HB 177

HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

(11)
Date Referred: April 19, 1989 FURTHER REFERRALS:

Date of Committee Action: 3/7/90

The FINANCE Committee considered: HB 177

HOUSE BILL NO. 177 [PRE-EMANCIPATION AID FOR MINORS]
"An Act relating to the pre-emancipation services for certain minors."

RECOMMENDATIONS:
[X] be replaced with CS HB 177 (HESS) [X] the same title [ ] a new title
[ ] have attached amendment(s)
[ ] do pass
[ ] do not pass
[ ] no recommendation
[ ] individual recommendations
[ ] additional referral to the _____ Committee

ADOPTS: _____ letter of intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(s): (Dept)
[X] fiscal impact H & S S
[ ] zero fiscal note
[ ] zero with analysis

APPROVES PREVIOUS: (Date/Dept)
[ ] fiscal note(s) _____
[ ] zero fiscal note(s) _____
[ ] zero fn/analysis _____

SIGNING DO PASS:

Koppner
Swackhammer
Brown
Wallis

SIGNING:
(Check approp. column)

	Do Not Pass	No Rec	Amend
Hoffman		X	
Larson		X	
Barnes		X	
Rieger		✓-	
Shultz		✓	

Ronald J. Larson
Chairman's Signature
Hoffman

STATE OF ALASKA
1990 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL VERSION: CSHB 177
PUBLISH DATE:

FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date:
Title: An Act relating to pre-emancipation services
Sponsor: HESS
Requestor:

Agency Affected: Health & Social Services
BRU: Purchased services, Family Services
Components: Foster Care, Residential Care, Central Office

Adopted

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
CONTRACTUAL	10.0					
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	58.0	48.0	48.0	48.0	48.0	48.0
CAPITAL						
REVENUE						

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND	58.0	48.0	48.0	48.0	48.0	48.0
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL	58.0	48.0	48.0	48.0	48.0	48.0

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

No fiscal impact is expected in FY 90. The impact in fiscal years FY 91 through FY 96 is attached.

Prepared by: Russ Webb, Director
Division: Family and Youth Services
Phone: 465-3170
Date: 2/6/90

Approved by Commissioner: Myra M. Munson
Agency: Health and Social Services
Date: 2/6/90

Distribution (by preparer):
Legislative Finance
Legislative Sponsor
Requestor
Office of Management and Budget
Impacted Agency(ies)

TRAVEL:

Central Office Component $ 3.0

Travel and perdiem for staff to monitor programs, aid in curriculum development, and provide training. 6 trips x $600/trip.

CONTRACTUAL:

Central Office Component $ 10.0

Initial cost to develop and purchase training curriculum for emancipation services/independent living skills, as well as to purchase films, video's, and reference materials for foster parents, residential child care providers and state youth correctional institution staff.

GRANTS:

Foster Care Component $ 20.0

Provides training for 20 foster parents in independent living concepts and skills. These trained foster parents could then provide independent living skills to 24 youth the first year and 100 per year thereafter.

Residential Care Component $ 25.0

$25,000 to train 21 staff from 21 residential child care facilities and 4 youth corrections facilities in the independent living skills curriculum. These care givers would then teach independent living skills to 75 youth the first year and 175 youth each year thereafter. Each of the residential and youth correction facilities would be required to add this component to their treatment programs.

TOTAL: $ 58.0

TRAVEL:

Central Office Component	$ 3.0
Travel and perdiem for staff to monitor programs, aid in curriculum development, and provide training. 6 Trips x $600 per trip.	

GRANTS:

Foster Care Component	$ 8.0
A cost of $8,000 per year would be required to train additional or new foster parents to accommodate turnover among foster parents, and to update and enhance the curriculum.	
Residential Care Component	$37.0
$10,000 each year to update and enhance the independent living curriculum and to train additional staff from residential child care facilities and to youth corrections facilities due to turnover and the need to update skills.	
$27,000 to provide supervised or subsidized independent living for three (3) youth each year on a demonstration basis to evaluate the effectiveness of these approaches in helping youth make the transition to full independence. Costs are estimated at $9,000 per youth with the actual costs varying based on the needs and circumstances for each youth.	

TOTAL:	$48.0

Offered: 4/19/89
Referred: Finance

6-0691H

Original sponsor: Health, Education and Social Services Committee

IN THE HOUSE

BY THE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 177 (HESS)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

A BILL

For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to the pre-emancipation services for certain minors."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

* Section 1. AS 47.10.080(b) is amended to read:

(b) If the court finds that the minor is delinquent, it shall

(1) order the minor committed to the Department of Health and Social Services for a period of time that does not [TO] exceed two years and that does not [OR IN ANY EVENT] extend past the minor's 19th birthday [DAY THE MINOR BECOMES 19], except that the department may petition for and the court may grant in a hearing (A) two-year extensions of commitment that [WHICH] do not extend beyond the minor's [CHILD'S] 19th birthday if the extension is in the best interests of the minor and the public; and (B) an additional one-year period of supervision past the minor's 19th birthday [AGE 19] if continued supervision is in the best interests of the minor or the minor is receiving pre-emancipation services, [PERSON] and the minor [PERSON] consents to the additional period of supervision [IT]; the department shall place the minor in the juvenile facility [WHICH] the department considers appropriate, [AND] which may include a juvenile correctional school, detention home, or detention facility; the minor may be released from placement or detention and placed on probation on order of the court and may also be released by the department, in its discretion, under AS 47.10.200;

(2) order the minor placed on probation, to be supervised

by the department, and released to the minor's parents, guardian, or a suitable person; if the court orders the minor placed on probation, it may specify the terms and conditions of probation; the probation may be for a period of time that does [,] not [TO] exceed two years and that does not [IN NO EVENT] extend past the minor's 19th birthday [DAY THE MINOR BECOMES 19], except that the department may petition for and the court may grant in a hearing

(A) two-year extensions of supervision that [WHICH] do not extend beyond the minor's [CHILD'S] 19th birthday, if the extension is in the best interests of the minor and the public; and

(B) an additional one-year period of supervision past the minor's 19th birthday, [AGE 19] if the continued supervision is in the best interests of the minor [PERSON] and the minor [PERSON] consents to it;

(3) order the minor committed to the department and placed on probation, to be supervised by the department, and released to the minor's parents, guardian, other suitable person, or suitable non-detention setting such as a family home, group care facility, [OR] child care facility, or supervised independent residence, whichever the department considers appropriate to implement the treatment plan of the predisposition report; if the court orders the minor placed on probation, it may specify the terms and conditions of probation; the department may transfer the minor, in the minor's best interests, from one of the probationary placement settings listed in this paragraph to another, and the minor, the minor's parents or guardian, and the minor's attorney are entitled to reasonable notice of the transfer; the probation may be for a period of time that does not [, NOT TO] exceed two years and that does not [IN NO EVENT] extend past the

minor's 19th birthday [DAY THE MINOR BECOMES 19], except that the department may petition for and the court may grant in a hearing

(A) two-year extensions of commitment that [WHICH] do not extend beyond the minor's [CHILD'S] 19th birthday, if the extension is in the best interests of the minor and the public; and

(B) an additional one-year period of supervision past the minor's 19th birthday, [AGE 19] if the continued supervision is in the best interests of the minor or the minor is receiving pre-emancipation services, [PERSON] and the minor [PERSON] consents to the additional period of supervision; [IT; OR]

(4) order the minor to make suitable restitution in lieu of or in addition to the court's order under (1), (2) or (3) of this subsection; or [.]

