “Yes” fund for the wonderful times that we get to say yes to requests!

For years, a very kind gentleman donated regularly to this fund and kept it hearty. Since his passing, this fund has dwindled, making it difficult to say yes to all the requests we receive. We very much appreciate those who still contribute to the “Yes” fund and want to remind everyone that contributions are always welcome ☺

If you would like to request something from the fund for your CASA youth, please contact Michelle for the request form.