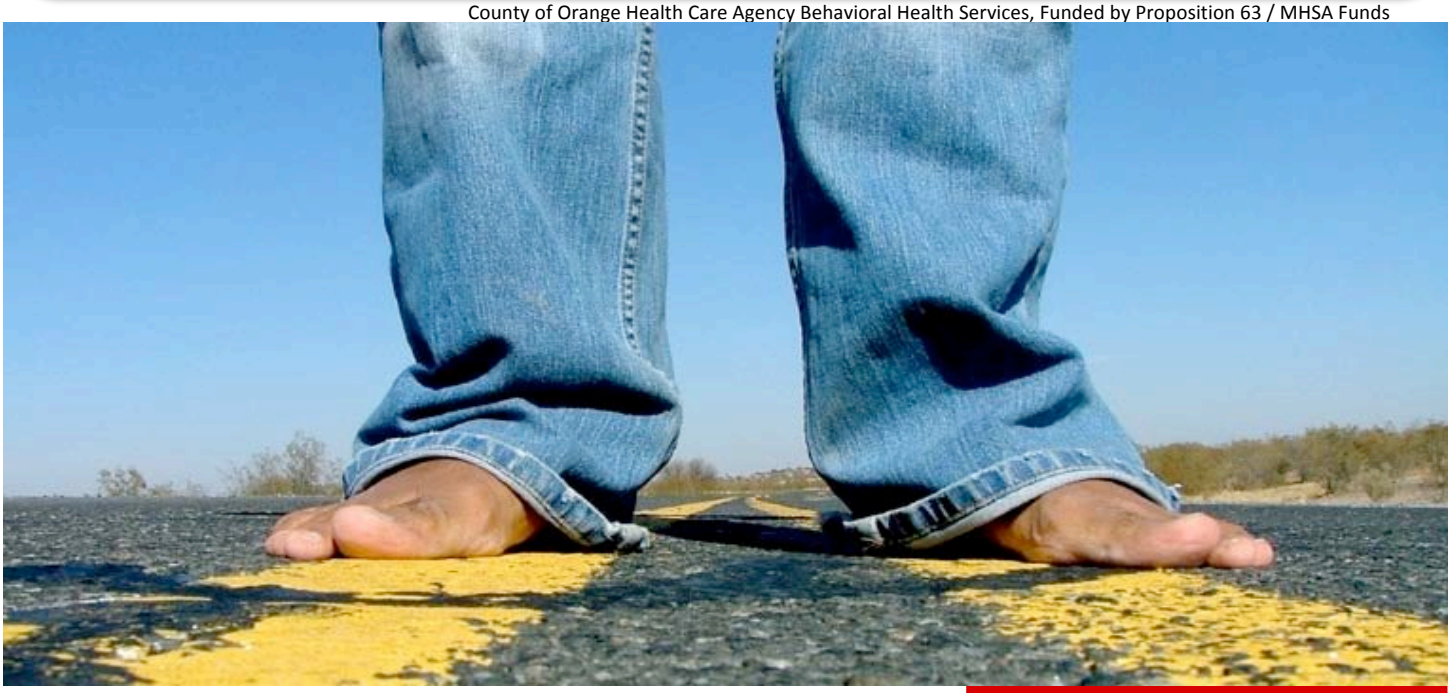
Issue #11 | March '10

TAY TIPS QUARTERLY

TRANSITIONING TODAY'S YOUTH INTO ADULTHOOD

County of Orange Health Care Agency Behavioral Health Services, Funded by Proposition 63 / MHSA Funds



Emancipating & Foster Youth

Approximately 4,000 youth will age out or emancipate from the foster care system each year in California (Rassen, 2009). These youth are particularly vulnerable to a variety of challenges, economically, socially, and emotionally.

This issue of TAY Tips is dedicated to providing information and resources that are available to foster and emancipated youth. Helping them access resources and reach out for can significantly increase their ability to navigate the transition from the foster care system into adulthood successfully.

Rasen, E. (2009). *Challenges faced by foster youth in California.* Insight into Student Services. Issue 21.

IN THIS ISSUE

Housing P. 2
Independent Living P. 3
Education P. 4
Legal P. 6
Misc. P. 7

For additional information about TAY resources or for referrals contact:

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Housing

Beverly's House

YWCA of Central Orange County | 133 N. Grand St.| Orange, CA 92866 | (714) 633-4950

Provides shelter for young women who are transitioning from foster care, with supportive services. Clothing needs are supplied though *My Sister's Closet*, and handbags and toiletries are provided through *Joanie's Purse Project*.

Olive Crest Transition Program

2130 E. Fourth Street, Suite 200 | Santa Ana, CA 92705 | (714) 543-5437

THPP

Transitional Housing Placement Program for Current Foster/Probation Youth ages 16-18

The THPP is a transitional housing placement opportunity for foster and probation youth aged 16-18 who are currently in the child welfare system. The goal of the program is to provide a safe living environment so that youth can practice skills necessary to live on their own upon leaving the foster care support system.