(5) order the minor committed to the Department of Health and Social Services for placement in an adventure-based education program established under AS 47.21.020 with conditions the court considers appropriate; concerning release upon satisfactory completion of the program or commitment under (1) of this subsection if the program is not satisfactorily completed.

* Sec. 2. AS 47.10.080(c) is amended to read:

(c) If the court finds that the minor is a child in need of aid, it shall

(1) order the minor committed to the department for placement in an appropriate setting, which may include a supervised independent residence, for a period of time that does not [TO] exceed two years and that does not extend [OR IN ANY EVENT] past the minor's 19th birthday [DATE THE MINOR BECOMES 19 YEARS OF AGE], except that the department may petition for and the court may grant in a hearing

(A) two-year extensions of commitment that [WHICH] do not extend beyond the minor's 19th birthday, if the extension is in the best interests of the minor and the public; and (B) an additional one-year period of supervision past the minor's 19th birthday, [AGE 19] if the continued supervision is in the best interests of the minor or the minor is receiving pre-emancipation services, [PERSON] and the minor [PERSON] consents to the additional period of supervision [IT]; the department may transfer the minor, in the minor's best interests, from one placement setting to another, and the minor, the minor's parents or guardian, and the minor's attorney are entitled to reasonable notice of the transfer;

(2) order the minor released to the minor's parents, guardian, or some other suitable person, and, in appropriate cases, order the parents, guardian, or other person to provide medical or other care and treatment; if the court releases the minor, it shall direct the department to supervise the care and treatment given to the minor, but the court may dispense with the department's supervision if the court finds that the adult to whom the minor is released will adequately care for the minor without supervision; the department's supervision may not exceed two years and may not [OR IN ANY EVENT] extend past the minor's 19th birthday [DATE THE MINOR REACHES AGE 19], except that the department may petition for and the court may grant in a hearing

(A) two-year extensions of supervision that [WHICH] do not extend beyond the minor's 19th birthday, if the extension is in the best interests of the minor and the public; and

(B) an additional one-year period of supervision past the minor's 19th birthday, [AGE 19] if the continued supervision is in the best interests of the minor [PERSON] and the minor

[PERSON] consents to it; or

(3) by order, upon a showing in the adjudication by clear and convincing evidence that there is a child in need of aid under AS 47.10.010(a)(2) as a result of parental conduct and upon a showing in the disposition by clear and convincing evidence that the parental conduct is likely to continue to exist if there is no termination of parental rights, terminate parental rights and responsibilities of one or both parents and commit the child to the department or to a legally appointed guardian of the person of the child, and the department or guardian shall report annually to the court on efforts being made to find a permanent placement for the child.

* Sec. 3. AS 47.10.230 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

(h) The department shall provide appropriate pre-emancipation services to a child 16 years of age or older who has been committed to the custody of the department and for whom the department finds that pre-emancipation services are appropriate or needed. The services may include

(1) assistance in completing academic or vocational training designed to make the child employable;

(2) assistance in acquiring and managing suitable housing; assistance under this paragraph may include financial assistance to the child;

(3) training and supervision in skills needed for independent living;

(4) assistance in petitioning for removal of the disabilities of minority; and

(5) social support and services coordination.

(i) The department may award a grant to or contract with a municipality or with an entity incorporated under AS 10.20 to provide

pre-emancipation services under (h) of this section. The commissioner shall adopt regulations establishing criteria for the award of grants under this subsection.

(j) The department may recruit and train foster parents to provide pre-emancipation services under (h) of this section.

Angela Salerno, MSW
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Testimony to the House Finance Committee on HB 177
March 7, 1990

HB 177 addressees a gap in social services for kids who have been dependent on the state child welfare system long-term: kids in foster care, in detention, kids who are at risk of remaining dependent on some state service system in their adult years.

Specialized pre-emancipation services provide children who are dis-charged to their own supervision, and who are expected to assume adult responsibilities fully at the age of majority, with assistance in making the transition to independent living. These services aid adolescents during a pivotal time in their development, especially when they have no guarantee of employment, higher education, housing or guidance, none of the critical resources needed to learn adult living skills. (And the body of foster care studies suggest that these educational and employment deficits are the most troublesome problems for foster children to deal with as adults). Without such help, many of them will probably pass from one form of moderately inexpensive dependency-foster care- to another, far more expensive form- on welfare, as adult criminals or in the mental health system.

Up to now the child welfare system has focused on child protection. Services are for the most part designed to meet the dependency and security needs of abused and neglected children. With this bill, the state shifts that focus to the development of programs that promote self-sufficiency. With this bill, the state recognizes the independence needs of adolescents, and in fact promotes independence from welfare systems. In fact, pre-emancipation services can be the last state-funded social service provided to this troubled population.

Formal state policy authorizing pre-emancipation services exists in seven states, and functioning models for transitional living services for youth operate in Texas, Maryland, Oregon, New York, Massachusetts and Idaho, and Alaska. Covenant House International right here in Anchorage and the Casey Family Project operate successful pre-emancipation services.

Available outcome studies on this type of service are rare but hopeful. One study suggests that 70% of the participants in an independent living program moved successfully into living on their own.

The current fiscal note is fully adequate to fund a small demonstration project. NASW fully supports this bill and urges it passage into law. We need to assist kids to help themselves out of lifelong dependency on the state.

Angela Salerno, MSW
Alaska Chapter NASW
Social Action Committee

Alaska Youth & Parent Foundation

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jim Nordlund

FROM: Sheila A. Gaddis

SUBJECT: Pre-emancipation services - HB 177

DATE: April 1, 1989

Alaska Youth and Parent Foundation supports the concept of pre emancipation services for youth and supports HB 177.

We are presently preparing commentary on the sections of HB 177 and will submit them, in writing, next week to Rep. Ellis.

Some thoughts:

Please find enclosed a copy of the Oregon Runaway and Homeless Youth Project, prepared by the Northwest Network of Runaway and Youth Services of which I am a board member.

It is an excellent report. I call your attention to the section on Independent Living Skills Programs, page 19. Structured programs teaching homeless youth skills are also competencies which will also be required in programs focusing on youths preparing for emancipation.

