

HB

177

HOUSE HESS COMMITTEE

- 1) CALL MEETING TO ORDER
- 2) NOTE MONTH/DAY/YEAR Thursday, April 6, 1989
- 3) NOTE TIME:
- 4) NOTE MEMBERS PRESENT AND EXCUSED

(For the record, note any late arrivals to the meeting)

- 5) REMIND PARTICIPANTS TO SIGN THE WITNESS REGISTER
- 6) COMMITTEE CALENDAR:

1. SB 138: Training of Foster Parents

2. HCR 16: Master of Social Work Program: U of A

3. HB 175: Programs & Proceedings Relating to Minors

5. HB 177: Pre-emancipation Aid for Minors

4. HB 178: Tort Liability Related to Foster Care

- 7) INTRODUCE WITNESSES

For the record, ask participants to state their name, title, and the name of the firm or agency they represent.

Ask participants with written testimony to submit it to the committee secretary.

- 8) UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE: (see attached)
- 9) ANNOUNCE TIME OF ADJOURNMENT

There was a committee named HESS,  
 That knew foster care was a mess,  
 So without hesitation,  
 They passed legislation,  
 That changed foster care for the best!

*Page of final subcommittee*

*Letter of Intent*

*basic essentially*

*testimony Run word*

*[Handwritten signature]*

House HESS Committee  
Schedule  
Page Two

*Wills & Lally - notified Myrna  
Reckman 786-1721  
- will get back to me 5/1/89  
522-1684  
- thinks it's OK. pub. house*

Thursday, April 6, 1989 *Px. chng (4/3)*

- SB 138: Training of foster parents
- ✓ HCR 16: Master of Social Work Program: U of A
- ✓ HB 175: Programs & proceedings relating to minors
- ✓ HB 177: Pre-emancipation aid for minors
- ✓ HB 178: Tort liability related to foster care

*Full*

Friday, April 7, 1989 *Px. chng (3/31) Arch. LIC*

*Mr. S. L. D. - 4/13/89  
Fairbank 2610  
James Gray - 348-2629  
- 1st. 1st. possible  
direct deal*

- 1 ✓ \*HB 181: Exemption of home-brew from A.S. 04
- 3 ✓ \*HB 230: Warning signs on liquor premises
- 2 ✓ \*HB 246: Increasing tax on beer, wine and liquor
- 5 ✓ \*HB 236: Level of blood alcohol for DWI offenders
- 4 ✓ HB 35: Access to licensed premises by minors



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 being 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

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- 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.

RIGHTS OF PASSAGE

A TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM  
FOR STREET YOUTH

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## PROGRAM NARRATIVE

In fifteen years of providing short term crisis services to youth, Covenant House has witnessed a growing number of homeless and disconnected young men and women. These young people lack the outside supports necessary to sustain their small gains - dead end jobs fail to provide sufficient income; makeshift housing arrangements dissolve under financial pressures; and the necessity of leading a hand-to-mouth existence prevent them from seeing beyond the present. These young people require long-term assistance: a stable place to live, a supportive environment with the loving relationships that would allow them to grow, guidance in obtaining a job with a future, and assistance in gaining the education and training needed to further themselves.

In response to this need, Covenant House opened its Rights of Passage program in March of 1986. The goal of Rights of Passage is to provide young people, ages 18-21, with the opportunity to change their lives and become productive, successful adults. We firmly believe that it is our relationships with the young people that provide the basis for change. It is in the context of these relationships that the young people are accepted, understood, loved and challenged to reach their potential. As they begin to trust, they are able to look at themselves and the circumstances in their lives that have prevented them from reaching their goals. The youth who come to Covenant House have been failed by their families, the foster care system and society at large. Traditional approaches to change have not been effective for them, and thus Rights of Passage has created this innovative philosophy designed to meet their needs.

### EMPLOYMENT

These youth suffer from barriers to employment such as basic education and career awareness. The Rights of Passage employment program eases the labor market exchange between employers and unskilled potential employees. Each youth, with the guidance of the Educational/Vocational Coordinator, develops an individual vocational plan. Plans are created by assessing interests, skills, and abilities through interviews and aptitude tests. Placement is then determined by matching skills and interests with available positions. Entry-level opportunities are provided by donors, board members and friends of Covenant House.

Jobs are developed on an on-going basis to reflect continued demand and the diverse interests of the youth. Selecting appropriate job sites is key in facilitating job placement. The opportunities must be meaningful with recognizable career ladders and limited training. Youth have been placed in fields such as advertising, construction, hotel management and investment banking. Once a youth is placed, employers are contacted on a bi-weekly basis. Workshops are held for supervisors to discuss overall employment issues.

## EDUCATION

The overall instability of their lives prevents these young men and women from gaining sufficient education and skills, thus limiting their access to opportunities. The Rights of Passage education program diminishes their anxieties around formal academic and vocational training, and introduces them to appropriate educational experiences.

The educational backgrounds of the youth range from eighth grade through freshman year of college. Youth are encouraged to continue their education while in Rights of Passage. The young people are enrolled in programs such as GED preparation, adult basic education, technical training and college. Union preparation and vocational training programs are also available. Youth attend classes on a part-time or full-time basis.

Non-traditional approaches to education are also offered. A summer program with St. Michael's College in Vermont orients college-bound youth to campus life. Rights of Passage is in the process of developing a cooperative model with various colleges throughout New York City. This has been developed as a means of facilitating the resident's access to college and provide additional support services to maintain them in their studies. Thus far, we have been successful in starting up this model in cooperation with St. Francis College in Brooklyn. Financial assistance is available through standard government grants and loan programs, in addition to scholarships and gifts from individual donors and corporate sponsors.

Consistent with the overall program, the education component provides youth with the resources necessary to make practical choices regarding their education.

## MENTORS

Disconnected youth lack consistent relationships with adults. A unique piece of Rights of Passage is the contribution of volunteer mentors. Each mentor provides support and individual attention, while serving as a role model for one young person. Drawing on life experience, each mentor offers a perspective on the world of work, the struggles of building a career, and the ingredients necessary for success. This relationship provides an additional context for the communication of values to the youth.

Potential mentors are recruited through personal contacts with donors, board members, staff and associates of Covenant House. Candidates are introduced to the program, and staff emphasize the time and commitment necessary to build the mentor-resident relationship. Selection criteria include both personal and professional qualifications. Current mentors have established

careers in professions such as investment banking, management, social services and law.

The main task of the mentor is to gain the trust of the young person by taking on a variety of roles including friend, confidante, advisor and counselor. The mentor is expected to see the youth on a bi-weekly basis and keep contact on the alternate weeks.

After mentors join Rights of Passage, they attend an initial workshop to acquaint them with the program and prepare them to begin the mentoring relationship. Workshops are then held periodically to discuss issues that arise between the mentors and the young people. Mentors and residents are paired during the orientation period following an informal meeting. Utilizing both mentor input and individual resident needs, staff facilitate the matches.

Several mentors also serve as members of the advisory committee which assists with both operating and planning decisions. Separate advisory committees exist for the young men and the young women. Each group is represented on an overall committee which develops future goals for the program as a whole.

### CHILD CARE

Most of the young mothers in the program have been unable to pursue their education or vocational plans due to a lack of affordable, quality day care. In addition, these young mothers have not had the role models necessary to show them how best to care for their children. The Rights of Passage nursery program assists the young women in learning "to mother" while also providing care for the children.

Based on the cooperative model, all mothers are expected to take an active part in the nursery. Some of the mothers attend school in the evenings and work in the nursery during the day. Each young mother is expected to pay a nominal fee for the care of her child.

These young women, assisted by staff and volunteers from the foster grandparents program, work together to create an atmosphere that is comfortable, educational and stimulating. The nursery program assures the individual attention necessary to encourage each child's development.

### SELECTION OF RESIDENTS

Selection of Rights of Passage participants is a gradual process which identifies those young people who are both motivated and able to negotiate the demands of the program.

Through a series of interviews, staff assess the candidates' goals, abilities, and willingness to participate in all aspects of the program. They must possess the ability to learn at a level necessary to either enter a training program or hold an entry-level job. In addition, they must be free from active drug, alcohol, psychiatric or legal problems, which would prevent them from

completing the program successfully.

Rights of Passage limits its population to those young people who are residents or ex-residents of the Covenant House Crisis Shelter and are between the ages of 18-21. Staff members spend time in the crisis center identifying possible candidates for the program. Crisis center recommendations, self-referrals, and direct identification provide a pool of candidates.