Maximum length of stay is 24 months.

THP-Plus

Transitional Housing Placement Program for Emancipated Foster/Probation Youth ages 18-24

The THP-Plus is a transitional housing placement opportunity for emancipated foster youth, aged 18-24, who emancipated from the child welfare system. The goal of the program is to provide a safe living environment while helping youth achieve self-sufficiency so that they can learn life skills upon leaving the foster care support system.

Maximum length of stay is 24 months.

Rising Tide Transitional Housing Program

Orangewood Children's Foundation | 1575 E. 17th St. | Santa Ana, CA 92705 | (714) 619-0239

Rising Tide Transitional Housing Program is an intermediate step between dependency and independent living. Motivated foster and probation youth who have emancipated are eligible to apply for affordable and quality apartment housing with a supportive community to help them become self-sufficient, responsible and caring adults.

WHO:	Emancipated Foster and Probation Youth ages 18+
WHAT:	Furnished Apartment, Mentor, Employment Guidance, Life Skills Training
WHERE:	Apartment locations in Garden Grove and Tustin
HOW LONG:	18-24 months
COST:	Starts at $200 per month, increases $50 every 3 months All rent paid over $350 is reimbursed at graduation $200 security deposit due at move-in

Independent Living Program

Orangewood Children's Foundation

Orangewood Children's Foundation | 1575 E. 17th St., Santa Ana, CA 92705 | (714) 619-0200

The Independent Living Program (ILP) provides workshops, special events and support services to foster youth between the ages of 16-21, to help prepare them for emancipation.

ILP focuses on four key areas:

1. Education
2. Career
3. Relationships
4. Daily Living

ILP participants can:

- Receive life skills instruction on the four key areas above with the help of volunteer experts from the community and former foster youth called Peer Mentors
- Attend a variety of workshops held several times each month at locations throughout Orange County
- Attend special events such as "Independent City," college tours, 3 on 3 basketball tournament, and end-of-the-school-year celebrations for students and graduates
- Receive the monthly "ILP Connection" e-newsletter containing information to help foster youth prepare for emancipation and the schedule of ILP workshops and special events
- Earn "OCF Dollars" for attendance, participation and completion of ILP homework assignments. OCF dollars can be used to purchase items such clothing, food, furniture and other household items

For More Information (866) OCF4Kids (866-623-4543) ext. 212

To RSVP for IPL Workshops (866) OCF4Kids (866-623-4543) ext. 300

Education

Orangewood Children's Foundation

Children's Trust Fund

Provides financial awards for foster and emancipated youth for educational-related expenses including books, tuition, driver's education, yearbook, graduation, sports and other extracurricular activities, medical and dental expenses, transportation, and work expenses. Emancipated youth can receive financial awards to assist with rent, utilities, groceries, and other miscellaneous expenses.

Youth must apply for funding during each funding cycle (July 1-June, 30). Funding is not guaranteed, and decisions are made on an individual basis.

Awards:

Dependents 0-18 yrs	up to $250
Emancipated Non-ILP Eligible 18-21 yrs	up to $500
Emancipated ILP-Eligible 18-21 yrs	up to $1000

Children's Trust Fund Scholarship Program

Provides financial assistance to current and former Orange County foster youth who are pursuing higher education.

Grant amount determined by total number of units enrolled/completed within the annual grant period (July 1st - June 30th) and may be used for tuition, books, supplies and living expenses. Recipients must maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA. Applications can be filed each year until the age of 25 and supporting documentation is required.

Awards (per school year):

Community College	up to $3500
Vocational/Trade School	up to $3500
University	up to $6000

FASFA www.fasfa.ed.org

Federal Application for Student Financial Aid (FASFA) is a federal program in which potential students can apply for federal loans, grants, and work-study programs. This is the primary way that students become eligible for financial aid options. Other financial aid opportunities, such as Chafee Grants, may require that FASFA is completed. Funding can be used for tuition, books, supplies, room and board, transportation, and other education-related expenses depending on the funding source guidelines.

***Application deadlines*: March 2 through September 2 for the following year (i.e. for 2010-2011 year, deadline is March 2, 2010 through September 2, 2010). The awards are based on first-come, first-served, so the earlier the better. Most grants are awarded at the first deadline. Amounts are based on income and cost of school. Applications accepted online only.**

Preparation for FASFA Application:

- **Social Security Number**
- **Drivers license number or State ID number**
- **W-2 forms (student and parent)**
- **Previous year's income tax return (student and parent)**

Education continued...

Chafee Grant

www.chafee.csac.ca.gov

Provides financial assistance for college, trade, or career training of up to $5000 per year.

Eligibility Requirements: Current or former foster youth who have not have reached their 22nd birthday as of July 1 of the award year. The court must have established your dependency when you were between the ages of 16 and 19. (KinGap youth, adopted youth, guardian placement, and voluntary placement may not be eligible for the Chafee Grant, unless court dependence was established, at anytime, between the ages of 16 and 19).