"These competencies may include: job skills, money/budget management, basic health and hygiene, nutrition and food preparation, housing search and procurement and social skill development." HB 177, Section 3 (h) is a critical piece of this legislation in that services for this population are clearly stated.

Transitional housing, independent living skill programs, youth jobs skills programs and case management procedures for homeless and pre-emancipated youth are currently not in place in our state.

This bill is an important start. We have a lot to do.

(Formerly Alaska Youth Advocates)

Family Resource Center, 3745 Community Park Loop, Suite 202
Anchorage, AK 99508 Phone 274-6541

We have started by revising our Emancipation booklet. It is currently at the printers. Copies will be distributed through the Bar Association and complimentary copies given to legislators for their use.

Also, Alaska Youth and Parent Foundation has an agreement with the Municipality Job Partnership Training Act to provide job training with youth both in and out of our shelter. This service is funded by the Federal Department of Health and Human Services.

AYPF and the Office of Public Advocacy are discussing the possibility of targeting a few young people who are ready for emancipation and moving them through a step by step process culminating in independent living.

On a federal level, AYPF asked for Congressional support of the Minimum Wage Restoration Act. It has passed the House as the Fair Labor Standards Amendments of 1989 (H.R. 2). If we are to effectively aid youth in becoming contributing and self-sufficient members of our communities, I believe we must recognize the importance of adequate compensation for work performed and its resulting impact on self-worth and sense of identity.

Thanks for listening. I will mail the commentary to you.

TESTIMONY BY FRED ALI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, COVENANT HOUSE ALASKA

TO

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE HE&SS COMMITTEE

APRIL 6, 1989

Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you this morning. My name is Fred Ali, and I am the Executive Director of Covenant House Alaska. I am here to testify in support of House Bill No. 177, "An Act relating to the pre-emancipation services for certain minors."

Let me begin by briefly explaining our program at Covenant House. Covenant House Alaska is a private non-profit corporation serving runaway and homeless youth between the ages of 13 and 20. Located in downtown Anchorage, Covenant House is open 24 hours a day, every day of the year, responding to the needs of kids in crisis.

Our goals are to:

- Provide immediate sanctuary and services to homeless and runaway youth;

- Reunite families as quickly as possible, whenever possible;

- Enable youth to choose positive and stable lifestyles;

- Educate the community about problems of homeless, runaway, and throwaway youth, and assist and promote productive community solutions.

Covenant House Alaska is an affiliate of Covenant House, Inc., an international child care agency with centers throughout North and Central America.

I would now like to specifically address H.B. 177.

H.B. 177 would give the Department of Health and Social Services the authority to provide pre-emancipation services to appropriate children, 16 years of age or older. We believe pre-emancipation service programs are needed in this state to address the following groups of kids at risk:

- Youth ageing out of the Foster Home system;

- Youth leaving juvenile justice facilities, i.e, in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Nome, and Bethel;

- Throwaways (not necessarily in state custody);

- Chronic runaways (not necessarily in state custody) who have voluntarily exiled themselves from their families.

Many of these kids share problems in common. They have not developed skills that will allow them to succeed on their own. They find it difficult, if not impossible, to hold a job, manage financial resources, and form positive relationships with other people. They cannot or will not return home or to another stable living situation. They are essentially on their own, but without the skills to live independently. They survive on the streets by participating in illicit activities or by bing exploited by others. Most importantly, they are kids who will eventually end up in our adult correctional facilities unless there is some form of intervention.

Let me share the stories of two of our residents at Covenant House.

> Patty is 17 years old. She is no longer in state custody, lacks a stable home, is addicted. She's dropped out of school and lacks the job skills necessary to hold down a job. Her father is dead and she hasn't seen her mother for over a year.
>
> John is 17 years old. His mom is dead and he hasn't seen his father for over two years. He dropped out of school, and has been living from "crash pad to crash pad." John has decided he wants to make some positive changes in his life. That's why he came to Covenant House.

Patty and John are not unique. We see many kids just like them at Covenant House every day.

Since opening our doors on last Hallowe'en, we have provided shelter and assistance to over 250 youth.

Characteristics typical of runaway and homeless youth across the nation are common in the Anchorage Crisis Center.

- Lack of basic literacy skills

- Lack of skills necessary for independent living

- Lack of self esteem and poor self image

- Past involvement in street survival activities, such as prostitution, survival sex, drug dealing, theft

- Histories of personal or family substance abuse

- Escaping abusive or dysfunctional homes

- Victims of physical or sexual assault

We recognize that many of our kids, like Patty and John, need more than just a crisis center. They need sufficient time, support and resources to achieve true independent living.

For this reason, Covenant House has developed a program called Rights of Passage (ROP). ROP programs are operating in tandem with our crisis centers in New York, Houston, New Orleans, and Ft. Lauderdale. In Anchorage, we are currently assessing the feasibility of an ROP program.

The ROP program provides long-term residential care for a period of 9-15 months. In addition to stable housing, ROP residents are provided:

- Counseling
- Health Care
- Money Management training
- Life Skills instruction
- Educational/vocational training
- Employment counseling
- Mentoring
- Aftercare

It is my sincere hope that this legislature will authorize and fund (on a pilot basis) programs offering pre-emancipation services. There is ample need to justify the funding of pilot projects throughout our state.

1. In five short months, Covenant House Alaska has worked with hundreds of disconnected kids in need of specialized services.

2. Annually, many kids are released from McLaughlin and other youth correction facilities who lack the skills to live successful independent lives.

3. On the Kenai Peninsula, the Kenai Community Care Center has begun a small independent living program for youth ageing out of the foster care system.

Chronic youth at risk start from a position of such disadvantage that it is hard for most of us to imagine. Their interior equipment for functioning in mainstream society is almost nonexistent. Lacking the most basic

skills -- rational thinking, decision-making, planning ahead -- they are in many ways no better equipped for life in the world than young children. An apartment of their own; security in a job; stable and constructive relationships with landlord, supervisor, family, friends; competence at fundamental independent living skills: they have difficulty even conceptualizing themselves in this role.

But these young men and women have the drive and talent to succeed. Some of them believe in themselves just enough to strive for a better life. For those young people, a pre-emancipation program like Rights of Passage presents a very real ray of hope. From the moment they are accepted their chance of realizing their vaguely articulated dreams increases thousandfold.

Succeeding will push them to the limits. Major life changes that most of us encounter singly and sporadically will be required of them, and in a limited period of time. Particularly to young people accustomed to running away from the smallest challenge, what we ask is a tall order. But they are accomplished strugglers and they work hard. We develop trusting relationships with them -- the first they may ever have had with an adult. And we use our bond as leverage to help them reach the goals they set out for themselves when they come to us. We praise them, "I can't tell you how proud I am of what you did." The praise means something, and one success breeds another. We address our efforts to every part of their lives.

