

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

## CHILDREN'S DIVISION

PO BOX 88

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI

SEPTEMBER 25, 2006

**What's Inside:**

- Upcoming changes in the Older Youth Program:
  - Program Name
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  - Contracts
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MEMORANDUM

TO: REGIONAL EXECUTIVE STAFF, CIRCUIT MANAGERS AND CHILDREN'S DIVISION STAFF

FROM: PAULA NEESE, INTERIM DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: ANNOUNCEMENT OF UPCOMING POLICY AND PRACTICE CHANGES IN THE OLDER YOUTH PROGRAM

REFERENCE: CHILDREN'S DIVISION

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of this memorandum is to share the plans for addressing the services provided by the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program.

The Older Youth Program

The Foster Care Independence Act of 1999, a federal legislation, introduced the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program in each state. At that time, Missouri Children's Division renamed the Independent Living Program to reflect this change. The Missouri Children's Division has made a decision to change the name of the program that serves adolescents in foster care to a name that more broadly encompasses all of the needs of older youth in foster care. The new name, the Older Youth Program, better reflects the specific philosophy and services that are offered to youth, ages 14 and older, in the custody or previously in the custody of the Missouri Children's Division. The name change will become effective in Spring 2007.

The Older Youth Program will encompass:

- Philosophy:
  - Positive youth development
  - The distinct permanency needs of adolescents
- The Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) services:
  - Life skills training
  - Education and Training Vouchers (ETV)
  - Aftercare services
- Transitional Living Program (TLP)
- Independent Living Arrangement (ILA)

## Policy Changes

New policy changes that will be forthcoming include revisions to the current Chafee Foster Care Independence Program chapter (CWM Section 4 Chapter 21). This revised Older Youth Program chapter will outline:

- the philosophy of youth permanency and positive youth development
- the responsibilities of case managers of older youth, ILP Contractors, TLP Contractors, Older Youth Contract Coordinators;
- the role of the Older Youth Transition Action Teams
- procedures for using the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment and the Adolescent FST Guide & Individualized Action Plan (formerly the CS-1 Attachment)
- helpful resources to engage youth in their permanency and education planning

Within this policy change will be a revision to the current CS-1 Attachment. This form will become the Adolescent FST Guide & Individualized Action Plan. This form will be essential in the planned transition of a youth becoming an adult and leaving the foster care system. It will detail the goals of the youth and how they plan to meet those goals. It will be an inventory of youth skills and their belongings. Most importantly, this tool will be used to document that there are adults that the youth has identified as having a connection with. This should help to facilitate the involvement of those identified adults in the youth's life. This tool should help guide the Family Support Team Meeting and be used as the action plan for every adolescent, ages 14 to 21, in foster care.

The policy revisions and Adolescent FST Guide & Individualized Action Plan will first be tested by sites that are identified by the Regional Directors. At these sites, identified workers and supervisors will receive training on older youth permanency needs, positive youth development, the Adolescent FST Guide & Individualized Action Plan (FST Guide/IAP), and Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA). Once the training is completed, these sites will utilize the ACLSA and the FST Guide/IAP for two months. Then feedback will be given from these sites and revisions may be made. Upon completion of this test project, the training, new policy and tool is anticipated to be ready for implementation for all staff beginning in April 2007.

## Contracts

Contracts are being developed to better serve older youth in foster care. These include the contract for Transitional Living placements and the services through the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. Each of these contracts has been written to allow for more flexibility and creativity for providers to offer services and support to youth. The Transitional Living Program providers will now be responsible for providing life skills training to youth in their placements and ILP contractors will not only deliver services, such as life skills training, but will also be responsible for administering these services. This means that some of the ILP Specialists duties, like coordinating life skills classes, providing payment to youth for specific needs, i.e. graduation expenses or attendance and homework allowance, and processing provider payments, will all be done by the ILP contract administrator. These contracts will enable the Children's Division to benefit from the private agency's ability to be flexible and creative in procurement of services and resources, which will better meet the needs of older youth in foster care.

## Older Youth Contract Coordinators

These contracts will need support and monitoring. Seven regionally based, Children's Service Worker positions, called Older Youth Contract Coordinators will perform this task and be the gatekeeper for CFCIP and TLP services and determine ETV eligibility.

### Timeline

Below you will find an approximate timeline for training and implementation of policy and practice in the Older Youth Program:

- November 2006:
  - Part I Training of Test Sites
  - Part II Training of Test Sites
- December 2006 – January 2007:
  - Test Sites utilize FST Guide/IAP
- January 2007:
  - Planned TLP& CFCIP Contracts award
- February – March 2007:
  - Test Site Feedback on FST Guide/IAP & Policy
  - Revision of FST Guide/IAP & Policy
- April – June 2007:
  - Training to all staff
  - Policy and practice implementation

<b>NECESSARY ACTIONS:</b>	
1. Review this memorandum with all Children's Division staff.	
2. All questions should be cleared through normal supervisory channels and directed to:	
<b>PDS CONTACT:</b> Tricia Phillips 573-526-5408 <a href="mailto:Tricia.L.Phillips@dss.mo.gov">Tricia.L.Phillips@dss.mo.gov</a>	<b>PROGRAM MANAGER:</b> Cindy Wilkinson 573-526-0957 <a href="mailto:Cindy.R.Wilkinson@dss.mo.gov">Cindy.R.Wilkinson@dss.mo.gov</a>
<b>CHILD WELFARE MANUAL REVISIONS:</b>	
N/A	
<b>FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS:</b>	
N/A	
<b>REFERENCE DOCUMENTS and RESOURCES:</b>	
N/A	
<b>RELATED STATUTE:</b>	
Section 477 of Public Law 107-133	

**ADMINISTRATIVE RULES:**

N/A

**COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION (COA) STANDARDS:**

N/A

**PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PIP):** (Employee Access Only)

P1.10.2; P1.10.3; WB1.17.2

**SACWIS REQUIREMENTS:**

N/A