

A. DATA/RECORD SHARING BETWEEN SYSTEMS

1. National - *Mythbusting: Breaking Down Confidentiality and Decision-Making Barriers to Meet the Education Needs of Children in Foster Care*

- Manual that answers common questions by individuals involved with the child welfare system, including judges, children's attorneys, parents, foster parents, youth, caseworkers, and court appointed special advocates (CASAs)
- Publication (1) provides context and explains why there is a need to address the education needs of children in foster care; (2) debunks myths about confidentiality and decision making; (3) explains the federal laws that affect confidentiality of education records and decision making; and (4) suggests strategies to overcome confidentiality and decision-making hurdles when addressing the needs of children in foster care
- Link to manual - www.abanet.org/child/education.

2. National - *Lessons Learned*, a publication of the Juvenile Law Center and the Education Law Center

- Publication highlights state examples of immediate enrollment procedures and expedited record transfers for children in foster care
- www.abanet.org/child/education/fce-pub.shtml

3. California – Data Sharing

- AB 1858 requires that school districts provide disaggregated data on their students in foster care. Accordingly, academic achievement data regarding youth in care are collected and reported throughout the state.
- California's countywide Foster Youth Services (FYS) Program requires that educational outcome data be tracked and reported. The ongoing evaluation measures actual performance against target objectives in the areas of academic achievement, discipline problems, and truancy.
- San Diego's FYS has developed a specific database (Foster Youth Administration System) that houses all educational information regarding the County's youth in care.

4. Los Angeles – Data Sharing

- Los Angeles Education Coordinating Council helps collect and analyze data on youth in care throughout the county and facilitates data matching between the Unified School District and the Department of Children and Family Services.
- A data matching report provides demographic and educational information for children in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.
- <http://www.educationcoordinatingcouncil.org>.

5. Florida – Data Sharing

- Florida law requires that the Department of Child and Family Services must enter into agreements with district school boards or other local educational entities regarding education and related services for children "known to the Department."
- Such agreements must include, but are not limited to: (1) establishing a protocol for the Department to share information about a child, consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, in order to assist each child welfare agency in obtaining education and related services for the benefit of the child; (2) notifying the school district of the Department's case planning for the child and permitting the school district to provide information it deems desirable and appropriate to share within the plan development or review process; and (3) requiring the district school to identify all educational and other services provided by the school and school

district that the district believes are reasonably necessary to meet the educational needs of the child.

- The *Florida K-20 Education Data Warehouse (EDW)* integrates existing data extracted from multiple sources that are available at the state level.
 - Single repository of data concerning students served in the K-20 public education system.
 - Benefits include: (1) capability to track students over time and across delivery systems; (2) ability to perform trend analyses; (3) furnishing decision makers with tools and information necessary to make informed, fact-based decisions about a youth's education; and (4) allowing business users to run their own queries against summarized data in a timely, efficient manner.
 - <http://edwapp.doe.state.fl.us/doe/>.

B. SCHOOL STABILITY AND SEAMLESS TRANSITIONS TO NEW SCHOOLS

6. National - *Asking the Right Questions: A Judicial Checklist to Ensure That the Educational Needs of Children and Youth in Foster Care Are Being Addressed*

- Checklist outlines an array of questions that may be asked in a courtroom regarding the educational needs of children and youth in foster care
- Contains specific questions for an initial hearing that could lead to improved school continuity
- Checklist can be adapted by individual states and jurisdictions to reflect state law and local practice
- <http://www.abanet.org/child/education/NCJFCJChceklist.pdf>.

7. California - San Luis Obispo County Interagency Agreement

Interagency Agreement between child welfare agency and school district:

- Provides that School Educational Liaisons “will participate, in an advisory role, in educational placement decisions in consultation with the youth and the person holding educational rights.”
- If a School Educational Liaison plans to recommend that the youth not remain in the same school, he or she must provide a written explanation of that decision to the youth and person holding the educational rights.
- The San Luis Obispo County Interagency Agreement can be found at www.abanet.org/child/rciji/education/sloaggreement.doc.