Undertaking such work is no small challenge. Resolving the complex issues of development and readying a staff to do the demanding work of pushing and prodding, cajoling and encouraging the youth in their struggles with job, school, and personal lives takes time, intellectual and emotional energy, and commitment.

But the rewards are commensurate with the effort -- because programs like this work.

Alaska Foster Parents Association

P. O. BOX 140651 • ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99508

POSITION PAPER
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The Alaska Foster Parent Association supports the concept and intent of this legislation, which is to provide pre-emancipation services to youth in the custody of the state in order to prepare them for independent living.

One concern is that, although some youth age 16 and above coming into care may need a specific pre-emancipation setting or supervised independent residence, all youth need to have access to pre-emancipation skill building. Youth also need a home setting in which to be nurtured. Federal laws require the least restrictive setting possible, which is usually defined as foster care. Therefore, we need to insure that this bill also provides for pre-emancipation skills to be provided in each foster home and in residential facilities providing care for youth.

During the past year several foster parents have applied for grants from the Division of Family & Youth Services to help foster parents prepare youth for independent living based on materials from Eastern Michigan University, Institute for the Study of Families and Children called "PREPARING YOUTH FOR EMANCIPATION FROM FOSTER CARE". Foster parents are the logical choice to teach youth these skills, both in specific programs and in every day living that incorporates good role modeling, gradual independence, and an opportunity to test new skills in the community in which they live.

The Alaska Foster Parent Association would support independent living residences for those youth for whom this is the only option, but would also ask for the same support and grants to enhance foster parents' ability to prepare youth for independence that would, hopefully, produce productive and healthy young adults that would not continue to be a burden on society. Grants should be awarded to foster parent groups that are willing to incorporate independent living skills as a program of foster care in their area. Specific supports and provisions within policy would also be needed to support this concept.

We must remember that each and every youth will be an independent young adult soon. We must work to prepare all of them for emancipation or we will perpetuate the cycle of welfare and dependent families.

Miriam Sumner
President

Frank H. Wasmer
Vice President

POSITION PAPER/Department of Health & Social Services

POSITION PAPER

HOUSE BILL NO. 177

For an Act entitled: "An Act elating to the pre-emancipation services for certain minors."

House Bill No. 177 would establish statutory authority necessary to allow the Department to provide a full range of pre-emancipation services to youth 16 to 19 years of age. This would facilitate the successful transition to full adult independence of youth who have been in state custody, particularly those who cannot return to the home of a parent or parent substitute. Specifically the bill would:

1. require the Department to provide pre-emancipation services to those youth in the custody of the Department who are 16 to 19 years of age and who request the service, unless the Department finds that such services are inappropriate;

2. require the Department to adopt regulations establishing criteria for determining whether pre-emancipation services are appropriate for youth;

3. authorize extension of Departmental custody beyond a youth's 19th birthday in order for the youth to continue receiving pre-emancipation services;

4. authorize the Department to utilize supervised independent residences as placements for youth committed to Departmental custody;

5. authorize the Department to grant or to contract with municipalities or private nonprofit organizations for the provision of pre-emancipation services.

Needs Addressed by HB 177

Most youth in our society have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for successful independence gradually throughout childhood and adolescence. For these youths, transition to full independence is also accomplished gradually and with the support and assistance of parents or parent substitutes.

For many youth in state custody, particularly those who have been in long-term custody and have no parent or parent substitute upon whom to rely when they leave state custody, this type of gradual training and transition cannot occur. This is

prevented by a lack of statutory authority for providing transition services, funding limitations, and a lack of appropriate services.

Preparation for independence does occur as a formal part of foster care and residential care placements for older youths in state custody. However, this has not been an area of primary focus, nor has it followed a special curriculum to ensure its completeness or effectiveness. Foster parents and residential care staff are not generally trained specifically to prepare youths for independence and there are no mechanisms available to provide for support during the final phases of the transition to independent adulthood.

This bill addresses the need to provide services to prepare youth who are in state custody for independent living. It does not address the need for additional transition support provided routinely by parents on ongoing basis. This is the situational support, often short-term financial support, to help young persons who are residing independently to overcome unforseen contingencies. For most youth who have made the transition to independent living, parental support is available when required. However, youth who have been in long-term state custody usually have no such support system once state custody is terminated. For example, there is no mechanism for the state to aid a youth who chooses to leave state custody at age 19 to attend college, in case of an illness or other setback which could cause need for financial or emotional support.

DEPARTMENT POSITION

The Department recognizes the need to provide better transition services for children leaving state custody and for other youth who do not have the transition support traditionally provided by parents. The Department believes that House Bill 177 provides the authority and mechanisms to successfully address this need in most cases.

The provisions of HB 177 establish specific statutory authority enabling the Department to extend custody of youth for the purpose of providing transition services. It also establishes the Department's authority to utilize supervised independent living situations to facilitate the transition of youth to independence.

Importantly, the bill also provides the Department with the flexibility needed to target services appropriately and manage resources most effectively. By allowing the Department to establish criteria for determining the appropriate population of

POSITION PAPER/Department of Health & Social Services

youth to receive independent living services, the bill ensures that the services will be utilized most effectively and that costs will be held to a minimum. Because of this the cost of implementing the programs under HB 177 is significantly less than the cost under similar legislation introduced previously.

The Department supports HB 177.

Recommended by: Yvonne M. Chase

Yvonne M. Chase, ACSW
Director
Division of Family
and Youth Services

Date: 3/8/89

Approved by: Myra M. Munson

Myra M. Munson
Commissioner
Department of Health
and Social Services

Date: 3/9/89

Emancipation Services for Adolescents in Foster Care

Richard P. Barth

Many adolescents in foster care who are not adopted are discharged from care when they reach the age of majority. This article reviews studies on the likely social and educational futures for such adolescents and on the range of services that may promote adolescents' successful transition to independent living. Changes in practices, programs, and policies are suggested.

BY THE early 1900s foster care was considered a temporary solution to the problem of children without safe refuge. Concerned professionals and researchers later recognized that many who entered foster care as young children were still in foster care as adolescents, and indeed, adolescents now represent an increasingly large proportion of all children in care (Maas and Engler, 1959; Hornby and Collins, 1981; Fanshel and Shinn, 1978; Knitzer, Allen, and McGowan, 1978). Contrary to early expectations, foster care is not short term and is not treatment directed—instead, such care has become "foster care with tenure" (Goldstein, 1975).