The single most important characteristic in a candidate is motivation. After the first interview, candidates are asked to maintain contact with the program in order to arrange further interviews. They are also asked to produce a resume, a written statement explaining his or her reasons for wishing to join Rights of Passage, and two letters of reference. Those youth who continue to express an active interest in the program over the course of several weeks often prove to have the motivation necessary to negotiate the program.

After the completion of the interview process, a select number of candidates are forwarded to the Director for his review. The final step requires that the candidates present themselves to an Advisory Committee, chaired by the Director, and composed of mentors and the Rights of Passage team.

Youth are accepted in small groups in order to facilitate the orientation process. Staff reactivate the selection process once four or more openings become available.

## RESIDENTIAL LIFE

### Orientation

A two-part orientation process initiates a young person into Rights of Passage. The orientation begins with a three day, off-site program and then moves into a three week program in the residence. The focus during this period is on engaging the youth in relationships with the staff and their mentors. These relationships vary as the young people attach themselves to different people: some to their Resident Advisor, some to one of the Coordinators, some to their mentor. Yet it is crucial that these relationships begin immediately upon intake and that staff and mentors take the initiative.

The off-site orientation program has a strongly motivational thrust. Staff help the youth look at the changes they are about to make and encourage them to set realistic goals for themselves. The Coordinators run various workshops ranging from values clarification sessions to career exploration activities. The Associate Director and Director challenge the young people on issues of relationships, responsibility and their own obstacles to success. Periods of time are set aside for recreation, time alone, or one-on-one talks with a staff member.

Mentors also participate in the off-site orientation program. A visit to the office of a mentor is included to orient the youth to the world of work. The mentor often arranges a tour and

initiates discussion on the types of entry level positions available, the commitment necessary to succeed in the world of work, and details of his or her own career.

Upon their return to the residence, the young people move into the second phase of the orientation program. Over a three week period, the staff work with the youth to orient them to the program structure and philosophy. Expectations for behavior are communicated, and topics discussed during the off-site program begin to take shape.

During this time, staff also help the young people prepare for interviewing and employment through a series of workshops. The youth are encouraged to explore possible careers and education programs. Many of the young people have unrealistic expectations regarding entry-level positions, salaries, and promotions. Interest inventories, educational and vocational testing, and individual interviews are used to assess each person's skills and interests.

The mothers and their children become involved in the nursery program during this time. The young women also participate in their first parenting workshops and spend time discussing their experiences as mothers.

As Orientation comes to a close, the young people begin to settle into the program. They come to know the other residents and begin to find their place within the Rights of Passage community. The assigning of a youth to a Resident Advisor is also done at this time.

### **Adjustment to the Program**

At the completion of the orientation period, individualized plans have been established and most of the youth have begun their education or vocational placements. The majority of the young men and women choose to work full-time and obtain entry-level positions in fields of their choice. They often need assistance in getting to work promptly, dressing appropriately and interacting in a business environment. The staff and mentor work together with the youth to overcome these difficulties. For some of the young people, education is the priority. For the youth who attend classes, difficulties arise and staff and mentors discuss solutions with the youth. In addition, those with full-time education plans begin to discuss part-time employment opportunities with the Educational/Vocational Coordinator.

Money management also begins during this phase of the program. Upon receiving the first paycheck, each young person meets with his or her Resident Advisor and the Life Skills Coordinator to develop a personalized budget. Each is expected to pay 25% of his/her monthly income to the program as rent, and mothers are additionally required to contribute to the cost of running the nursery. The budgeting process is geared to teaching responsible spending habits and encouraging the youth to make long-term decisions concerning their finances.

During this period, money management often becomes an issue. Again delayed gratification is problematic. Although many youth are unable to adhere to their budget and savings plans, staff assist the youth during this time in opening checking and savings accounts, planning for personal expenses and balancing needs versus wants. All interactions are geared to preparing the youth to live independently.

The stabilization period is also a crucial time in the residence. The youth are challenged to act rationally rather than emotionally, and to accept the consequences of their behavior. They are also further pressed to understand responsibility in such areas as sexual relationships, friendships, and parenting. Both individually and in groups, staff members use their relationships with the young people to educate them and assist them in formulating and acting according to their values.

This period is also a significant time in the mentor-resident relationship. The young people either turn to their mentors for support during their struggles or avoid them altogether. The staff and mentors work closely to insure that they are communicating consistent messages about issues such as employment, education, and personal difficulties. The mentors are consulted on all major issues involving their particular mentee.

### **Toward Independent Living**

After completing six to eight months in a successful job or school placement, the young people begin to look toward leaving Rights of Passage. By this point, they can handle the daily demands involved in work and/or school. They need little assistance from staff in managing their money. They are sufficiently able to make rational decisions in pursuit of their goals. The mothers have a good grasp of parenting skills and have developed the ability to judge the quality of day care programs. They begin to discuss their plans for moving out with staff and their mentor.

By this time, the young people themselves are committed to their goals. They have developed the ability to survive independently because they are self-motivated and self-directed. Staff members work with the youth to identify goals and to set a timetable for completion of their move into the community.

During this period, the staff and mentor work together with the young adult as he or she goes through the transition involved in moving out of the program. Separation is difficult, and the young people have ambivalent feelings about moving on. In addition to assisting them in locating affordable housing and appropriate community resources, the staff and mentor must provide the emotional support needed during the transition.

Furthermore, the young mothers first experience separation from their children during this period. A child may have difficulty adjusting to the nursery atmosphere, while the mother may not understand her role in relation to the nursery staff.

The residential component of Rights of Passage sets it apart from other programs which only emphasize education or vocational training. The advantage of having the young people live on-site is the ever present opportunity to communicate values. In these first few months, the young people begin to struggle with the freedom afforded them. Many have difficulty with issues of accountability, relationship building, and responsible behavior. Instead of following established rules, each young adult must set his or her own limits in areas such as curfew, visitors and leisure activities. The Resident Advisors and Coordinator help the young people define their goals and structure their behavior so as to reach these goals. Every interaction is an opportunity to communicate values and challenge the young people to act responsibly.

The mentor also provides support during the adjustment period. In order for the resident and mentor to get to know one another, the mentor must be aggressive in pursuing the relationship. Often the young person does not understand the role of the mentor and may be resistant. It is only through spending time together that the youth can discover the meaning of the relationship and trust the mentor's commitment. Each relationship is very individual and proceeds at varying paces.

#### Stabilization of Gains - another phase

Once the young people have settled into the program, the excitement wears off and the monotony of the daily routine begins to take its toll. Perseverance in the face of frustration or boredom presents a challenge, and each young person must now learn the importance of delayed gratification. Most have developed relationships with the staff and their mentors by this point, and all work together to negotiate difficulties and stabilize gains.

As the youth settle into their jobs and schools, changes take place. Some of the youth are promoted to positions involving more responsibility. Those who are working successfully begin to put their educational plans into effect. Others lose their jobs as they lose motivation. The Resident Advisors and Coordinators work with the latter group to help them understand their failure and better equip them to succeed in their second work experience. Those who are in school also experience great difficulties with motivation during this time. All need the support of staff and their mentors to help them to follow through with their plans.

## Aftercare

For six months to one year, the young people are involved in the aftercare program. The Aftercare Coordinator meets with each youth on a monthly basis or as needed. Phone contact and visits to the program are encouraged. Issues such as money management, responsibility, and values continue to be discussed. The Aftercare Coordinator and the young person work together to stabilize the changes made during the previous 12-18 months. The Educational/Vocational Coordinator maintains contact with the employer and school to insure that all continues to proceed smoothly.

The mentor-mentee relationship does not end when the youth leaves the residence. The mentor remains a source of support and advice as the young person begins his or her life out in the community.





HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

(7)

Date Referred: February 15, 1989

FURTHER REFERRALS: FINANCE

Date of Committee Action: 4/18/89

The HEALTH, EDUCATION, & SOCIAL SERVICES Committee considered: HB 177

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

RECOMMENDS:

- [ ] replacing with CSHB 177 (HESS) [X] the same title [ ] a new title
[ ] the attached amendment(s)
[X] do pass
[ ] do not pass
[ ] no recommendation
[ ] individual recommendations
[ ] additional referral to the Committee

ADOPTS: letter of intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

- [X] fiscal impact DHS
[ ] zero fiscal note
[ ] zero with analysis

APPROVES PREVIOUS:

- [ ] fiscal note(s) published:
[ ] zero fiscal notes(s) published:

SIGNING DO PASS:

Handwritten signatures: Peter Jull, Mark Greenberg, Gene Jallo, Robert Bowen, J. Ellis

SIGNING OTHER THAN DO PASS: (Do Not Pass, No Recommendation, Amend)

Handwritten signature: Cheri Davis - No Rec.
Chairman's signature: J. Ellis

## FISCAL NOTE

**REQUEST:**

Revision Date: 4-17-89  
Title: An Act relating to preemancipation services  
Sponsor: HESS  
Requestor: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**EXPENDITURES/REVENUES:** (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94
PERSONAL SERVICES	-0-					
TRAVEL		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
MISCELLANEOUS						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>-0-</b>	<b>58.0</b>	<b>48.0</b>	<b>48.0</b>	<b>48.0</b>	<b>48.0</b>

CAPITAL						
---------	--	--	--	--	--	--

REVENUE						
---------	--	--	--	--	--	--

**FUNDING:** (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND		58.0	48.0	48.0	48.0	48.0
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-0-</b>	<b>58.0</b>	<b>48.0</b>	<b>48.0</b>	<b>48.0</b>	<b>48.0</b>

**POSITIONS:**

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

**ANALYSIS :** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Prepared by: *Yvonne M. Chase*  
Division: Division of Family & Youth Services

Phone: 465-3170  
Date: 4/17/89

Approved by Commissioner: *Myra M. Munson*  
Agency: Department of Health & Social Services

Date: 4/17/89

Distribution (by preparer):

- Legislative Finance
- Legislative Sponsor
- Requestor
- Office of Management and Budget
- Impacted Agency(ies)

TRAVEL:

Central Office Component \$ 3.0

Travel and per diem for staff to monitor programs, aid in curriculum development, and provide training.  
5 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 per diem 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

## FISCAL NOTE

**REQUEST:**

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

Agency Affected: Health and Social Services  
 BRU: Child and Youth Custody  
 Components: Foster Care, Residential  
 Care

**EXPENDITURES/REVENUES:** (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL		3	3	3	3	3
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS		163	222	222	222	222
MISCELLANEOUS						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>		<b>166</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>225</b>

CAPITAL						
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REVENUE						
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**FUNDING:** (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND		166	225	225	225	225
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>=0-</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>225</b>

**POSITIONS:**

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

**ANALYSIS :** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Prepared by: Yvonne M. Chase, Director  
 Division: Division of Family & Youth Services

Phone: 465-3170  
 Date: 2/9/89

Approved by Commissioner: [Signature]  
 Agency: Department of Health & Social Services

Date: 3/9/89

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

TRAVEL:

Central Office Component \$ 3.0

Travel and per diem for staff to monitor programs, aid in curriculum development, and provide training. 6 Trips x \$600/trip.

GRANTS:

Central Office Component \$ 10.0

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

Foster Care Component \$ 20.0

Provides training for 40 foster parents in independent living concepts and skills. These trained foster parents could then provide independent living skills to 25 youth the first year and 100 per year thereafter.

Residential Care Component \$133.0

\$25,000 to train 50 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.

\$72,000 to provide supervised independent living to 8 full time equivalent youth ages 17 and older at an annual cost of \$9,000/year for the first year. Costs will vary per youth because of varying levels of maturity and abilities to

achieve transition to subsidized independent living or full independence. Maximum time in supervised independent living would be one year.

\$36,000 to provide an average subsidy of \$750/month to 4 full time equivalent youth. The amount and length of time subsidies will be provided will vary within a range based on individual needs. A full subsidy will be funded initially and decreased to zero during the course of a year.

TOTAL: \$166.0

FY 91-94

TRAVEL:

Central Office Component \$ 3.0

Travel and per diem 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 \$214.0

\$10,000 each year to update and enhance the independent living curriculum and to train staff from residential child care facilities and youth corrections facilities due to turnover and the need to update skills.

\$144,000 to provided supervised independent living to 16 youth ages 17 and older at an annual cost of \$9,000/year. Costs will vary per youth because of varying levels of maturity and abilities to achieve

transition to subsidized independent living or full independence. Maximum time in supervised independent living would be one year.

\$60,000 to provide an average subsidy of \$750/month to 8 full time equivalent youth. The amount and length of time subsidies will be provided will vary within a range based on individual needs. A full subsidy will be funded initially and decreasing to zero during the course of a year.

TOTAL:

\$225.0

Continuum of Services	Informal Independent Living Concepts	Formalized Training Programs	Supervised Practice Living	Self-Sufficiency (After-Care)
Type of Service	Placement in substitute care (Residential or foster care) with the intent of encouraging youth to be involved in decision making, problem solving, and everyday tasks. (Existing Service)	DFYS has a small federal grant (\$6000) to purchase a training curriculum for for youth and their care-takers to work through together. Some skill handling programs already exist in Alaska, but need to focus on this special population of youth.	Both residential care and foster care providers can be trained to work with this population.	Two items of importance here: 1) Only youth who have been through the first three phases should be accepted into these programs; 2) An independent living subsidy (either offered or being developed by 27 states) assists the youth in making the transition to independent living.
Serving All Eligible Children (Total Estimate)	If youth is not in substitute care, independent living seminars would need to be developed and run by private provider. Cost estimate based on 100 children annually. \$20,000.	Cost estimate based on 45 youth in a formal skills development program for one year. \$45,000.	Some new program development needed here. Cost estimate based on 60 children annually. \$540,000. (Average cost of \$9,000. annually per child)	Subsidy estimate based on 31 youth, each with a subsidy for one year. (Average of \$750/month with greater subsidy initially decreases during the year) \$279,000.
Serving Children in State Custody (Total Estimate)	Existing Service - No Additional Cost	Purchase of training materials covered by federal grant; DFYS will provide training to foster parents. (No additional cost)	Cost estimates based on 50 children annually, using same cost per child as those in state custody. \$450,000.	Estimate based on 26 children with a subsidy for one year. \$234,000.

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 being 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.

POSITION PAPER

HOUSE BILL NO. 177

For an Act entitled: "An Act relating 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

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House Bill No. 177  
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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 unforeseen 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

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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

HOUSE BILL NO. 412

"An Act relating to pre-emancipation services for certain minors."

Chairman Adams advised members that the bill would allow certain delinquent minors to establish supervised independent living situations instead of having to remain in group homes, detention facilities or foster care. The intent is to encourage the development of independent living skills which the minor may not develop in these other environments. Chairman Adams said the HESS Committee Substitute added language that pre-emancipation services for a child over age 16 does not have to be provided if the department finds that this would be inappropriate and requires the commissioner to adopt regulations establishing criteria for appropriateness of these decisions. The original bill clarified age cut-offs in various sections to be at the time a minor reaches his or her nineteenth birthday. He said the bill has a fiscal note from the department of Health and Social Services for FY 88 totaling \$20,000 and \$260,500 in FY 89. Modifications to the fiscal note were being suggested by University of Alaska personnel.

REPRESENTATIVE ELLIS said the HESS Committee held a number of hearings during the interim on the problems of runaway and homeless youth in Alaska. Representative Ellis said there are thousands of youth who are runaway, "throwaways" or homeless. In attempting to address the runaway problem, the HESS Committee has developed several pieces of legislation. Representative Ellis said there is a resolution in the Rules Committee which would call upon the federal government to continue the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act which provides federal funds to non-profits. He said SB 79, by Senator Rodey, is another piece of legislation which addresses runaway youth. HB 412 is an important part of the package of legislation according to Representative Ellis.

He said the bill would require the department to provide pre-emancipation services to youth age 16 or older who are in their custody. He said the HESS Committee authorized the extension of departmental custody beyond the youth's nineteenth birthday because of the ambiguity in the statutes. He said they authorized the department to utilize supervised independent living situations as placement alternatives to youth committed to departmental custody. Representative Ellis said the department is authorized to grant or contract with municipalities or private nonprofit organizations for the provision of pre-emancipation services. Representative Ellis said the legislation meets one of the general goals of the Governor's Interim Commission on Children and Youth, economic independence for young people, and the specific goal of providing legislation which would allow for placement of youth

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in supervised independent living situations.

Representative Ellis discussed the provision of independent living skills to children by parents in relationship to children from "dysfunctional" families. He said it is important to provide services to children from these families so they are not burdens of the state; not in state custody beyond the age where they could become independent; are not part of the welfare system; and become productive members of society.

PUDGE KLINEKOPF, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF SOCIAL WORK, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA, ANCHORAGE, testified via teleconference in Anchorage. Ms. Klinekopf referenced the fiscal note prepared by the Department of Health and Social Services. She said the bill would provide, and the fiscal note would fund, the opportunity for the Department of Health and Social Services to assist a variety of adolescents with the preparation to become independent. The legislation is primarily directed to those children who have been in the department's custody and the custody is about to end either due to a lack of ability to provide further services or age.

