

Laurie Glaze, Chair  
Adoptation  
Avondale House  
Bering Omega Community Services  
Care for Elders  
Career and Recovery Resources, Inc.  
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston  
ChildBuilders  
CHILDREN AT RISK  
Christ the Good Shepherd Catholic Church  
Coalition for Behavioral Health Services  
Collaborative for Children Communities In Schools  
DePelchin Children's Center  
Family Services of Greater Houston  
Fort Bend Regional Council on Substance Abuse, Inc.  
Gateway to Care  
Good Neighbor Healthcare Center  
Gulf Coast CHIP Coalition  
Harris County Healthcare Alliance  
Healthcare for the Homeless-Houston  
Houston Area Association for the Education of Young Children  
Houston Food Bank  
IntraCare Hospitals  
Jewish Family Service  
Justice for Children  
Legacy Community Health Services, Inc.  
Memorial Hermann Healthcare System  
Mental Health Association of Greater Houston  
NAMI Metropolitan Houston  
Neighborhood Centers, Inc.  
Northwest Assistance Ministries  
San Jose Clinic  
SEARCH  
South County Community Clinic, DBA The Community Clinic  
Spaulding for Children  
Target Hunger  
Texas Children's Hospital  
The Arc of Greater Houston  
The Center for Success and Independence  
The Arrow Project  
The Network of Behavioral Health Providers  
United Way of Greater Houston  
Wesley Community Center  
YMCA of Greater Houston

## Child Welfare: Aging Out of Foster Care

**Position Statement approved by One Voice: August 11, 2006**

**Issue/Concern:** Youth aging out of foster care are not prepared to live as adults at age 18. They need a support network in order to help them to successfully transition to adulthood.

### Specific Policy Recommendation(s):

- ★ Provide adequate funding for existing Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) transition centers, including case managers.
- ★ Support the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services' (DFPS) Legislative Authorization Request to extend PAL services to children ages 14 and 15.
- ★ Add six new transition centers.

**How does this issue/recommendation relate to prevention and early intervention or maximizing federal funds for health and human services?** The transition center in Harris County for youth aging out of foster care is known as the Houston Alumni and Youth (HAY) Center. A US Department of Labor (DOL) Demonstration Grant funds the HAY Center. The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) serves as a Center Partner and the Center's fiscal agent. If this model proves to be successful in its efforts to more comprehensively support current and former foster youth in attaining employment, post-secondary and vocational education, and affordable housing, DOL representatives have expressed interest in expanding and creating further collaborations between DOL, state employment centers, and state child welfare agencies. Historically, for the youth they serve, transition centers prevent criminal activity, reduce criminal recidivism, lessen their need for welfare supports, and enable them to develop more stable family relationships.

**Supporting Facts/Research/Resources:** The PAL program helps youth aging out of foster care prepare for successful adult living. Harris County's HAY Center provides a one-stop program where young people can receive information and services to help them develop as independent adults. The HAY Center and other centers in Texas are struggling to sustain their funding, keep their centers open, and provide needed services. Transition centers funded by DOL grants require a 100% cash match, which is a significant expense for existing PAL program budgets. Accordingly, we recommend that DFPS' budget specifically provide for funding to *sustain existing centers*, including case managers, before expanding the program. SB6 mandates that TWC and the local workforce boards enter into cooperative agreements with DFPS to further the goals of the PAL program. The boards are instructed to ensure that (a) services are prioritized and targeted to meet the needs of current and former foster children; and (b) such services include, where feasible, referrals for short-term stays for youth needing housing.

After one year of operation, the HAY Center has achieved the following successful outcomes:

- ★ 193 unduplicated youths enrolled; target was 150 for 12 months (28% above target);
- ★ 101 youths were provided with employment/military/apprenticeship/educational placements; target was 45 youths (124% above target)
- ★ 60 youth retained their provided employment/military/apprenticeship/educational placements; target was 36 youths (67% above target);

## **Child Welfare: Aging Out of Foster Care**

**Position Statement approved by One Voice: August 11, 2006 (cont.)**

**Supporting Facts/Research/Resources:**

- ★ 27 youths attained high school diplomas/GED's; target was 10 (170% above target);
- ★ 3 youths recidivated to criminal activity; target was 3 or fewer (at target).

**Legislative Outcome:** One Voice recommendations were not adopted. However, HB 1, Rider # 37, budget for the Department of Disability Services, Promoting Independence Plan, Home and Community-based Services, appropriated \$1,699,464 in general revenue in FY08 and \$4,859,969 in general revenue in FY09, and associated federal funds, for interest list reduction, including funding for 120 children aging out of foster care.

**Contact:** Conni Barker at 713-802-7706 or [cbarker@depelchin.org](mailto:cbarker@depelchin.org)