Beginning in the late 1970s and continuing through the current time, the permanency planning movement has endeavored to redress practices that lead to prolonged foster care careers and to adolescents having no family support. Despite such endeavors, the benefits of federal and state permanency planning statutes may, in fact, contribute to the welfare of older adolescents least of all. The principle goal of permanency planning is to reduce the number of children in state custody by (1) curtailing the entry of children into the foster care system by providing preventive services; (2) providing reunification services for the children and their birth parents; and (3) closing cases rapidly via relinquishment for adoption and via placement with permanent adoptive parents. Despite the efforts made to prevent foster care placement, almost one-fourth of the children in foster care in New York and Maine first enter care as adolescents (Hornby and Collins, 1981). Placement prevention is particularly difficult among adolescents, who, more than younger children, enter foster care because of their behavioral problems rather than because of inadequacies in the home (Bernstein, Snider, and Meezan, 1975; Fanshel and Grundy, 1980; Hornby and Collins, 1981). Placement prevention is, of course, water under the bridge for those adolescents who entered the foster care system before permanency planning came into effect and who are now growing up in foster care. A significant number of children are not beneficiaries of permanency planning, as, for example, in New York City, where the percentage of adolescent children in foster care nearly doubled in the last decade (Lash, Sigel, and Dudzinski, 1980).

Reuniting adolescents with their birth families is difficult to achieve. For adolescents who have grown up in foster care, relationships with birth parents are often nonexistent. Even when those relationships endure, the parents or adolescents often are unwilling to undergo the readjustments required by reunification. Although some programs, such as Spaulding for Children in Chelsea, Michigan, successfully identify single- and multiple-kin placements (for example, the foster children are placed with their grandmother or older siblings, or with their older siblings and their grandmother), often adolescents with long stays in foster care do not experience lasting reunifications. (For adolescents new to the foster care system, reunification rates may be somewhat higher.) Overall, less than 20 percent of the adolescents in foster care return to their birth homes (Hornby and Collins, 1981). More than one-fourth of the children in foster care in New York State are expected to "age out" of foster care—that is, reach the age of majority and, therefore, be discharged from foster care (Dempsey, 1983).

Pilot permanency planning projects show that the adoption of older children is the major contributor to reductions in long-term foster care (Fein et al., 1983; Lahti et al., 1978; Rooney, 1981). Still, only about one adolescent in 20 currently in foster care is likely to be adopted (Hornby and Collins, 1981). Many adolescents cannot find or choose not to accept or not to remain in an adoptive placement (Borgman, 1981). Guardianship is the mandated first alternative for such adolescents, although guardianship may also be vulnerable to disruption (Ten Broeck, 1983). Long-term foster care is the least stable form of placement—half of the "permanent" foster care placements were disrupted in a longitudinal study, conducted in Connecticut, of the outcomes for children in foster care (Fein et al., 1983). Although permanency planning has a bright future and promises constructive changes in the care of dependent children, its current influence on the lives of adolescents in foster care is not great. Much to its credit, permanency planning will clarify adolescents' legal status. Some, who would have drifted through foster care and lived their entire years in limbo, will be freed for adoption, guardianship, or long-term placements. Nonetheless, many will live as foster children until they reach the age of majority.

This article briefly reviews studies of children leaving foster care without special emancipation services, reviews the range of emancipation services currently in use throughout the United States, and suggests changes in policy and practice to improve outcomes for the significant number of fos-

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ter children who will age out of foster care in the coming years.

EMANCIPATION WITHOUT SPECIAL SERVICES

The argument for emancipation services follows on the assumption that children who are discharged to their own supervision and who are expected to assume full adult responsibilities at the age of majority (typically 18 years) need assistance in making the transition to independent living. This assumption is not implausible: these youths, at the very minimum, have no guarantees of support from adults in getting settled in the worlds of employment, higher education, housing, and child care. Despite the logic of this assumption, the futures of children who move from foster care to independent living are not well understood. Studies of children who have grown up in foster care are scarce and lack sufficient experimental rigor to explain sometimes diverse findings. Nonetheless, the findings provide guidance for policymakers, program planners, and practitioners.

Studies of Outcomes

An early investigation (Theis, 1924), found that three-fourths of the more than 500 adult interviewees who were former foster children lived competently in their communities; the remaining one-fourth, according to the standards of that time, were judged as unable to support themselves, "immoral," or "shiftless." According to the study, children who were placed after the age of 5 were least likely to succeed as adults. Almost 40 years later, a Dutch social worker's study of 160 adults with lengthy foster care experience (Van der Waals, 1960) showed that the former foster children were successful by conventional social standards, but that they reported feeling unsuccessful, dissatisfied, and distressed. The study also showed that the interviewees' low self-estimates were mitigated only by continued contact with their birth parents. McCord, McCord, and Thurber (1960) found that providing foster care to delinquent youths did not prevent them from engaging in criminal behavior as adults. Gil (1964) investigated whether foster children had realized their preadmission developmental potential and found that as adults only half his sample of 25 achieved their potential.

Meier's (1965) study of adults with five years of experience as foster children presented puzzling findings. Although two-thirds of the adults in the sample had positive social functioning, they had higher than average rates of marital dissolution and, among the women, higher rates of problem pregnancies and births. A follow-up study of 140 former foster children in Scotland, found that one-sixth were convicted of a crime during late adolescence, but that almost all were self-supporting by age 20 (Ferguson, 1966). Interviews with 40 members of this cohort as young adults found that they were "coping fairly well" but that they had limited education and limited job skills. Youths who had been integrated into their foster family showed the most positive outcomes.

Harrari's (1980) study of 34 adolescents who had left foster care within five years and had not returned to their foster homes found that their self-reports on a personality inventory were indistinguishable from such reports by the general population. In descending order of importance, the adolescents' adjustment to independent living was associated with the availability and use of services to help with the following: financial problems, family planning, substance abuse problems, emotional problems, and locating or reuniting with birth parents. Bohman and Sigvardsson (1980) compared 329 male children who were adopted, raised by their birth parents, or raised in foster care. By age 18, the children in foster care fell behind the adopted children with regard to intellectual ability and had higher rates of alcohol abuse and criminality than the other two groups of children. In an informal assessment of emancipated adolescents, Anderson and Simonitch (1981) reported that the adolescents experienced high rates of reactive depression. Kraus's (1981) investigation of almost 500 former foster children found that the length of time the children spent in placement and the degree of placement continuity were unrelated to their later involvement in law violations. The investigation drew no comparisons to children raised in their own homes.

Zimmerman's (1982) study of 61 former foster children who were from 19 years to 29 years old at the time of the interview found that those with the poorest educational preparation had the most problems as adults. The educational attainment of the interviewees was lower than that of the general population in New Orleans and lower than that of a group with which they were matched according to ethnic minority status. More than half of the sample dropped out of school and, on the average, those surveyed finished less than 11 years of school. Three out of four members of the sample were self-supporting, although slightly more than one in three lived at or below the poverty line. More than 10 percent were incarcerated at the time of the study. Nearly half repor needing or seeking mental health servi and about 5 percent of the sample a hospitalized for a mental illness at so time after foster care. A preponderanc these young adults appraised their li as currently satisfactory or hopeful. Th discharged from foster care after a lo stay were more likely to be among the b ter functioning group.