She said services could be provided to a child living in a foster home, residential youth facility or could be in an independent, but supervised, setting. Ms. Klinekopf said the State of Oregon has a model program which is commonly copied. In the Oregon program, when the youth is ready they would move into an apartment with the department's guidance and oversight. The department would provide services during that time to help the child to learn how to manage their money, train for a job, finish school, etcetera. Ms. Klinekopf said the State of Alaska provides this type of service to individuals with chronic mental illness and those who experience developmental disabilities.

Ms. Klinekopf felt the fiscal note could be significantly reduced. She said the department's note provides for a subsidy to the child of up to \$750 per month to help with costs as they move into independent living. She said the costs are to diminish and zero out at the end of a year. Ms. Klinekopf suggested that the amount be \$600 per month since the cost which would otherwise be expended for a youth in foster care would be \$610. She said \$600 is the average amount being used to facilitate independent living for people with chronic mental illness or developmental disabilities. She said the department approximated serving 22 youth starting in FY 89. Ms. Klinekopf said the State of Oregon found the need for a start-up fund to be used to pay utility deposits, etcetera, and a vocational training contingency fund.

In response to a question from Representative Larson regarding the \$600 payment, Ms. Klinekopf said it would go to pay food, clothing, rent, etcetera. She said it would not be provided

to the department to pay for social workers to supervise youth. Representative Larson asked what exposure the state would assume in this type of a living situation. Ms. Klinekopf understood that the state has no greater liability for the youth than if they were in a foster home or a youth facility because of the ongoing supervision the department would be required to provide. She provided members with the name of a representative in Oregon who could submit further details regarding the Oregon program and any state exposure.

Representative Davis asked if the program would be a pilot project. Ms. Klinekopf said the department does not yet know how many youth might need or take advantage of these particular services therefore it could be considered a pilot project. Representative Davis noted that some youth would already be in a foster home and the state would be paying for their care therefore the fiscal note could be reduced. Ms. Klinekopf agreed and said the state could provide "up to \$600" since a youth might be working therefore making some income to assist with their needs. Representative Davis commented on the ability to live on \$600 per month. Ms. Klinekopf said in Oregon many youth share an apartment and they may work which supplements their income. She said it is hoped that when the department is ready to release a youth from custody the youth would better be prepared to make it on their own.

Representative Frank did not want the state to encourage children to move away from home. RUSSELL WEBB, DIVISION OF FAMILY AND YOUTH SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES, advised members that the department supports the bill. He said the legislation only deals with children in the department's custody. Mr. Webb said some youth would receive services in foster care, residential care centers and through supervised independent living situations or subsidized independent living situations. Mr. Webb said a youth would not be eligible for compensation at age 20. He said pre-emanicipation services does not always entail independent living conditions. Representative Frank acknowledged his concern that the state not support a youth after they gain independence.

Vice-chairman Pourchot advised members that due to time constraints, HB 412 would be HELD until the next meeting of the Committee scheduled for April 8.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEETING - MARCH 17, 1948

HB 412

Representative Sund announced that the next two bills, SB 79 and HB 412, would be taken up together today and also next Tuesday, March 22. He asked Mr. Nordlund, staff to the House HESS Committee, to address the committee and also invited Sen. Rodey to join the committee at the table.

Jim Nordlund, told the committee that HB 412 was submitted at the request of Pudge Kleinkauf, who was present to

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testify. Also present was Commissioner Munson to address the bill. Mr. Nordlund deferred to those individuals to testify on HB 412.

Sen. Pat Rodey, sponsor of SB 79, stated that the bill received a great deal of work in the House HESS Committee and he endorsed their CS version, as it had solved many of the problems of the bill. He summarized that there is concern with the large population of runaway youth, particularly in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau. SB 79 makes fundamental changes in state law and allows for some assistance to the youths. He noted that with present law there is little that can be done by enforcement agencies to help the youth or society itself. He requested that Ms. Rich address the committee with the details of the bill.

Judy Rich, testified in support of SB 79. She was speaking from many perspectives. She has worked as a client advocate for Standing Together Against Rape, counseling victims of sexual assault and family violence; she has been active for three years in Toughlove, a support group for parents with troubled teens; she has worked for the Crisis Line for several years; for the past year she has served on the Governor's Interim Commission on Children and Youth; and she is the parent of a seventeen year old drug addicted runaway son who is currently at the McLaughlin Youth Center.

Ms. Rich explained that SB 79 is the result of concerns which arose from her experiences in seeking help for her son and for parents of other runaway children. The problems in the state are enormous and the only definitive study which exists is the Mayor's Runaway Task Force, which reports that 3500 children in Anchorage are at risk of running per year and that between 900 and 1200 children are on the streets on any given night. The reasons they run and the solutions are varied and complex. She focused on two provisions of the bill which would help the parents and agencies deal with the problem. One was a provision that is opposed by the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) and the other relates to her own personal experience.

The first provision was subsection (b) on page 1, beginning on line 22, which requires protective custody of a minor by a peace officer and gives three provisions for what to do with a minor if they are not otherwise subject to arrest or detention. She felt that all three provisions were necessary and what she liked most was that the child is in control. Children who run are often abused and this helps to protect them by giving three options. Most are also one time runaways and they need a safe place to go besides their home or an institution. Currently, the law doesn't allow a third location. Ms. Rich noted that the DHSS

objects to line 26, requiring consent of the legal guardian for the child to return home, but she felt it was important because of the issue of drug abuse and violent behavior. A parent has to be able to say no if the youth is abusive and presents a danger to other family members. It mostly relates to chronic runaways. Another situation that relates to this provision is that, because it is legal for a child to run, oftentimes the only way to get the child to stop is to turn the psychology around and not allow the child to return for a time, which has proven to be very effective and successful. It does not advocate that people turn their children out of the home, but allows parents to set bottom lines on behavior upon their return home. She said it is already part of the statutes, but wanted it codified in the runaway laws.

Ms. Rich discussed the detention provision in Section 2. Currently, children are given the ability to decide where they want to live who are not able to make rational decisions because they are on drugs. She discussed her son and his drug problem in context of this situation. He was institutionalized because he was in clear and imminent danger to himself. Parents cannot mandate drug treatment for their child, yet they must provide adequate medical treatment for other health problems. There is a need to provide a safe place for these youths, even if it is locked.

Myra Munson, Commissioner of the Department of Health and Social Services, testified next. She endorsed the HESS version of SB 79 wholeheartedly. The bill provides for needs which have been discussed for many years by people involved with runaways. She was pleased that a bill had finally been crafted that provides endorsement for entities such as Covenant House, a successful, effective and preventative program for the majority of runaways who are first time, short-term runaways. It provides a safe place with sufficient structure and appropriate intervention while the child's issues can be worked on, and the majority of kids go back home.

Commissioner Munson said the department has some qualms about the bill, but it does not diminish support for it. One is the provision that allows a parent to withhold consent to have a child return home. It already exists in law and having things appear twice can muddle things up. It also may encourage some parents to willfully exercise that right in an act of abandonment rather than in an effort to impose limitations. Many runaways in the system are there because their parents have abandoned them. The provision doesn't harm the bill, and to the extent that it empowers parents, it may be useful. With regard to attention, she was adamantly opposed to any law that makes it easy to detain a child or allows them to be detained

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purely for runaway. The provision in the bill is an exception in that the department can support it. It limits detention to the most extreme case, requiring court findings prior to the child's detention where there is severe risk to the child, which is more than the ordinary risk to a runaway. Any child out on the street is in jeopardy, but this refers to the most extreme cases of jeopardy, such as the child who is insulin dependent who doesn't take their medicine, or has other serious health problems. The provision for a very limited detention does allow the court to intervene and detain in cases where there has to be control of the child for a few days.

Commissioner Munson described the provisions for the program. It provides for three 45-day increments of service to children in runaway shelters and programs. The first 45 days the child controls the decision to be there as long as they meet the standards of the program. The second 45 days, the parent has to agree to the child being there. If they don't agree, but the child wants to be there, the department would have to step in to pursue custody and the parent would have the right to appear in the court proceedings. In the third 45-day period, not only the child and parent have to agree, but the department has to agree as well, even if they are not taking custody. That is to prevent the programs from turning into long-term care programs inappropriately. It also provides for the minimum level of regulation for approval of the program. It does not put the program under the ordinary child residential care provisions, which can be very stringent and interferes with the development of these types of programs because of expense and overregulation. It provides all the protections for kids without unnecessary and expensive regulations.

HB 412, regarding pre-emption services, was a companion bill, according to Commissioner Munson. It makes a huge leap forward in services available to adolescents who have become separated from their families, in that it provides assistance to help them become fully independent. Many kids without independence skills become delinquent and criminal. The services allow for the prevention and the response to the chronic runaway and provides academic and vocational training. The Commissioner discussed the substantial fiscal note and pointed out it was a small investment for helping these kids.