Applications: Available online at www.chafee.csac.ca.gov. FASFA must also be completed to apply for the Chafee Grant.

College Grants

Financial assistance that covers tuition and fees for qualified students. Applications available at the financial aid office or online at the school the student will attend.

Board of Governors Fee Waiver
California Community Colleges
www.cccapply.org/BOG_Waiver

State University Grant
California State Universities (CSU)
Check college financial aid office for application and additional information

University Grant
University of California (UC)
Check college financial aid office for application and additional information

Pell Grant studentaid.ed.gov

Provides financial assistance to help pay for college expenses including tuition, room and board, books, and supplies.

Application: Submit FASFA during regular filing deadlines (March 2 through September 2 for the following year).

Cal Grant www.calgrants.org

Provides financial assistance to help pay for college expenses including tuition, room and board, books, and supplies.

Application: Submit the FAFSA between January 1 and September 2 and submit a verified Cal Grant GPA anytime between November and the September 2 deadline.

Legal

For Providers and Consumers

National Center for Youth Law (NCYL)

www.youthlaw.org

NCYL is a non-profit organization that works to ensure that low-income children have the resources, support, and opportunities they need for a healthy and productive future. Much of NCYL's work is focused on children who are additionally challenged by abuse and neglect, disability, or other disadvantage.

Teen Health Rights Initiative

www.teenhealthrights.org

NCYL established Teen Health Rights Initiative to provide resources and information to health care providers about California laws pertaining to minor consent, confidentiality, child abuse reporting, and other adolescent health concerns.

NCYL is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

California Ombudsmen for Foster Care

www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov

The Office of the Foster Care Ombudsman was established by legislation, California Senate Bill 933 (Chapter 311/Statutes of 1998) and has been mandated to do the following:

- Ensure the voice of foster children and youth is heard, and act on their behalf.
- Create an avenue for foster children and youth to file complaints regarding their placement, care and services without fear of retribution from those who provide their care and services.
- Act as an independent forum for the investigation and resolution of complaints made by or on behalf of children placed in foster care and make appropriate referrals.
- Provide children and youth with information on their rights when placed in foster care.
- Maintain a toll-free telephone number which foster children and youth may call from anywhere in California to express their concerns and complaints.

Orange County Ombudsman
Orange County Children and Family Services
888 Main Street
Santa Ana, CA
(714) 245-6030 *Fax: (714) 245-6049*

Misc. Resources…

Orangewood Children's Foundation Resource Center

www.orangewoodfoundation.org

Drop-in hours: Monday-Thursday 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. | Friday 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
1575 E. 17th St., Santa Ana, CA 92705 | (866) OCF4Kids (866-623-4543) ext. 232

OCR is a drop-in center for current and emancipated foster youth in Orange County that provides supportive services focusing on education, employment, housing and health. **Youth can a**ccess employment leads, create professional resumes, and receive interview tips. Receive guidance and assistance when considering options after high school. Utilize career assessments and explore careers. Find shelter information and housing resources. Receive information on other Foundation programs and the application process. Access Foundation Peer Mentors, computers, a telephone, a copier, a fax machine, and a washer/dryer. Access food, hygiene items and clothing (depending on availability). Also available in the ORC is the Foundation's Education and Career Specialist, who can help with career exploration, college options (including job training, apprenticeships and vocational schools), employment goals and general resource questions.

Tips for Foster Youth

from the Office of Foster Care Ombudsman

www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov

Go to Your Court Hearings!
You have the right to attend your court hearings and talk to the judge. Court hearings are your chance to let the judge know what you need.

Health Insurance to 21!
Foster youth who emancipated from foster care on their 18th birthday can have Medi-Cal health insurance until they turn 21, regardless of income. Contact your case worker to find out what you need to do to get coverage.

Money Available for Emancipated Foster Youth!
The Governor has budgeted money for emancipated foster youth to help cover the cost of housing, college, transportation, or other needs. There is also money available for providing housing for former foster youth.

See Your Case Plan and Your Court Report!
You have the right to see your case file, case plan, and court reports if you are 12 or over. If it doesn't include everything you need, let your social worker know. It is important that you be your own advocate and speak up for what you need.

Get Your Driver's License!
DMV will accept the signature of a guardian, biological parent , foster parent, grandparent, adult sibling, aunt or uncle who is living with you. If you get your own auto liability insurance, you can have your social worker or probation officer sign that form.

Participate in ILP!
Make sure you participate in the Independent Living Program, You will also have access to many financial incentives and special programs and transitional housing programs.

Free Money for School!
You are eligible for free money for college. Foster youth can receive financial aid that can help pay for tuition as well many living expenses, such as rent and transportation.

Foster Youth Have Rights! Know Your Rights!
Foster youth have many rights in care. If you don't know them, you can't speak out when they are being violated.

Seal Your Court File When You Turn 18!
You have the right to ask the court to seal your case file. If you are looking for a job, this can be important if you have a delinquency record.