Festinger's (1983) recent findings are most sanguine of the outcome studies. La ing an optimum control group, Festin could only draw comparisons between t outcomes for the ex-foster children s studied (now adult respondents) and t norms of the population at large. S found no differences between her samp and the population at large on most cha acteristics, including number of arres self-esteem, happiness, and satisfactio with life. However, she did find dramat differences between the sample and th general population in educational achiev ment (especially for males, who complete college at a rate of 2.3 percent of th former foster children compared to 22. percent of the general New York City pop ulation) and in employment (especially fo black youths formerly in foster care, o whom 53.1 percent were employed as com pared to 74 percent of the general New York City population of black males). The respondents' continued contact with their foster parents or their ongoing contact with birth parents during their tenure in foster care was again shown to be associated with better outcomes.

A study of 607 former foster children in West Virginia (Jones and Moses, 1984) found that adolescents who aged out of foster care after an average of five years in the system had rates of marriage, broken marriages (separation and divorce), incarceration, parenthood, and marital satisfaction that were comparable to the general population. The former foster children surveyed lagged behind their peers in education by one year, were largely (95 percent) free from incarceration, and experienced, in a significant number (20 percent), problems with alcohol. The West Virginia study also found that 19 percent of the sample's children were or had been in foster care, which is an exceptionally high rate of foster care and is not found in other studies of the foster care rates of the children of former foster children. Nearly 85 percent of those surveyed said that overall they were happy and optimistic about the future, and 62 percent said that they were "mostly satisfied" with their lives. Most (75 percent) of the former foster children were living with family

members, including a spouse or partner (27 percent), foster or adoptive parents (22 percent), birth parents (15 percent), and other relatives such as grandparents or siblings (7 percent) or their own children (4 percent).

Although studies on outcomes for former foster children fall far short of definitiveness, such studies indicate that foster children are not a favored group. Many foster children entered care because of behavioral or personal handicaps. With abridged educations, no borrowing power, and scanty guidance or encouragement, these youths are expected to negotiate successfully the vagaries of a society that requires increasing levels of preparation for entry-level jobs and capital for making purchases, such as a car or house. Certainly, such conditions do not work to the advantage of these youths.

The body of studies on foster care outcomes offers several implications. First, continued contact with foster parents and birth parents improves outcomes for foster youths. Second, educational and employment deficits are apparently the most troublesome problems for foster children to deal with as adults. Third, problems with criminal behavior and substance abuse are less common in adults who were foster children, but are possibly overrepresented in this population. Although exposure to foster care does not doom children to a distressed adulthood—and, indeed, may provide the children with beneficial developmental experiences not found in their birth homes (Fanshel and Shinn, 1978; Lerenberg et al., 1981; Zimmerman, 1982)—foster children are at risk of abridged futures and, therefore, are deserving of assistance during their struggle into adulthood.

CURRENT EMANCIPATION SERVICES

Special services for adolescents moving from long-term placements to independent living are relatively new to child welfare. Informal efforts to assist adolescents in accomplishing a successful transition to independent living preceded specialized independent living arrangements. Many caseworkers and foster parents have informal procedures by which they commemorate discharge, including life-history review scrapbooks, "graduation" parties, and special trips and awards. Unlike the services provided in mental health and developmental disabilities programs, however, few formal child welfare programs promoted independent living prior to the 1970s. (More than half of Festinger's sample of ex-foster children reported that they received little or very little preparation for discharge [Festinger, 1983]). The development of services with the greatest utility for foster children calls for an examination of current efforts. Programs that supplement the emancipation efforts of traditional foster family care include (1) foster parent training; (2) supervised residences; (3) independent living subsidy programs; (4) scholarship programs; and (5) postemancipation groups.

Foster Parent Training

Foster parent training is a staple of child welfare services. Studies show that the best training programs are effective in helping individuals to continue to serve as foster parents and in reducing replacement (Boyd and Remy, 1978; Simon and Simon, 1982). Training also helps parents manage more effectively the behavior of their foster children (Guerney, 1976a; Guerney 1976b; Guerney and Wolfgang, 1981). Euster and Noble (1981) developed and successfully implemented a program to prepare caseworkers to train foster parents. Moreover, foster parents who are trained to train other foster parents have outcomes equal to those of child welfare workers who train foster parents (Cobb, Leitenberg, and Burchard, 1982). Almost one of every three licensed foster parents in Vermont took a course from another foster parent. Foster parent training to improve outcomes specifically for adolescents discharged from foster care is not as well documented or studied. Few states or counties include more than a modicum of training to prepare foster parents to promote independent living among adolescents.

Supervised Group Homes

A few agencies have developed projects for emancipation apartments or group homes or have transformed already-established and all-purpose group homes into specialized homes to prepare youths for independent living. Such projects include the Casey Family Program's Independent Living Project (Mauzerall, 1983), the Oregon Children's Services Division's Self-Support Program, and the Hope Center for Youth's Supervised Apartment Living Program for soon-to-be-discharged minors (Furrh, Jr., 1983). Each of these projects serves emancipating minors between the ages of 16 and 18. Contracts between youths and group home parents are an essential element of services and stipulate the youths' educational, social, and employment plans and responsibilities. Other than the contracts, residents are unbridled by typical features of foster care, such as curfew. In all homes, the youths assume full responsibility for fulfilling their commitments to school, work, and the agency. Their support checks are distributed directly to them, and they pay rent to their foster parents or to their landlords. Youths stay about six months in each program, with aftercare plans a prerequisite to discharge. Along the path to independent living, these programs help youths to address problems with depression, frustration and failure in finding housing, alcohol and drug abuse, friends who "crash" at the youths' apartments, landlord conflict, loneliness, difficulty with self-care activities such as laundry and cleaning, unemployment, and relationships with former foster parents and with birth parents (Anderson and Simonitch, 1981; Furrh, Jr., 1983; Simonitch and Anderson, 1979).

The programs have differences. In addition to individual counseling, youths in the private nonprofit Casey Family Program's Independent Living Project receive extensive life-skills training to supplement the lessons of semi-independent living. Life-skills groups—complete with workbooks and videotapes—help youths obtain working papers, find and keep employment, improve their self-presentation to others, and locate and rent a home.

The Oregon Children's Services Division's Self-Support Program (SSP) is financed from cuts in the regular foster care system and by special reduced rates and the state's Independent Living Subsidy Program (Oregon Children's Services Division, 1983). SSP payments (which were $450 per month in late 1983) may be used to support living arrangements in settings other than foster homes or licensed child care agencies, as for example, in boardinghouses, fraternities or sororities, and apartments with older friends. Service providers must

- be located so as to provide reasonably convenient access to schools and places of employment or services
- comply with state and local zoning, fire, sanitation, and safety regulations
- provide a setting conducive to good mental health and progress toward independence for the youths
- provide appropriate supervision and room and board
- ensure that the self-support program established for each youth is carried out
- monitor the availability of services necessary to reach the agreed-on goal for each youth.