Representative Sund asked about HB 412, page 5, line 14, regarding the use of the term "inappropriate" for pre-emption services and the adoption of criteria by regulation for what services would be "inappropriate." He pointed out that, normally, regulations would be adopted for services that are appropriate rather than inappropriate. Commissioner Munson replied that it relates

to establishing criteria for determining whether pre-emancipation services are inappropriate, not whether a particular service is inappropriate.

Representative Sund asked about SB 79, page 2, line 19, regarding a protective custody order and the language under item (J), "no reasonable placement alternative", noting that it is a problem in most communities. Commissioner Munson explained that it requires the court to make all three findings to show that there is no other way to provide the level of supervision the child needs outside of a detention program. Representative Sund clarified that in order to be detained, there has to be a finding of probable cause that the minor is in violation of a court order, the minor's current situation poses severe imminent risk, and there is no other reasonable placement. Commissioner Munson affirmed and added that during the 48 hours the child has to be brought back before the court for a determination related to civil contempt. At that point, the vast majority of kids would be released from detention.

Representative Sund said AS. 47.10.142(f) was a new subsection created in Section 3. Commissioner Munson explained that it allows the court to order a child to remain in placement when a child is committed to custody because of runaway behavior. At present, there is no law that allows a detention order to be entered by the court because a child is a runaway.

Representative Sund asked what happens in a place like Ketchikan where there is no place to detain a juvenile.

Commissioner Munson explained that the provision is limited to places where there is a youth detention facility, such as Nome, Bethel, Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau. Outside of these areas, a youth cannot be detained under the provision. It explicitly excludes adult jails for detention because it is high risk and would not be in compliance with federal requirements.

Representative Ulmer referred to page 1, line 22, subsection (b), and assumed the language would allow the police officer to take a child to a place like the AWARE shelter. Commissioner Munson replied that it would have to be agreed upon by the parent and the child. Representative Ulmer expressed concern about that because of the number of abused runaways, and the parent can refuse if the child wants to go to a shelter. Commissioner Munson explained that if the child wants to go, they will presumably refuse to return home, and if so, they must be taken to the department. The child controls whether they go home or go to another location. Representative Ulmer explained a particular situation and asked what was wrong with amending the language so that the child could go to the shelter even

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Without the parent's permission. Commissioner Munson was not sure the domestic violence shelters were prepared to take children that may choose to go there in wholesale numbers or if they could become a residential place for runaways under their regulatory scheme. She didn't want to create a provision that would allow the child to choose without parental consent, as they could choose a place that could be unsafe for them.

Judy Rich pointed out that shelters don't take minors without parental consent. She explained that the S.T.A.R. shelter had to turn away a 17-year-old with a baby last week because of that policy.

Representative Cotten asked what the procedure was for kids who go to the department in the middle of the night. Commissioner Munson said they are usually placed in a foster home or a runaway program. Representative Sund asked what happens when a police officer picks up a child late at night. Commissioner Munson explained that the officer would talk to the child to see where he or she wants to go; if they want to go home, the parent has to agree, if not, they would go to another appropriate place. If they refuse to go home, they would go to the police station and call a social worker at home who would then locate a foster home placement. Representative Sund asked what if the child keeps saying no. The Commissioner said they can refuse to accept services. Representative Sund asked if the child was not under arrest if she could just walk out of the police station. Commissioner Munson replied that the options the police officer has are to deliver the child to the department or the family. Representative Sund commented that conceivably a child could be sitting in the police station with nowhere to go. Commissioner Munson said they would have a place to go, but they have chosen not to go. They rarely go back on the street again from the police station, generally they go to a foster home. The detention provision would not apply to a community like Ketchikan, but ground is still gained because the other provisions may encourage the development of the kind of shelter program addressed in the legislation.

Representative Ulmer asked if the shelter program could include a network of safe homes. Commissioner Munson affirmed and discussed the Fairbanks model. The legislation would make it easier with clearer authority, less regulations and expense, and shelters could be set up in smaller homes.

Representative Sund asked if page 2, line 19, really means a youth detention facility. Commissioner Munson explained that it means the court must find there are no reasonable alternatives first.

Pudge Kleinkauf, a social worker for twenty-five years and Chair of the Department of Social Work at the University of Alaska, Anchorage, testified next. She supported HB 412 and said it came about as the result of a major research project last year by one of her students. The need for pre-emancipation services was identified by the Children's Code Task Force in 1975, but in light of other needs at the time, it was not a priority. The necessity for these services has now become very clear to those involved with runaway youth. HB 412 does three things. It increases the alternative to courts for disposition of runaway children, it continues state custody to age 19 if a child is in a pre-emancipation program and they consent to continued custody, and it provides the pre-emancipation services by the department, which is a most crucial need. In Ms. Kleinkauf's opinion, HB 412 was the most progressive piece of legislation being considered.

Ms. Kleinkauf discussed Section 3, on page 5. The service possibilities are the result of screening what other states provide. She pointed out that statutes already exist for independent living programs for the chronically mentally ill and developmentally disabled, but not for youth.

Representative Sund asked if the program was analogous to half-way houses and if "pre-emancipation" was a term-of-art. Ms. Kleinkauf explained that there are emancipation statutes for minors via the court and pre-emancipation implies that it is preparatory to emancipation in that it assists the child in becoming independent. She noted that Section 3 defines pre-emancipation services.

Representative Ulmer asked if page 5, line 26, would include mental health counseling. Ms. Kleinkauf replied that case management refers to a service that assists in coordinating other services. The services listed are not exactly viewed as mental health services but those to assist the youth in becoming independent; it could include mental health services, however. Ms. Kleinkauf pointed out that HB 412 is the single piece of legislation that responds to the Governor's specific charge to the Interim Commission on Children and Youth to develop legislation that seeks to make children economically independent.

~~Ms. Kleinkauf addressed SB 79 next. She had concerns with Section 2. AS 47.10.142 (e) and (f) refer specifically to child-in-need-of-aid. It allows the state to institutionalize a child without a violation of law except contempt of a court order. Children's constitutional rights are the same as adults and it seems that Section 2 would violate civil liberty via the route of a contempt of court citation. She was concerned with the major public policy decision to deprive a child of liberty who hasn't~~

otherwise broken the law. She felt there may be another constitutional issue regarding children being treated differently in different parts of the state. She had not been aware previously about Section 2 not applying to areas of the state that did not have the appropriate detention facilities for youth. She suggested that if the committee chose to retain Section 2 and the child is held in contempt of court, the options open to the court in a contempt situation should be specified, identified, or narrowed. The child ought to know what is likely to happen to them as it may mitigate the chances the child would run away.

Representative Sund noted that page 3, lines 6-7, attempts to do that by trying to anticipate that the child was given notice that they could be in civil contempt. Ms. Kleinkauf interpreted it as implying that the consequence of violating the order would only be contempt of court. Representative Sund felt it was a civil liberty issue that needed careful consideration.

Ms. Kleinkauf felt that Sections 1 and 4 of SB 79 were very essential and she strongly supported them.

Representative Sund discussed anticipatory arrest as a civil liberty issue. Ms. Kleinkauf discussed the fact that children on the streets do break laws and can be prosecuted, but aren't because of the time and expense involved. She felt that the state should use the statutes already on the books to prosecute for laws the kids are breaking instead of setting up the contempt provision.

Representative Gruenberg noted an Alaska Supreme Court case (L.A.M v. State) that says you can't imprison a child for runaway, but can constitutionally do it for contempt of court, so the constitutional issue of that provision is already settled. He noted that the right to a jury trial on contempt charges exists, but they are seldom done.

Representative Sund noted that SB 79 and HB 412 would be back before the committee on March 22 and that it would be teleconferenced. He noted there was one more witness wishing to testify today.

Tom Scott, member of Toughlove, discussed his 14-year-old stepdaughter who got involved in drugs and ran away. They had the resources and took the initiative to put her in a group home for drug treatment and now, one year later, they have a fairly normal 8th grade girl. He discussed the Toughlove support group and the many stories from parents who's kids are out of control because of drugs, and there is essentially no way to get control of them. SB 79 would give the child another incentive to turn around. The possibility of detention would be more of a deterrent than it will actually be used and gives parents a way to get a

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clarify the perception of the department's view regarding detention and protective custody. The course of detention requires very specific findings that relate to children who are endangering themselves as a runaway. She felt it was a constitutional provision that didn't jeopardize federal funding. The bill provides for brief detention for 48 hours. She spoke to the concerns about indeterminate detention after the initial 48 hours. If the court orders additional detention it would be a criminal contempt proceeding. It may create a situation where the child gets out of detention by promising not to run away or cooperating in some way. She would not permit a policy that encouraged any of her staff to seek an order that would require a child to remain in detention for an indeterminate period. The point of the provision was to stabilize a child briefly and get them into an appropriate setting, not to substitute detention for a more appropriate and less restrictive setting. Only a small group of kids would be subject to these provisions. She referred to page 2, lines 15-17, regarding the temporary custody provision. It could be fixed to also refer to children after adjudication by adding "or 47.10.080," which is the disposition statute after adjudication. It would leave the runaway determination to be made by probable cause.