8. Florida – Broward County Interagency Agreement *Fostering Student Success: Technical Assistance Manual for Foster Care Designees 2004-2005*

- Interagency agreement (between the school board, the Department of Children and Family Services, and Childnet) attempts to keep most children in care at their current school unless the child's best interests dictate otherwise.
- School district provides transportation for children in licensed foster homes when it is in the best interests of the student to attend a school outside the school boundaries of the shelter or foster home location.
- Transportation is provided either on the district's buses (at existing stops or at new stops on existing routes such as those for magnet schools, ESE cluster programs, or local schools); by payments to foster parents at district reimbursement rates, if approved by the School Board; or by transportation through contracted services coordinated by the School Board Transportation Department and approved by the School Board.
- Manual is available at http://floridaschildrenfirst.org/04_reports/proj/Education/National/2004-05_TechManualFosterCareDesignees0405.pdf.

9. Arkansas - Foster Care Liaisons in Schools

- Arkansas uses foster care liaisons to ensure immediate enrollment and prompt record transfers for children in foster care. Each school district must identify a foster care liaison to assist with

school transitions by ensuring the transfer of credits, records, grades, and any other relevant school records.

- When a child in foster care is subject to a school change, the child's caseworker must contact the school district foster care liaison within two business days. The new school must enroll the child immediately regardless of whether the child is able to produce any required records or clothing.
- When a child is placed in a new school, the foster care liaison in that school must request the education records from the foster care liaison in the child's previous school within three school days. The foster care liaison in the previous school must send the child's education records within 10 school days of receiving the request.

10. California – Foster Care Liaisons

- California Assembly Bill 490 (AB 490) promotes seamless transitions by mandating a number of protective measures when foster youth transfer between schools.
- AB 490 requires every local education agency (LEA) to have a foster care liaison. Foster care liaisons must ensure that children in care are able to enroll in school, access education related services, and participate in the school's academic and nonacademic programs to the same extent as other students.
- Foster care liaisons are also responsible for "ensuring proper transfer of credits, records, and grades." Within two business days of a request for enrollment in a new school, the foster care liaison in the new school must request the youth's records from the school last attended by the youth in care. The liaison for the last school attended must send the youth's records to the new school within two business days of receiving the request.
- AB 490 further provides that a school must "immediately enroll" a foster youth who transfers to the school even when the foster youth is unable to present records or clothing normally required for enrollment.

11. Kentucky - Educational Passport

- In Kentucky, an "educational passport" provides basic demographic and academic information on children under state agency care
- When a child leaves a school, the school must send an updated passport to the state agency within two days. The state agency must send the passport to the new school within two days of enrollment

12. Tennessee - Educational Consultants

- In 2001, Tennessee's Department of Children's Services (DCS) and the plaintiffs in the *Brian A. v. Sundquist* lawsuit reached a settlement agreement requiring DCS to hire education consultants and attorneys to act as liaisons and improve communication between DCS regional offices and the public schools
- Education consultants ensure school records of youth in care are transferred to new schools.
- <http://www.comptroller1.state.tn.us/repository/RE/custodyeducation.pdf> and <http://www.childrensrights.org/site/PageServer?pagename=cases#TN>.

C. EDUCATION SUPPORT "CENTERS"

13. Texas – Educational Specialists

- Texas has hired education and developmental disabilities specialists for each of the state's regional child welfare offices. The specialists help Child Protective Services (CPS) staff address the complex educational needs of youth in care, particularly those with developmental disabilities.
- Education and developmental specialists train CPS staff on special education topics, consult with staff about the special education needs and IEP plans of youth, and advocate alongside CPS staff for needed education services.
- The specialists also collaborate with local organizations, agencies, and school districts to meet the education related needs of children in care, and to decrease duplication of efforts.
- http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About/State_Plan/2003_Progress_Report/2003_14proposals2004_Disability.asp

14. New York City - Education Support Center

- Advocates for Children created *Project Achieve* to ensure that children in or at-risk of placement in foster care receive access to appropriate educational services.
- Program employs three key strategies: (1) providing individual case assistance and advocacy to all clients of a child welfare agency who are identified as having unmet education-related needs; (2) building the capacity of agency service staff, caseworkers, and supervisors to help them identify and solve routine school-related issues; and (3) empowering and educating birth and foster parents and, where appropriate, young people to navigate the New York City Department of Education and other agencies, and to be actively involved in educational planning and progress.
- Project Achieve model was first piloted at Louise Wise Services (LWS), a private preventive services and foster care agency in New York City. The child welfare agency is currently replicating the project at two other foster care and preventive services agencies in New York City.
- http://www.advocatesforchildren.org/pubs/Project_Achieve_final.doc