Portions of the youths' earnings are saved for aftercare costs and for the costs of SSP. SSP can prepare youths for entrance into the Independent Living Subsidy Program (described later in this article) or can directly precede emancipation.

The Hope Center for Youth's Supervised Apartment Living Program draws on a model of supervised living arrangements common to services provided for people with mental or physical disabilities. Adolescents live in one of the two apartment complexes, which are segregated by gender. These complexes are licensed as halfway houses, and each has 20 residents and a ratio of one staff member to five youths. Skills training for independent living is comprehensive and includes such topics as financial responsibility, vocational skills, job finding, consumer skills, use of community resources, and interpersonal skills. Although not strictly a child welfare program (youths from juvenile justice, mental health, and mental retardation programs are also served), this independent living arrangement is a prototype for other child welfare programs.

Independent Living Subsidy Program

Another innovation in independent living arrangements is the Oregon Children's Services Division's Independent Living Subsidy Program (ILSP). Complete with sponsoring legislation, this program provides adolescents 16 years of age or older with subsidies for start-up apartment costs and stipends for continued independent living in residences of their choice. To qualify for ILSP, youths must have lived previously in two or more public settings and must be judged unsuitable for such settings (the median number of placements prior to entering ILSP is four), and they must be in school full time or work full time or be engaged in a combination of the two. Youths negotiate their living arrangements in the private housing sector and may live with non-ILSP roommates. Payment grants for living expenses typically go directly to the youths. In negotiating for housing, the youths consult with social workers, who are mandated by law to meet with the youths on an ongoing basis, twice monthly. (An evaluation by Altorier and O'Donnell [1978] shows that some social workers see this mandate as a strength of the program, whereas others view it as an expensive and burdensome requirement.)

A recent evaluation of ILSP found that average start-up costs were $227 in 1979–1980, average monthly payments per participant were $209, and the average length of stay was just short of 1½ years (Halm, 1980). Social workers indicated that more than three-quarters of youths' case plans were achieved. This figure is markedly above the 54 percent rate of reopened cases for youths 13 years to 16 years old in alternative programs of foster family care or foster group homes in Oregon. Because the costs were not significantly greater than those incurred by these alternative programs, ILSP was judged as an effective program for promoting independent living. Neither the author nor the director of ILSP know of the existence of programs comparable to ILSP.

Scholarship Programs

Several studies identify the exceptional educational needs of foster children (Festinger, 1983; Zimmerman, 1982; Dolan and O'Neill, 1983). Limited finances and educational preparation make the likelihood of the youths attending college after foster care slim. The failure to attend college not only limits foster youths' future income, but often ends their immediate post–high school support. A few states, for example, Michigan and Arizona, continue to subsidize foster care until age 21 for youths in extended educational programs. In such states, the opportunity to gain secondary education provides the dual advantage of continuity of care during the youths' struggles to remediate their educational disadvantages. States with approved Title IV-E plans (of the Social Security Act) are eligible for optional federal funding to aid foster children, up to 19 years old, completing high school degrees.

The Foster Care League attempts to help foster children achieve adequate educational preparation for college (Dolan and O'Neill, 1983). The private nonprofit agency serves as liaison between social service agencies and private boarding schools in New England to arrange placements and scholarships for foster children. Some 65 private schools have granted scholarships of 50 percent or more of the costs for social services to their students in foster care. States pay the standard or special foster care rates to the private schools. Foster children maintain contact with their foster families and return home during vacations (foster parents are then reimbursed at a daily rate). Five states now use the no-fee placement service. The program has not been evaluated.

Other programs provide consultation and encouragement to foster youths who are considering going to college. The Casey Family Program in Boise, Idaho, Spence-Chapin Services to Families and Children in New York, the Jewish Children's Bureau in Chicago, and the Methodist Home in Waco, Texas, are among the programs that help adolescents in foster care to identify colleges and to complete the applications and financial forms necessary for admission. For matriculating students, the programs supplement school-based aid. Most programs also offer continued contact an guidance during the students' transitio from their high school years to the sem independent college years. The Foster Chi dren's Scholarship Foundation of San Mate County, California, provides financial a sistance for foster children seeking to enro in technical training, community colleg or university programs (Reiden, 1983 Students with at least a C average in hig school are eligible for scholarships under written by contributions from foundation and individual donors.

Pre- and Postemancipation Services

Services to prepare adolescents for inde pendent living are largely restricted t specialized independent living programs Adolescents who do not participate in such programs—the majority of emancipat ing adolescents—are unlikely to find help with planning their impending emancipation and to find assistance during their emancipation. Life Planning Services for Older Children in Hennepin County, Minnesota, is designed to help youths aged 10 to 16 who are free for adoption but whose family status and emancipation plans remain unclear (McDermott, 1983). The combined effort of private and public child welfare agencies and the juvenile court supports outreach efforts to identify such youths, offers group and individual counseling to review emancipation options, and helps youths to develop emancipation plans. Prior to emancipation, social workers help the youths identify relationships that approximate continuous family relationships or that show promise of developing into familylike relationships. The commitment of adults to maintaining a relationship with the youths before and during emancipation is ascertained and encouraged by the youths and staff. Supportive services are provided to the adults and to the adolescents for exploring the implications of their mutual commitment and for planning for the future.

Emancipating youths may also receive assistance in their transition to independent living from child welfare workers who informally provide some postdischarge counseling and from caseworkers, foster parents, and birth parents who continue to have contact with the children after they have reached the age of majority. Although Zimmerman (1982) concluded that foster children rarely saw their social workers after leaving the agency's custody, social workers from ILSP, among others, report periodic contact with youths after emancipation.

Another source of assistance for eman-

cipating youths is self-help groups. In an era in which self-help groups are increasing in number and in acceptance by professionals and by lay persons, it is unfortunate that self-help groups for foster children receive little attention. Self-help groups for adolescents traditionally have difficulty maintaining membership and momentum (Barth, 1983), although some notable exceptions, such as Ala-Teen and Daughters and Sons United, suggest the potential for such efforts. Like these groups, self-help groups for foster children require considerable resources and supervision from adults if the groups are to succeed.

CHANGES IN POLICY

The existing models of formal emancipation programs deserve more use. Oregon's statute supporting independent living subsidies is now a decade old and deserves emulation in other states (State of Oregon, 1976). Developers of formal independent living arrangements might follow the example of the Hope Center for Youth's Supervised Apartment Living Program and look to program models from service sectors more experienced in promoting independent living. Evaluations of pilot emancipation services are overdue and, when completed, should provide impetus for further development, adjustment, and innovation.

