

National Governors Association
 Policy Academy on Youth Transitioning from Foster Care
 Minnesota Implementation Plan
 Updated: June 5, 2007

<i>Establishing connections to caring adults by reviewing and strengthening (where possible) administrative court reviews of youth in placement supported by the use of "family finder technology".</i>				
Action Steps	Timeline for completion of action steps	Key organizations, divisions or persons responsible for implementing actions steps	Expected outcomes and how you will measure success	Date of completion
Review current language and/or policy for administrative reviews of youth in Long Term Foster Care (LTFC) or state wards.	December 06	DHS permanency staff, Ann Ahlstrom (staff attorney with the Minnesota Supreme Court). NGA subcommittee and county NGA partners.	Existing language and policy is identified.	January 2007
Draft language to support the continued efforts of social services to find kinship and/or adoptive placements for LTFC or state wards at administrative review hearings.	January 07	DHS permanency staff, Ann Ahlstrom (staff attorney with the Minnesota Supreme Court). NGA subcommittee and county NGA partners.	Draft language is written that supports continued efforts to identify supportive permanent relationships for youth.	January 2007
Draft suggested amendments into a white paper format and consider for introduction to the 2008 legislature.	October 07	DHS permanency staff, Ann Ahlstrom (staff attorney with the Minnesota Supreme Court). NGA subcommittee and county NGA partners.	A white paper is written that can be introduced as an amendment to the 2008 legislative session as a technical amendment.	
Provide social workers with training on "family finder" technology to support efforts to link youth with relatives for the purpose of creating more permanent supportive relationships.	October 07	DHS permanency staff with technical assistance from the National Resource Center on Family Centered Practice and Permanency.	Social workers statewide will receive training on the use of family finder technology and its associated practice.	
<i>Corporate engagement (public/private partnerships) by strengthening the links (via training and best practices) between county social service agencies and local workforce centers regarding employment and training. How can we reinforce work readiness as a policy for younger adolescents in care as a precursor to more structured job training for older adolescents?</i>				

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Determine best practices between county social services and local workforce development agencies.	November 06	DHS staff, NGA subcommittee and DEED representatives.	A document is produced that will be framed in the context of supporting foster youth with services from local workforce development agencies.	December 2006
Circulate best practice guidance to all county social service agencies via DHS SELF coordinators list serve. Also circulate to DHS grantees serving youth in transition.	December 06	DHS SELF coordinator and adolescent services staff. NGA subcommittee and DEED representatives.	Circulation to all identified partners is complete.	December 2006
DEED will include Best Practices for Reaching Youth Aging Out of Foster Care on its Youth Services Website - and will create a Shared Youth Vision weblink that all State-Level partners can link to.	December 06	DEED Office of Youth Development	State and local partners have access to web-based information on best practices. See item #4 at the below website: http://www.deed.state.mn.us/youth/SYV/SYV.htm	December 2006
Minnesota's Workforce Service Areas will include in their PY2006 Youth Plans local goals/strategies for increasing services to youth in foster care through cooperative projects.	March 07	DEED Office of Youth Development and local workforce service areas, Workforce Investment Boards, and Youth Councils.	An increased number of youth in foster care are served through MN's youth workforce development system.	March 2007
DEED will include in its Unified Plan for WIA the goal of increasing services to youth in foster care statewide through cooperative strategies - once again, identifying best practices underway in specific regions.	May 07	DEED Office of Youth Development	An increased number of youth in foster care are served through MN's youth workforce development system.	May 2007
Explore the involvement of foundations such as Life's Headwaters in supporting work readiness, support and mentoring for foster care youth.	Ongoing	DHS and DEED staff along with NGA subcommittee and representatives.	Foster care youth become involved in work readiness programming and are linked to mentors to support the development of a comprehensive independent living plan.	Life's Headwaters is working transition age youth in Hennepin County.

Youth engagement to the extent that we can identify a broader array of child welfare programs that could be impacted by youth participation.

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Identify existing efforts to engage youth. Consider how to expand existing efforts to meet broader child welfare goals.	December 06	Child Safety and Permanency Staff and administration. NGA subcommittee. Others to be determined at future NGA meetings.	Ultimately a decision whether existing efforts could be expanded to meet a broader mandate for youth input on child welfare programming/policies (specifically the federal Child and Family Service Review).	December 2006
Research other states youth engagement methodologies and consider for implementation in Minnesota.	March 07	Request technical assistance to the NGA	Knowledge of how youth advisory boards work in other states.	Scheduled to be completed during retreat on April 22, 2007
Connect with the Foster Club and determine how they are being used as the youth engagement strategy for states and other initiatives.	January 07	DHS staff to contact Foster Club representatives.	A general understanding of the role of Foster Club and how it could be used to meet identified needs for youth engagement in Minnesota.	Scheduled to be completed during retreat on April 22, 2007

Youth Housing

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DHS Supportive Services (Ending Long-Term Homeless Initiative) grants will have transition planning included.	July 1, 2007	Jane Lawrenz and staff at Community Living Supports at DHS.	Greater focus on supportive services including housing to youth in transition and homeless youth.	
Write transition strategies/services within all state RFP's regarding homelessness. Create "set-asides" for youth within current state funding streams that are mandated to serve youth.	As RFP's are written by various state staff.	OEO staff, DHS staff, MHFA staff where appropriate.	Dedicated funding for youth housing and require applicants to plan and articulate how they are going to provide housing to youth in transition.	2/07 FHPAP RFP goes out and will have youth as a priority population and has an added

				section in the RFP for youth (including a designation of funding for youth programs), 2/07 Cherie and Beth put together a survey for youth providers to get feedback on how Minnesota Housing can better work with the youth providers, 2/07 the OEO RFP's go out and will include youth in them
Do a Gaps Analysis for homeless/transitioning youth in terms of how many youth are not currently being served.	February 2007	Beth Holger in response to 2005 legislation.	Widely distributed report to community stakeholders. May affect policy and legislation in the 2007 session.	January 2007
Have a discussion on youth & transition issues during the Interagency Task Force (ITF) on Homelessness. Incorporate youth transition strategies into the ITF 2007 work plan.	January 2007	Cherie Shoquist/Beth Holger and Interagency Task Force membership.	Create awareness within other state agencies regarding youth transition issues and how the ITF can support the NGA initiative.	January 2007
<i>Juvenile Justice</i>				
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Conduct a presentation on best practices in transition planning at the annual Field Services Advisory Conference.	May 10, 2007	Kyiunga Olson, DHS staff and others as needed.	Corrections staff from across the state will be presented with resources and best practice information on planning youth transition from care.	May 10, 2007
Interagency participation in a resource fair for juvenile corrections staff.	June 28, 2007	Kyiunga Olson, Kay Tracey and Steve Vonderharr to coordinate with respective state agency staff.	Corrections staff from across the state will be provided with resources that support transition from several state agencies.	
<i>Adolescent Health</i>				
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Distribute the adolescent health e-newsletter to SELF coordinators across the state.	Monthly starting January 2007	Jennifer O'Brien and DHS staff	County SELF staff will be aware of resources, information and best practices regarding adolescent health issues.	February 2007 and ongoing
Distribute resources ("10 Tips for Foster Parents", Shoulder to Shoulder, ATOD pamphlets) on adolescent health risk factors to foster parents and foster care workers.	June 2007	DHS staff, MDH staff and MOAPPP	Increase knowledge among foster parents and foster care workers on risk factors for youth in foster care including early sexual activity, drugs, alcohol and tobacco.	