15. Washington State - Education Support Center

- In partnership with the nonprofit agency Treehouse, the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Children's Administration began a statewide education advocacy program in 2006.
- Program assigns an Education Advocacy Coordinator to each region to collaborate with social workers, caregivers, and youth in foster care to serve the educational needs of youth in the region.
- Coordinators train social workers, caregivers, and community partners on education-related topics such as special education and school discipline. Coordinators also advise caregivers and social workers on how to advocate for the educational needs of specific youth.
- In cases requiring more intensive advocacy, the coordinators intervene directly to address the problem.
- Finally, the coordinators refer youth, caregivers, and social workers to education-related agencies and resources that address their particular issues, such as community tutoring services and special education laws.
- <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/pdf/ca/Final%20Foster%20Parent%20Q%20and%20A%20EDUCATION%20ADVOCACY%20PROGRAM.pdf> and <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/pdf/ca/Final%20EA%20Memo1.pdf>

D. EDUCATION STANDARDS FOR PLACEMENT PROVIDERS

16. California - Educational Standards for Residential Placement Providers (Residential Treatment Facilities in Philadelphia)

- Assembly Bill 1858: Quality Non-Public Schools for Foster Youth (Chapter 914 Statutes) was enacted in 2004 and requires all NPSs to meet the same standards as public schools for appropriate curricula, qualified teachers, and adequate materials and supplies.
- AB 1858 requires the NPS to provide access to the following: (1) the same instructional materials used by the district in which the NPS is located; (2) college preparation courses; (3) extracurricular activities such as art, sports, music, and academic clubs; (4) career preparation and vocational training; (5) supplemental assistance, including academic tutoring, psychological counseling, and career and college counseling; and (6) teachers and staff who provide academic instruction and support services with the goal of integrating the students into the least restrictive environment.
- AB 1858 requires NPSs to be monitored similarly to public schools to ensure they are offering appropriate educational programs and services.

E. MENTORS/TUTORS

17. National - *Mentoring USA's (MUSA) Foster Care Initiative*

- Targets youth ages 10 through 18
- After receiving special training, mentors commit to a minimum of four hours each month for at least one full academic year at an MUSA foster care site, which currently includes 10 foster care agencies and one public school.
- Mentors work with foster youth on developing life skills that prepare youth to live independently. Youth learn about postsecondary education opportunities, career planning, conducting a job search, and handling basic finances.
- http://www.helpusa.org/site/PageServer?pagename=MUSA_Homepage

18. California – Mentors/Tutors

- Tutor Connection is a collaborative program offered as a community service course at California State University at San Marcos (CSUSM) College of Education.
- Program is intended to change the way future educators see and understand the issues surrounding youth in out-of-home care.
- Participating education students are given a pre- and post training Child Welfare Knowledge Questionnaire about their self-perceived knowledge of the child welfare system and issues pertaining to youth in out-of-home care.
- Analysis of these questionnaires shows a statistically significant increase in their knowledge, leading to better outcomes for youth in care.
- www.sddoe.net/students/ss/fys.asp

19. New York City – Mentors/Tutors

Building Futures Community-Based Mentoring Program

- Based on Big Brothers/Big Sisters' traditional mentoring model
- Youth are referred from foster care agencies throughout New York City
- Program is designed to provide them with mentors who will provide them with continuous support, share their life experiences, and have fun.
- <http://www.bigsnyc.org/a-p3.htm#BUILDING>

20. Texas – Mentors/Tutors

Texas Mentorship Pilot Program

- Establishes a pilot program where a private or nonprofit entity pairs children in foster care, ages 14 and older, with volunteer adult mentors.
- Mentors provide guidance to prepare children for the transition to adulthood, including future education pursuits. Children in foster care who qualify may participate on a voluntary basis

F. COLLEGE ACCESS

21. Washington State - The Foster Care to College Program

- Partnership of private and public agencies designed to support adolescents in Washington State foster care to prepare for, pursue, persist in, and succeed in postsecondary education and training programs statewide, regionally, and nationally.
- Partnership provides targeted outreach to youth in foster care between the ages of 13 and 21 to convince them a college education is possible and to provide them with the resources necessary to achieve their postsecondary aspirations.
- Offers an all-expenses paid summer program with workshops and activities to help high school students between 10th and 12th grade or in a GED program prepare for postsecondary education.
- Pairs positive, professional adults with youth who have similar vocational interests. These adults help young people complete necessary college or training program entry paperwork and provide motivation, encouragement, and support throughout the college experience.
- <http://www.independence.wa.gov/partner/contact.asp>