Representative Gruenberg questioned the need for a subsection after AS 47.10.080(f) on page 2, line 17. Commissioner Munson said she would check into it. She continued her comments in response to Mr. Walleri's testimony. She did not feel there was a conflict with the Indian Child Welfare Act, although there may be a potential if the court chooses not to comply. The provisions of SB 79 and the Act can be reconciled in individual cases. With regard to the detention provision, those children are going voluntarily, and is the least restrictive setting in some respects, and has the best potential for reconciling the child with her or his family.

She discussed the issue of whether to license the shelters under existing child care provisions or to create new provisions for approval of runaway shelter programs. She was supportive of the current licensing regulations, but there was always the potential to make licensing too difficult to achieve and it was important to encourage shelter programs. She wanted the department to have a shot at crafting new regulations that achieve quality care with a less bureaucratic approach, pointing out that it may provide a starting place for revising the current regulations. She remarked that the Covenant House was already operating under the current licensing standards.

Chairman Sund announced that there was little time remaining and he wanted to get to SB 117. He assigned SB 79 and HB 412 to a subcommittee comprised of Representative

~~Gruenberg and Representative Ulmer. He noted the people on teleconference that were unable to testify today could do so at a subcommittee meeting. He said there were several people present to testify on SB 117 and asked Ms. Ploog to address the committee first.~~

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEETING - MARCH 30, 1988

HB 412

Chairman Sund announced that HB 412 would be heard next. He noted that there were no amendments offered and asked if there were any further comments on the bill. He said it had been heard in conjunction with SB 79.

Representative Navarre moved for passage of CSHB 412 (HESS) with individual recommendations.

Representative Taylor objected for purposes of discussion. He asked to review the bill briefly and wanted to know what it actually did.

Commissioner Munson explained that the bill provides a new service by the department by making it possible for kids that are in custody for some time to get additional services to assist in gaining independence. Chairman Sund added that it is really a fiscal note issue and that the next committee of referral was House Finance.

Chairman Sund asked if there were any further objections. There being none, CSHB 412 (HESS) passed from committee with individual recommendations.

HOUSE H.E.S.S. COMMITTEE MEETING - FEBRUARY 10, 1988

HB 412

SB 79

Rep. Koponen asks Myra Munson, Commissioner of the Department of Health and Social Services, to testify on HB 412, relating to pre-emancipation services for certain minors.

Commissioner Myra Munson states that the Department of Health and Social Services has not yet submitted a position paper or a fiscal note on HB 412, but does support the bill in concept. Commissioner Munson further states that HB 412 is considered to be a "companion bill" to SB 79, relating to runaway minors. Commissioner Munson adds that the department is unaware of the level of service anticipated from the department by the sponsor of the bill. Commissioner Munson states that the department cannot afford to fund new training programs but would rather fund existing programs at a higher level.

Rep. Koponen asks if the committee has any questions for Commissioner Munson.

Rep. Hudson asks Commissioner Munson, in her opinion, what services are needed in the area of runaways.

Commissioner Munson states that pre-emancipation services are definitely needed, however the department is unable to have more than just a ballpark figure for a fiscal note as it is difficult to determine how large the "target group" is.

Rep. Hudson states that he looks forward to the department's fiscal note along with a clear cut definition of what the "target group" will be.

Rep. Koponen states that in terms of the administrative code, the department will have to draw up the appropriate regulations determining what is appropriate and those regulations would be publicly announced and discussed before they go into effect.

Commissioner Munson states that perhaps she was not clear on explaining that the children who would be receiving services are currently in the custody of the Department of Health and Social Services or would be in the department's custody at some point. Commissioner Munson adds that this legislation would provide a new service delivery system that would press for some children to come under the custody of the department in order to receive services. Commissioner Munson further adds that it is difficult to lay out the needs of the "individual" child in regulations, however, what would be subject to regulation is what the programmability to either enlarge or narrow the focus of services offered will be.

Rep. Koponen notes for the record that Rep. Ellis has joined the meeting. Rep. Koponen states that the committee will now move on to the companion bill, SB 79, relating to runaway minors.

Rep. Hanley asks for clarification of line 4 on page 5, which pertains to "the petitioning for removal of the disabilities of minority."

Commissioner Munson explains that "the petitioning for removal of the disabilities of minority" means to petition for emancipation which is covered in Alaska statute.

Angela Solerno, a social worker from Anchorage, testifies in favor of both HB 412 and SB 79. Ms. Solerno states that she has researched the issue of pre-emancipation services in the state of Alaska for Rep. Ellis and asks that the committee vote in favor of the legislation.

Rep. Koponen asks Ms. Solerno to please send a copy of her written testimony as it was difficult to hear her over the teleconference network.

Rep. Ellis thanks Ms. Solerno for all her work on behalf of

the committee. Rep. Ellis asks Ms. Solerno to repeat the percentage of successful cases in the Oregon program that she cited.

Ms. Solerno states that 75.8% of the youth involved in the Oregon emancipation program achieved independence.

Rep. Ellis asks Ms. Solerno if pre-emancipation services were an explicit recommendation of the Governor's Interim Commission on Children and Youth.

Ms. Solerno answers that she is not sure if pre-emancipation services are specified as one of the GICCY recommendations.

Rep. Koponen states that pre-emancipation services are included in the final, edited version of the GICCY recommendations.

Rep. Koponen invites Senator Rodey to come forward to speak on his bill, SB 79.

Senator Rodey thanks the committee for the work done thus far on SB 79 and states that he supports the draft committee substitute.

Rep. Ellis comments that Senator Rodey was great to work with on SB 79.

Rep. Hudson asks if the legislation provides for a centralized referral center where parents and runaways could receive help and information.

Rep. Ellis states that the idea of a centralized referral center was discussed during the committee's interim hearings. Rep. Ellis states that there are television advertisements in Anchorage advertising the Covenant House Program, which is now in Anchorage, and provides a toll free "Runaway Hotline" telephone number. Rep. Ellis further states that Covenant House has a very successful track record nationwide.

Rep. Hudson encourages the Department of Health and Social Services to make sure and advertise this telephone number, especially in the urban areas of Alaska.

Rep. Koponen states that perhaps the cost of advertising the toll free number should be figured into the department's fiscal note.

Jim Nordlund, House HESS staff person, states that SB 79 would set up permanent regulations by the department. The department would oversee nonprofit and private providers and would not provide the services directly. Mr. Nordlund

continues that in certain instances a child may have good reasons for leaving a foster home, i.e., physical or sexual abuse. Ms. Goll further states that the Lobby is concerned that if the child's case is not fully disclosed, he/she can be sent back into an abusive situation. Ms. Goll states that the Lobby is very happy to see the inclusion of the program elements in this legislation and that the Department of Health and Social Services and the committee have looked at existing programs in other states such as Oregon.

Judy Rich, a member of the Governor's Interim Commission on Children and Youth from Anchorage, states that the commission recommended a variety of independent living services and a mechanism for emancipating youth. Ms. Rich further states that the Governor's charge to the commission was to remove those barriers that cause our youth to not be economically independent. Ms. Rich states that we should not rely totally on Covenant House to solve all of the needs of Alaska's runaway, castaway and homeless youth. Ms. Rich adds that Covenant House is designed to meet a very distinct population of children in Anchorage. Ms. Rich states that she is extremely pleased with the committee substitute for SB 79, but wonders why it does not address "for profit" institutions in the regulations regarding licence. Ms. Rich closes by urging the committee to pass both HB 412 and SB 79 out of committee today.

Rep. Koponen asks if there is any questions for Ms. Rich or further testimony via the teleconference network.

Pudge Kleinkapf of Anchorage, supports the committee substitute for SB 79, but asks the committee to consider two additional changes: 1) on page 5, line 8, to include "the residency may be extended for an additional forty-five days after notification or the written consent of the person or agency having custody of the minor"; 2) Section 2 needs clarification regarding the results of a child being held in contempt of court, specifically concerning the options open to the court. Ms. Kleinkapf states that the court could be dealing with a child in need of aid rather than a delinquent child; this situation should be dealt with differently and needs to be addressed in Section 2 of the bill so that the Alaska Statutes can be amended in order to address a child in need of aid. Ms. Kleinkapf adds that the committee needs to address the issue of a child having good cause for running away as had been earlier addressed by Sherry Goll.

