

**Transition to Adult Living
Implementation Team Meeting
Feb. 4, 2004, 2:30-3:30 P.M.
DHS Building, Room 304**

Minutes

Welcome and Introductions:

Richard Anderson called the meeting to order and introduced Herman Hooten, the new DCFS Independent Living Specialist. Richard spoke of focusing on what we could do in six months that would really make a difference in the lives of our youth. The brainstorming has been done—now we need to move to the implementation period. At this point, may need to think smaller rather than larger, because time is short. As we meet, focus on what can be accomplished in the next six months.

Foster Care Independence Act Funds (Chafee Funds):

Herman spoke to the group on Chafee Funds. These funds provide states with flexible funding that will enable programs to be designed and conducted to identify children who are likely to remain in foster care until age 18 and to help these children make the transition to self-sufficiency. None of the grant funds may be used for room and board for any child not yet 18. Not more than 30% of grant funds for a fiscal year may be expended for room and board for young adults aging out of foster care (18-21). As indicated on the chart Herman prepared, DCFS has \$838,240.00 (with combined State 20% & Federal Funds 80%) in the Independent Living Budget. 72% of these funds pay for the staff that provide services to these youth statewide. The remainder of the money is currently being spent for incentives to youth, activities, emergencies, and other needs. Between 200 to 250 youth age out of foster care each year.

Question Sheet:

A Question sheet was passed out to group. Knowing time is short, please write questions and give them to a support staff person or e-mail them in. When we send out minutes, we'll send out questions and answers to keep the group informed.

National Governor's Association (NGA):

Amanda talked about the National Governor's Association meeting to assist us in identifying problem areas, goals, vision, priorities, etc. This will be held on March 4, 2004 from 10 AM to 2 or 3 PM here at DHS. The meeting is for the Governor's Transition to Adult Living Implementation Team members. In April, the Core Team (a group of 6-8 members from the Implementation Team) will go to Phoenix for the NGA Policy Academy. The focus will be to address funding barriers and other administrative barriers to assist us in accomplishing our goals. NGA brings their staff to the Academy who can provide immediate help to eliminate barriers and advise us on helpful policy.

Task Groups Reports:

Employment/Training/Education (Bob Haywood reporting for Marie Christman) Bob recommended we share all information between Task Group Chairs to avoid losing crosscutting information. (Please refer to the form passed out earlier) This task group has

divided the workload into five sub-groups each with a chair. This will allow us to proceed with the technical work between the monthly task group meetings.

1. Employment training and education services inventory – Lori Neel, Chair. Meeting scheduled for February 26, 1 pm, DHS.
2. Resources and contacts in secondary schools - Mary Shumway, Chair. Meeting TBA pending her discussion with Marie.
3. Education training voucher (ETV) program development - Herman Hooten, Chair. Meeting scheduled for February 19, 1 pm, DHS.
4. Development of continuum of services merged with a.) Regional meetings with DWS, WIA providers, and IL Coordinators, and b.) IL Coordinators to sit on DWS Regional Youth Councils – Tim Holm, Chair. Meeting scheduled for February 19, 9 am, DWS.
5. Training recommendations – pending completion by the first 4 groups.

Housing (Richard Walker): The group has identified four groups of youth—those with a disability, those with behavior problems, responsive youth and disenfranchised youth. Therefore, a continuum of housing options needs to be provided. The group would like to do a “best practice” demonstration project that would give youth the support they need while transitioning to adult living. They are looking primarily at youth 18-21 because younger youth in care generally have a place to live and a caseworker to provide support. They hope to bring together a variety of interests and create partnerships of support networks to accomplish these goals. The group wanted support from the Governor. Richard Anderson asked that any letters to the Governor go to the Implementation Team Chairs (Richard Anderson & Mike Richardson) so all efforts for the Initiative can be coordinated.

Life Skills (Ron Harrell spoke for Jane Lewis): The group is planning to use the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment tool to teach and implement Life Skill training. The assessment is already validated, evidence based, and is free on the Internet. They will begin testing this on a small-scale basis. The goal is to give the youth the tools they need prior to leaving state custody to give them control of their own lives and be able to make good decisions. They will need to look at some of the existing contracts and decide what training will need to be made part of the contracts.