Volunteer Mentors

Informal helping arrangements also need development. Much research on teenage mothers—a group facing equally challenging transitions—shows that strong social support networks are all but essential to their well-being (Grow, 1979). Project Redirection enlists as volunteers community women who may have been teenage parents themselves to help young mothers struggle for self-sufficiency and for self-development. Recent evaluations underscore the importance of these volunteer mentors to the success of the youths in the project (Blum 1984; Polit and Kahn, 1985). Former foster children who have negotiated the risks of emancipation successfully might similarly serve as a resource to recently discharged foster children. Festinger's (1983) interviewees identified the need for foster care graduates to visit with and counsel soon-to-be emancipated foster children. With encouragement and consultation from child welfare departments, civic and religious organizations can serve as a source of mentors or, as a group, can help youths to acquire household furnishings, find work, and establish a supportive social network.

Incentives for Foster Parents

Foster parents and child welfare workers trained to promote independent living enable adolescents to be self-sufficient upon emancipation. Research on the generally salutary effects of foster parent training argues for enriching opportunities and incentives for such training. (Although the present discussion centers on foster parents, other group care providers will undoubtedly also benefit from better preparation for promoting independent living.) Child advocates who find state legislators or county administrators reluctant to develop programs to support independent living may argue more successfully for the provision of special room-and-board rates for foster parents trained to work with emancipating adolescents. Child welfare departments can arrange for foster parents to receive licensing waivers for temporary crowding and to receive short-term payments for boarding former foster children during respites from college or from the armed services. The costs of foster parent training and the higher room-and-board rates for foster homes with trained parents should be offset by reduced costs to the agency and community owing to failed placements or emancipation.

Materials for training foster parents to promote independent living include a videotape on the task-centered approach to promoting independent living with adolescents (University of Wisconsin, 1980), a supplement (Guerney, 1978) to a standard foster parent training program that focuses on adolescents (Guerney, 1976a), and *The Guidebook to Making It on Your Own* for adolescents (Ansell, 1983). Materials to assist social workers and foster parents in working with soon-to-emancipate adolescents include *On Your Way to on Your Own* (described in Mauzerall, 1983), *Life Skills Model for Foster Adolescents* (Euster, Ward, and Varner, 1982), and other books on life-skills training (for example, Schinke and Gilchrist, 1983).

Educational Enrichment

Our knowledge about the special educational experiences of foster youths argues for several changes in current practice and policy. Of the greatest importance is advocacy for laws that provide foster care for youths until the age of 21 as long as they are enrolled in high school or post-secondary education or in certified business or technical training programs. Many children in foster care are deprived of the opportunity for adequate educational achievement by a childhood that is interrupted by trauma and transition. When warranted by a foster child's ambitions and achievements, the state should provide the child with an extra year or more of dependency. Precedent for such action is found in legislation that extends entitlement to special education services to individuals up to the age of 21 in all states (and to the age of 25 in several states, such as Michigan).

Changes in practice can also provide foster children with greater educational enrichment and opportunity. Better contact with the schools is essential to monitoring and promoting foster children's educational achievement. Child welfare placement review boards should call on educators' knowledge of appropriate special and mainstream educational services. At the minimum, schools should employ an individual to act as a liaison to child welfare agencies in behalf of foster children. Too few schools are aware of the status of foster children and that these children have allies in child welfare workers and their agencies. More formal in-school services for foster youths—including counseling, tutoring, and employment preparation—can help keep them from falling behind other children. Such services are offered in several California school districts (Barth, 1985) and provide opportunities for informal cross-age helping among foster children at various points along the path to emancipation.

Because many foster children are in special education, stronger linkages to special education are also needed. For example, the number of lost and out-of-date Individualized Educational Programs can be reduced by school officials' agreement to send child welfare departments copies of the childrens' initial and yearly educational plans. This agreement also should encourage the children's speedy admittance into the appropriate school and classroom—even if they may move to another school shortly after admittance because of a new placement.

Promoting Contact with the Birth Family

The research on outcomes after foster care shows consistently that contact with birth siblings and parents during foster care is associated with improved outcomes for emancipated youths. This research also argues for programmatic responses. Many youths report close contact with their birth parents after foster care (Jones and Moses, 1984; Zimmerman, 1982). The contemporary approach to foster care embodied by permanency planning and by more intensive service provision to birth families should result in the greater involvement of these families in their children's life. Despite models for involving birth parents in their children's life in

foster care (Sinanoglu and Maluccio, 1981). however, the potential resources of relationships between foster children and their birth parents are too often unrealized.

Permanency planning presents the dual-edged possibility of damaging or facilitating efforts to keep children in contact with their birth families. If preventive or reunification services are successful, fewer children will grow up in foster care. Alternately, when birth parents are embittered by losing efforts to prevent agencies from terminating their parental rights, foster children may lose a valuable resource in the event that adoption or guardianship does not occur or is disrupted. In such cases, the children are forced into long-term foster care.

EXPANDING CURRENT KNOWLEDGE

Almost ten years ago, Wiltse (1978) called for service providers to devote more attention to emancipation services and research, but was only recently heeded. Decisions about the most apt and successful models of programs to promote independent living require additional information about program effectiveness. Little is known about the ability of emancipation programs to prepare youths for independent living. Available outcome data are skimpy but hopeful. An evaluation of a previous study concluded that more than 70 percent of the participants in an independent living program moved successfully into living on their own, with 20 percent returning home and the remaining 10 percent either returning to the care of another agency or failing to be traced by the researchers (Halm, 1980). Such an evaluation unfortunately stands alone.

More information on the implementation of such programs is also warranted. For example, the evaluation of Oregon's ILSP suggested that caseworkers use different standards of eligibility in referring youths to the program—some workers refer only those youths who have shown that they are incapable of managing in foster family care, whereas other workers refer only those youths who show promise of making a rapid and sure adjustment to independent living (Altorfer and O'Donnell, 1978). Similarly, agencies use different standards in contracting—in some agencies the use of contracts between youths and the agency is mandated; in other agencies, contracts are not required. In some agencies contracts specify employment goals only; in others, the contract specifies educational and personal living goals as well. Pinpointing the barriers to adolescents' use of programs offering emancipation service is vital. Harrari (1980) found that adolescents discharged from foster care perceive a need for services that were not offered. Social workers, in contrast, judged the adolescents used the services less often than offered and were unable to recognize how much they needed the services.

Descriptions of independent living programs will provide substantial addition to our knowledge. Although this article the author hopes, provides some guidance the designer of such programs will find little counsel in the published literature. Adolescents are often driven by law or circumstance to rush helter-skelter into independent living. For this reason, child welfare practitioners and policymakers should marshal their resources to reduce the legal pressures on foster children to emancipate before they are prepared and to prepare the adolescents at a young age—by life-skills training—for a successful transition to adulthood and self-sufficiency.

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