Rep. Koponen requests a written response from the Department of Health and Social Services on Ms. Kleinkapf's concerns.

Rep. Koponen states that the committee will incorporate

Commissioner Munson's suggested changes into the committee substitute for SB 79 and hold the bill over until February 17th. Rep. Koponen states that the committee will hold over HB 412 until February 17th as well.

Rep. Hudson states that he hopes that the Department of Health and Social Services will not overlook the need to make this whole new body of legislation and services available to the public at the expense of coming in with a zero fiscal note. Rep. Hudson adds that the public needs to know about these services and it will cost a little bit of money.

Rep. Phillips asks that the committee include a letter of intent that would request that a toll free number be included in the fiscal note.

Rep. Hudson states that he would be happy with that suggestion.

Rep. Koponen adjourns the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

HOUSE H.E.S.S. COMMITTEE MEETING - FEBRUARY 17, 1988

HB 412

Rep. Ellis states that the committee has just received a fiscal note and position paper on HB 412, relating to pre-emancipation services for certain minors, from the Department of Health and Social Services and asks committee members to review the information.

Rep. Ellis asks Jay Livey of the Department of Health and Social Services to come forward to testify on HB 412.

Mr. Livey states that Mr. Russell Webb will represent the department on this issue.

Mr. Russell Webb, Division of Family and Youth Services with the Department of Health and Social Services, testifies that the department is generally supportive of the concepts presented in HB 412. Mr. Webb continues that the department has long recognized the need to be able to aid youth in the state's custody and youth not in state custody who are in transition from either substitute care or an informal emancipation situation to full and independent adulthood. Mr. Webb adds that this bill addresses the need for these kinds of services and therefore the department is in support of HB 412. Mr. Webb states that the department's fiscal note deals with the best estimates available and he would be happy to answer any questions that committee members may have.

Rep. Koponen asks about the estimate of the number of youths anticipated to receive training and what it is based on.

Mr. Webb answers that it is based on two things: 1) the general population children aged 16 and 17 in the state, and 2) the population of children aged 16, 17, 18, and 19 who are in departmental custody in out of home placements. Mr. Webb adds that as the department has never done these services before, they are using a "best guessed estimate." Mr. Webb further adds that the department also estimates that only one percent of the 16 and 17 years olds that make a request will be eligible for the services and only ten percent of this one percent group would actually need an independent living subsidy and/or aid from the department. Mr. Webb continues that a larger percentage of the children requesting services would only receive training and no subsidy.

Rep. Koponen asks if most of the children that would receive services are currently in a foster care program.

Mr. Webb answers that most children seeking emancipation would be coming from a foster care situation and that the department will be training foster parents how to assist these children in learning independent living skills, but needs to augment this training program with more in-depth information.

Rep. Koponen asks if as many as one percent of the children actually come into the department's purview.

Mr. Webb answers that of the 16 and 17 year olds it is closer to three percent.

Rep. Gruenberg states that he is concerned with the phrase on Page 3, Lines 10 and 11, on Page 4, Line 29, and on Page 5, Line 1, which currently reads "and the minor consents to the additional period of supervision." Rep. Gruenberg continues that there may be certain cases where the minor does not consent with the additional period of additional supervision and therefore the court should have the jurisdiction to enter an order into an appropriate case after a hearing. Rep. Gruenberg asks what the department's views are on this and if it should be changed.

Mr. Webb responds that the language tracks what is already there in terms of adding additional supervision as opposed to custody. Mr. Webb states that there may be situations where the department would prefer to have supervisory authority over a youth for a longer period of time, past age nineteen, in order to provide the kinds of services that may be appropriate. Mr. Webb continues that difficulties may be encountered if the child refuses to participate or take part and the overall effectiveness of these services may be diminished substantially.

Rep. Gruenberg states that at the appropriate time he will

make a motion to accept his amendments and thanks Mr. Webb for his clarification of the language.

Rep. Ellis asks if committee members have any further questions for Mr. Webb of DFYS. Hearing none, Rep. Ellis asks committee members to refer to their packets on HB 412 which contain several proposed amendments.

Rep. Ellis asks committee members to refer to the Hein 5-1332 AA draft amendment which will now be considered Amendment Number One, and the Hein 5-1332 AB draft amendment will be considered Amendment Number Two for purposes of discussion. Rep. Ellis states that Amendment

Number One relates to Page 5, Line 15, of HB 412. Rep. Ellis informs the committee that these are his amendments.

Rep. Ellis invites Pudge Kleinkapf to testify via the teleconference network.

Pudge Kleinkapf, of Anchorage, testifies in favor of HB 412 and strongly urges the committee to pass the legislation as the need for pre-emancipation services for youth is great. Ms. Kleinkapf states that this legislation will help meet the Governor's charge to develop measures for the economic independence of youth. Ms. Kleinkapf states that she has not seen the latest fiscal note, but would be happy to answer any questions from committee members. (Please see attached written statements.)

Rep. Ellis outlines the numbers on the fiscal note for the benefit of the persons on the teleconference network.

Rep. Ellis asks if anyone else wants to testify on HB 412. Hearing none, Rep. Ellis states that the committee will discuss the proposed amendments for HB 412.

Rep. Koponen moves to adopt Amendment Number One for HB 412.

Rep. Ellis states that Amendment Number One is before the committee. He notes, for the record, that Rep. Hanley has joined the committee meeting.

Rep. Ellis states that from the Department of Health and Social Services position paper on HB 412, he ascertains that this is much needed language. Rep. Ellis asks committee members if there is any objection to the proposed amendment.

Rep. Koponen states that Amendment Number One clears up the problem of leaving the choice totally up to the child and the language would allow the department some latitude to reject these kind of provisions.

Rep. Ellis asks if there is any objection to incorporating Amendment Number One into HB 412. Hearing none, Rep. Ellis states that the amendment will be added to HB 412.

Rep. Ellis asks the committee to refer to Amendment Number Two which will address the department's concern that the current language of HB 412 does not allow flexibility to establish criteria requiring services to be provided to any youth sixteen years and older and clarifies that the bill is referring to youth committed to the custody of the department.

Rep. Koponen moves to adopt Amendment Number Two.

Rep. Ellis states that Amendment Number Two is presently before the committee and asks if there is any discussion. Hearing none, Rep. Ellis asks if there is any objection to accepting Amendment Number Two. Hearing none, Rep. Ellis states that Amendment Number Two is adopted.

Rep. Ellis asks Rep. Gruenberg to speak to his proposed amendment which will be called Amendment Number Three.

Rep. Gruenberg apologizes for not having the amendment in writing at an earlier time. Rep. Gruenberg asks committee members to refer to the handwritten amendment and says that the word "or" should be deleted from the proposed amendment.

Rep. Gruenberg moves to adopt Amendment Number Three.

Rep. Ellis asks if there are any questions for the maker of the motion. Hearing none from committee members, Rep. Ellis asks Pudge Kleinkapf in Anchorage if she has a question for Rep. Gruenberg.

Pudge Kleinkapf requests that Rep. Gruenberg read Amendment Number Three in its entirety and would like a clarification as to where it would be inserted in HB 412.

Rep. Gruenberg requests committee members and Ms. Pudge to turn to Page 3, Lines 10 and 11, where the phrase "and the minor person consents to the additional period of supervision if/or" would be stricken. Rep. Gruenberg continues that on Page 4, Line 29 to Page 5, Line 1, the phrase "and the minor (person) consents to if/or" is deleted.

Rep. Ellis asks Mr. Russell Webb to come forward again to answer questions and to comment on the department's perspective on the impact of the two amendments already adopted.

Mr. Russell Webb states that Amendment Number Three would eliminate the requirement that a minor consent to continue custody past his/her nineteenth birthday and would allow the department to petition for continued custody beyond the nineteenth birthday without the consent of the minor. Mr. Webb continues that departmental custody could then extend to when the child is age twenty. Mr. Webb adds that this situation has occurred mainly in reference to delinquency actions where a waiver of the juvenile court has been requested to transfer jurisdiction to the adult criminal court for a crime committed by a youth.

Rep. Ellis asks Mr. Webb if this is a common feature of law in other states.

Mr. Webb states that he honestly cannot answer the question as he does not have the information.

Rep. Gruenberg answers that it is present in California statute. Rep. Gruenberg states that unless the department is willing to accept the jurisdiction and felt that it would benefit the minor in question, then it would become a mute point. Rep. Gruenberg further states that the committee is talking about an unusual case where the minor may not realize the seriousness of their problem, but the department might feel it to be beneficial.