Mentoring (Lisa McDonald): The group hopes to provide a variety of mentors to assist youth as they transition. Many kinds of mentors are needed—such as work place mentors. The group hopes to have a comprehensive list of mentoring groups that are already in services, and then add to that list as needed. Attendees were asked to list any mentoring programs they are familiar with and give those to the Mentoring Task Group. Some mentoring programs don't currently serve older youth. The group will be developing a pilot program using recently retired seniors who have work and life experiences and time to help youths. The group could use additional members, particularly a representative from the Department of Workforce Services, from faith-based groups and others who are interested in mentoring.

Physical and Mental Health (George Delavan): The group reviewed what is currently available in regards to Medicaid, Newborn Plus (0-19), CHIP's, PCN and other insurance options. The Foster Care Independence Act allows Medicaid coverage for youths up to age 21. We are gathering data to determine the cost of the Medicaid match and the feasibility of

extending the age here in Utah. The group is also looking at health and mental health services (prevention and treatment) to determine what we have, what we need and how services can be accessed.

Transportation (Amanda Singer): There are several youth (including former foster youth) serving on the task group who have assisted them to stay focused. The four main areas of focus are:

1. Looking at models from different states (Celeste and Amanda heading this up)
2. Develop options for auto insurance and liability. Some parents are unwilling or unable to sign for the youth to get a drivers license. Herman will be talking with Risk Management. They will also work with insurance companies to come up with a reasonable group rate.
3. Look at transportation needs. Do they need help to purchase cars?
4. Look at how Job Corp provides these services and what is working for them.

Website (Kelly Colopy): The group is looking at website possibilities to link youth to needed services. Focus groups will be held to get the best and most helpful ideas. Currently they are looking at existing popular youth websites to get ideas for a design. A “mock-up” will be ready by mid-February. The Website should be developed and tested by end of May and they hope to have it functional by June 1st. A decision needs to be made regarding how the Website will be maintained.

Transitional Support Funds (Richard Anderson): These are smaller funds that close the gap for an immediate need like paying rent deposits, buying clothing for a job interview, etc. We are asking the Independent Living staff to compile the names of those youth who are transitioning in the next six months—what the projected needs are for this fund, and what the costs would be to meet those needs. We know most of the costs, numbers, and whether or not the Department has any funds available to accommodate needs.

Jim Anderson brought up a couple of issues: Will we have a Hotline/Warmline or a resource handbook. Where do they fit? How do you maintain connections as young adults age out? Let's not have disconnected youth.

The next Implementation Team meeting is March 3, 2004 at 2:30pm at DHS, Room 304.

Attendees:

Implementation Team Members:

Richard Anderson, Co-Chair
Jim Anderson
George Delavan
Ron Harrell
Mary Shumway
Karl Wilson

Mike Richardson, Co-Chair
Vicki Cottrell
Richard Dimick
Lisa McDonald
Richard Walker

Support Staff: Jane Broadhead, Herman Hooten, Suzette Martellaro, Amanda Singer, Barbara Thompson, Mary Steck

Excused: Don Carpenter, Marie Christman, Daniel Dayton, Barbara Feaster, Cindy Gates, Steve Goodrich, Steve Jardine, Tiffany Martin, Savania Tsosie

Task Group Members:

Bonnie Athas
Joeann Bartlett
Mike Beacco
Stacy Brubaker
Chris Chytraus
Kelly Colopy
Kevin Dayton
Kathy Dimick
Barbara Drake
Terry Feveryear
Ann Foster
LeRoy Franke
Bob Haywood
Terri Harris

Ken Huff
Jim Jensen
Melissa Larsen
Cosette Mills
Brent Morris
Michelle Murray
Lorilyn Neel
Irina Pierpont
Melissa Rhea
Pam Russell
Lynell Smith
Steve Titensor
Jayne Wolfe