



The SACHS CHRONICLE

Volume XIX

Summer 2007

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ACADEMY FOR PROFESSIONAL
EXCELLENCE
Don Dudley, Director

SACHS MEETING May 10-11, 2007

Special Event: LIA Graduation

Topic: Emancipated Foster Youth

Speakers:

Robin Nixon (National Foster Care Coalition)

Rhelda Shabazz (LA DCFS)

Mike Ryan (Orange County SSA)

Invited Special Guest: Kevin Gaines &
Mary Alt (CDSS)

Location: Embassy Suites Hotel, Arcadia, CA

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SACHS is a program of the
Academy for Professional Excellence at
San Diego State University School of Social Work



LIA Year 3 Participants



Orange County



Imperial County



Riverside County



Santa Barbara County

What Youth Who Have Left Care Say They Need

Each year, approximately 4,200 California youth emancipate, or “age out”, of the foster care system at age 18. In a number of studies, emancipated foster youth speak out about their frustration being “cut off” from the system once they reach their 18th (or 19th) birthday to fend for themselves, with limited life skills, financial assistance or support networks. Research from the social and medical sciences, as well as familial trends and public opinion studies, find that the typical young adult (who never had the added struggle of life in foster care) is not fully self-sufficient from their parents until the age of 26¹, whereas youth in care are “expelled” from the system at age 18 or 19, whether they are ready or not.

Statistics show the majority of these youth are not ready, as most of the former foster youth in California fail to achieve self-sufficiency. Recent research on California’s former foster youth find:

- 46% have not completed high school
- Less than 3% go to college
- 65% emancipate without a place to live²
- 51% are unemployed³
- Emancipated females are 4 times more likely to receive public assistance than the general population.⁴

In any given year, foster children comprise less than 0.3% of the state’s population, and yet 40% of persons living in homeless shelters are former foster children. A similarly disproportionate percentage of the nation’s prison population is comprised of former foster youth.

In California, eligibility policies, program administration, funding, and services for this population vary county by county. As a result, current programs for emancipating foster youth are fragmented and under-funded, fail to provide comprehensive assistance and services, and do not reach a significant number of former foster youth in a meaningful way.⁵

To improve outcomes, foster youth who have aged out of the child welfare system have highlighted areas where they could have been better prepared for their transition from care. In order to assure a more successful transition to adulthood, youth leaving care say they need:

- Increased access to, and availability of financial support
- Emotional and social support both during their transition from care and afterwards
- Presence of a consistent, responsible, caring adult mentor for encouragement and guidance
- Improved outreach from providers about available programs, how and where to access them
- Individualized support and mechanisms for the transition and post-transition periods
- Support in gaining access to education, vocational training, and employment programs
- Independent living/life skills training
- Transitional Living Programs
- Opportunities to develop decision-making and problem-solving skills
- Health, vision and dental care assistance
- Opportunities to actively and meaningfully participate in the development programs and creation of plans designed to assist them achieve self-sufficiency ⁶ ~ Karissa Erbes

¹Post, P. (2004) *Homeless Young Adults Ages 18-24: Examining Service Delivery Adaptions*.

² California Department of Social Services. (2002) *Report on the Survey of the Housing Needs of Emancipated Foster/Probation Youth*. Independent Living Program Policy Unit, Child and Youth Permanency Branch.

³Mosqueda, J. and Rodriguez, J. (2005). *Voices Carry: Recommendations of Young People in the Foster Care System*. *California Youth Connection 2005 Policy Conference Report*. p. 4. Sacramento.

⁴Needell, B., Cuccaro-Alamin, S. et. al. (May 2002). *Youth Emancipating From Foster Care in California: Findings Using Linked Administrative Data*. Center for Social Services Research University of California at Berkeley. p. 4.

⁵*Expanding Transitional Services for Emancipated Foster Youth: An Investment in California’s tomorrow* (January 2007). Children’s Advocacy Institute, University of San Diego School of Law, <http://www.caichildlaw.org>

⁶Ibid; Tweedle, A. (2005). *Youth Leaving Care-How do they Fare?* Discussion Paper prepared for the Modernizing Income Security for Working Age Adults (MISWAA) Project.

TOL SERIES

Developing a Learning Culture: LIA 3 Ideas

During Block 1 of LIA 3, the directors and LIA participants met in county groups to review suggestions for the transfer of learning activities from LIA back to the agencies. Some of the themes identified by the counties included a mentoring program, cross-program training on leadership, fuller use of management, meetings and cross-division sharing. Below are some highlights.

Manager mentoring: LIA alumni could be used to mentor current LIA participants. LIA participants would also like to job shadow LIA alumni. Both of these activities would contribute to succession planning and the breaking down of silos.

Leadership training: One group suggested roundtable discussions in small groups on a specific leadership topic. Another suggested carving out time for a leadership forum and discussion, such as at monthly conferences. Informal leadership forums could be used for directors and other executives to share their values, leadership techniques, and perspectives.

Management meetings: Existing management meetings are settings which could easily be used to increase transfer of learning. These meetings could be used to problem solve, via small group action learning exercises (similar to LIA learning process); and also to share knowledge across programs. One county team suggested using management meetings to share and discuss relevant journal articles and books. Several groups noted the importance of continually sharing the agency vision up and down the organization, including involving lower level managers in vision creation.

Cross-division sharing: One team suggested creating a new interdivisional meeting for special high profile projects to build teamwork and eliminate the silo effect through problem-solving and information sharing. Another suggestion for cross-division sharing was to create an outcome success model whereby divisional managers come together with selected managers from all divisions and departments to review successes, focus on areas needing improvements, and collectively work to find solutions. This process would increase awareness, allow input from a variety of perspectives, and create a broader knowledge of the issues impacting the agency.

A follow up session will be held at the May SACHS meeting where directors can talk with their participants about an action plan to assist in further development of this strategy. In addition, Don Dudley shared these recommendations with the Southern Region Training Planning Committee to further increase the transfer of learning discussion. ~ Tom Packard

LIA Year 3 Participants



LA DCFS



LA DPSS



Ventura County



San Bernardino County

At the February SACHS meeting, during a discussion of key strategies in TANF implementation, San Bernardino County presented information on their marketing plan, which includes incentives (e.g., for participating in the job club) and promotional materials such as videos and pins. This is an example of *social marketing*. Social marketing can be defined as “the planning and implementation of programs designed to bring about social change using concepts from commercial marketing.”¹ Social marketing has been used extensively in public health. Major marketing initiatives have attempted to impact behaviors such as smoking, using drugs, and unsafe sex. More recently, social marketing has been applied in the welfare-to-work arena and even in child welfare.

Many concepts from the traditional marketing field are relevant to social marketing. For example, marketing should focus on meeting the needs of consumers: the organization must find out what they want and provide it – “design an affordable product” to satisfy their needs/interests.

An essential point in marketing is that it involves *exchange relationships*: something of *value* for each partner is exchanged. These transactions can include services or products, and costs such as time. For example, a CALWORKS program has a goal to increase rates of participation in work-related activity. As with any marketing initiative, it is important to understand your audience, or target market. To market welfare-to-work services, planners should see the world as a person on TANF sees the world, and then consider what messages would resonate with such a person. A TANF recipient may see costs as including time taken, sitting in a training session, getting up early, having to arrange child care, etc. Benefits may include remaining eligible for TANF and the prospect of learning skills leading to employment, and increased empowerment or self esteem. Social marketing involves designing services so that benefits outweigh costs for the consumer.

Marketing is often presented using the 6 P’s:

Product is providing something of value to others.

Publics are categories of people; your *target audiences*, such as consumers.

Price includes costs to consumers, including money, time, social costs (inconvenience, not doing something else), or psychological costs (“needing help”, stress of change).

Place includes location such as the agency environment and its accessibility as well as the web or telephone.

Production is the agency’s ability to deliver quality and timely services.

Promotion involves creating demand and reaching targets through advertising, public relations, media relations, etc.

Social marketing technologies offer exciting and promising opportunities in the delivery of human services to improve the quality of life in our communities. ~ *Tom Packard*

Andreasen, A. (2006). *Social Marketing in the 21st Century*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

¹Ewing, M., Ed. (2001). *Social marketing*. New York: The Haworth Press, p. 1.

Kotler, P., Roberto, N. & Lee, N. (2002). *Social Marketing: Improving the Quality of Life*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Kotler, P. & Lee, N. (2007). *Marketing in the Public Sector: A Roadmap for Improved Performance*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Wharton School Publishing.

Social marketing: A Resource Guide, from the Social Marketing National Excellence Collaborative, at: http://www.turningpointprogram.org/Pages/pdfs/social_market/social_marketing_101.pdf

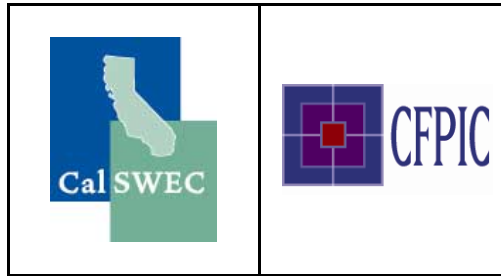
The Social marketing Institute, <http://www.social-marketing.org/sm.html>

Managing Multiple Generations

| GENERATION | CHARACTERISTICS/TRAITS | HOW TO SUPPORT IN WORKPLACE |
|---|--|---|
| <p>VETERANS 1900–1945</p> <p><i>Grew up in a time of economic turmoil in the aftermath of the Great Depression. Influenced by war times and military backgrounds.</i></p> <p>(10 % of the workforce)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comfortable with very directive leadership • Value hard work, order, respect for authority and discipline • Prefer being an "expert" in their function • Difficulty adjusting to change • Value commitment, sacrifice, and company loyalty • Prefer a hierarchical/top-down management style | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify how things are done so they know the "rules" • Encourage them to respectfully assert their authority • Honor their hard work and dedication with plaques and other symbolic records of achievement • Rehire them as part-time team leaders and consultants when they retire |
| <p>BABY BOOMERS 1946–1964</p> <p><i>Free-spirited generation shaped by the Vietnam War, the civil rights movement, antiwar protests, and social experimentation.</i></p> <p>(45 % of the workforce)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel betrayed by downsizing, reengineering & restructuring • View work groups as social groups • Goal and results orientated; believe they are capable of changing/improving situations • Expect hard work to be appreciated by management • More likely to encounter stress and poor health because overworked | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak in an open, direct style – avoid controlling language, answer questions thoroughly • Give them lots of public recognition • Link strategic work to goals and the big picture • Ask them for their input/get their consensus • Offer flexibility, authority, and respect • Challenge them to keep growing |
| <p>GENERATION X 1965–1980</p> <p><i>Shaped by Woodstock and Watergate. Entered the job market during a period of massive corporate layoffs and a brutal economic recession.</i></p> <p>(30 % of the workforce)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-reliant and pragmatic • Want to stay on the cutting edge • Enjoy self-command and dislike being micro-managed • Willing to break the rules • Expect immediate and ongoing feedback and equally comfortable giving feedback to others • Value fun and informality • Embrace diversity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use an informal communication style • Have an open door policy • Provide opportunities to increase knowledge and help them build transferable skills • If possible, provide flexible work time, alternative work arrangements and vacation time • Acknowledge and encourage their ability to work independently |
| <p>GENERATION Y 1981–1999</p> <p><i>Coming of age during a time of technological sophistication, extreme economic swings, individual prosperity, terrorism, and HIV/AIDS.</i></p> <p>(15 % of the workforce)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer-minded and socially/globally conscious • Team and relationship-oriented/ prefer collaboration with others • Accustomed to and receptive to internet, speed, and access to information • Value positive reinforcement at accelerated rates • Multi-taskers/ can be impatient • Very capable, but can be very demanding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain expectations, roles and responsibilities at onset • Provide a sense of belonging • Make groups, teams and collaboration part of their job • Provide non-monetary rewards • Use action words and challenge them at every opportunity • Provide growth opportunities • Allow flexibility |

~ Karissa Erbes

Save the Date!



**The California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) and
The Child & Family Institute of California**

are pleased to present

THE LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIA ON
EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE IN THE HUMAN SERVICES

SUMMER RESEARCH SESSION

SAVE THE DATE!

| | |
|---------------|---|
| When: | June 28th 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. |
| Where: | UC Davis |
| Who: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• County Human Services Agency Directors• Other Human Services Leaders• Researchers interested in partnering with Human Services Agencies |

Participants will:

- Learn about recent child welfare research and how it applies to practice
- Strategize about how to build new evidence in child welfare, and apply the evidence that we do have to practice.

Presentations by:

- California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare (CEBC).
- Bay Area Social Services Consortium (BASSC)
- Researchers who have completed research projects and related curricula via CalSWEC's research and development funding.

***** Symposium and registration details will be sent as soon as they are available. ****
Partial funding for this symposium is provided by the California Department of Social Services.*