Mr. Webb states that Rep. Gruenberg's point is an appropriate one to make in that the department would not have to initiate custody beyond the nineteenth birthday.

Rep. Ellis requests Rep. Gruenberg to find out how common this law is in other states and how it actually works in order to determine if there has been objection to the Department of Health and Social Services having the discretionary power.

Rep. Koponen states that this point could also be properly pursued in the Judiciary Committee which is the next committee of referral for this bill.

Rep. Gruenberg states that he is willing to withdraw the amendment and get a research paper done instead.

Rep. Ellis states that a research paper on the subject would be fine with him as he would not feel comfortable incorporating Rep. Gruenberg's amendment without having more background information from other states.

Rep. Ellis asks Mr. Webb if he would like to address the other two amendments.

Mr. Webb states that the other two amendments address concerns that the department has with being able to better

Pre-~~emancipation~~  
~~Services~~  
(for minors)

HOUSE BILL NO. 412, by the Health, Education & Social Services Committee. Would require the Dept. of Health and Social Services to provide appropriate pre-~~emancipation~~ services to minors 16 years of age or older who are in the care of the state for over two years, if the minor requests services. The services could include assistance in completing academic or vocational training designated to make the child employable; assistance in acquiring suitable housing; training in skills needed for independent living; assistance in petitioning for removal of the disabilities of the minority; and social support and services coordination.

The department can award a grant or contract with a municipality or a nonprofit corporation to provide pre-~~emancipation~~ services. The commissioner of health & social services could be responsible for adopting regulations establishing criteria for awarding grants. Does not provide an effective date (bill becomes law 90 days after being signed by the governor).

Introduced January 29, 1988 and referred to Health, Education & Social Services; Judiciary.

Pre-~~emancipation~~  
~~Services~~  
(for minors)

HOUSE BILL NO. 412, (see page 1032). Reported back to the House February 22, 1988 by Health, Education & Social Services recommending it be replaced with a HESS substitute and that it do pass. Concurring: Ellis and Koponen (Co-Chairs), Hudson, Donley and Gruenberg. To Judiciary.

The HESS substitute changes section 3 of the bill, which adds a new subsection to AS 47.10.230 (Delinquent Minors and Children in Need of Aid. Care of Children. Powers and duties of department over care of child). The new section requires the department of health and social services to 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 who makes a request to receive the services, unless the department finds that pre-~~emancipation~~ services are inappropriate for the child. The commissioner shall adopt regulations establishing criteria for determining whether pre-~~emancipation~~ services are inappropriate for a child. The services may include. . ." (underlined language added by HESS).

define the population group that the department would be dealing with in order to establish the criteria to determine the appropriateness of services to children. Mr. Webb further states that the original language in the bill indicated that any youth aged sixteen or older who requested emancipation services would then be eligible and the department would be required to provide them services.

Rep. Ellis asks Mr. Webb how the department can pare down the fiscal note.

Mr. Webb states that he thinks there will be some reduction, but cannot pin down an exact figure.

Rep. Ellis states that the committee will be looking forward to the new version of the fiscal note from the department. Rep. Ellis asks if there is any further discussion or questions for Mr. Webb.

Rep. Koponen recommends that the department look at an exploratory program in the first year in order to provide a better number for the fiscal note next year.

Rep. Ellis states that it is the intent of the committee co-chairs to pass both of the run way bills out today.

Rep. Hudson moves to pass out CS for HB 412 as amended with individual recommendations.

Rep. Ellis asks if there is objection to the motion before the committee. Hearing none, CS for HB 412 is passed out of committee.





*Department of Human Resources*

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES DIVISION**

198 COMMERCIAL STREET SE, SALEM, OREGON 97310-0450

April 30, 1987

Representative Johnny Ellis  
Alaska State House  
Attention: Angela Salerno  
1024 West Sixth Ave.  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Re: Independent Living

Dear Ms. Salerno:

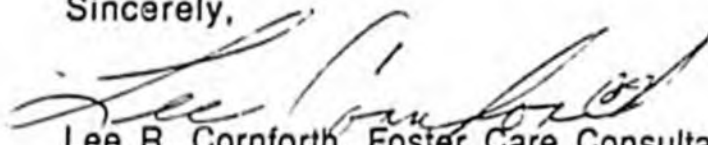
I am planning to conduct another evaluation of our Independent Living Program this summer since there has not been an evaluation since 1980.

I've taken the liberty of sending you information in the form of current policy and laws.

The importance of the program has not increased here in Oregon, primarily because of entrance requirements. Currently we are moving toward a greater emphasis on preparing older adolescents for emancipation while they are supervised in a substitute care setting. We believe youth 16 and over who must be in substitute care can achieve a greater degree of emancipation readiness under guidance.

I will be interested in knowing about your program in Alaska when your state laws are finally passed.

Sincerely,



Lee R. Cornforth, Foster Care Consultant  
Placement and Permanency Services

LRC/jm  
attachment

418.445 Surrender of children by juvenile court to institution receiving state aid. In all cases where the parents or guardian of any such child as mentioned in ORS 418.440 are not known or cannot be found, the judge of the juvenile court of the county in which the child is found may make surrender of such child to any institution entitled to receive state aid pursuant to ORS 418.405 to 418.455. [Formerly 419.218; 1967 c.534 §18]

418.450 [Formerly 419.220; repealed by 1967 c.534 §34]

418.455 Institutions may exercise authority of guardian. Any institution entitled to receive state aid pursuant to ORS 418.405 to 418.455 is entitled to the custody and guardianship of such children as are surrendered into its keeping as provided in those sections, and may exercise all the rights and authority of guardians under the laws of this state and may exercise all the rights and authority of the parents of such child in any proceeding for the adoption of such child. [Formerly 419.222]

418.460 Certain state-aided institutions must collect funds from parents for support of children. Every benevolent and charitable institution which receives state aid for the care and support of children committed to it by the juvenile court shall collect, so far as practicable, the funds for the support of such children which have been adjudged by the courts committing them to the institution. Such institutions may apply to the court for execution or other action, as provided in ORS 419.515, for the purpose of making such collections. In case of voluntary commitments or persons voluntarily becoming inmates of such institutions, each such institution shall ascertain, so far as possible, whether or not the voluntary inmate or his parents are able to support such inmate and shall exert its best efforts to collect such funds for such support. [Formerly 419.566 and then 419.224]

418.465 Agencies and institutions to submit estimates of state aid required for biennium. The agencies and institutions certified pursuant to ORS 418.005 to 418.025, 418.035 to 418.315, 418.355 to 418.370, 418.405 to 418.470, 418.505 to 418.565, 418.610 to 418.685 and 418.705 to 418.730 and otherwise qualified to receive state aid thereunder shall, through an organization representing such agencies and institutions, submit to the Executive Department, as

though such organization were a state agency subject to ORS 291.208, an estimate of the amount of such state aid to which they may become entitled during the biennium commencing on July 1 of the following year. The organization representing the agencies and institutions shall consult with appropriate state agencies prior to submitting their estimate and shall supply such other information in support of such estimate as may be required from time to time by the Executive Department. [1963 c.150 §2]

418.470 Authority to pay for shelter-care homes. (1) The Children's Services Division may engage and make reasonable payment for services of persons to make available, maintain and operate shelter-care homes for the safekeeping of children taken into temporary custody pending investigation and disposition.

(2) The services, pursuant to specific prior authorization of the division, shall be deemed actually rendered if the shelter-care home is made available, maintained and operated to receive such children. [1969 c.184 §1; 1971 c.401 §36]

#### INDEPENDENT RESIDENCE FACILITIES

418.475 Independent residence facilities; extent and nature of agreement between minor and division. (1) Within the limit of moneys appropriated therefor, the Children's Services Division may establish or certify independent residence facilities for minors who:

(a) Are 16 years of age or older;

(b) Have been placed in two or more foster homes, group homes, youth care centers or institutions, or a combination of them;

(c) Have been determined by the Children's Services Division to be unsuitable for placement in a foster home, group home, youth care center or institution;

(d) Have received permission from the appropriate juvenile court, if they are wards of the court; and

(e) Have been determined by the Children's Services Division to be suitable for an independent resident program.

(2) Residence facilities shall provide independent housing arrangements with counseling services and minimal supervision available from at least one counselor; and all resi-

dential facilities having six or more residents shall be licensed by the Department of Human Resources under ORS 443.400 to 443.455 and subsection (2) of 443.991.

(3) Each resident shall be required to maintain a program of education or employment, or a combination thereof, amounting to full-time activity and shall be required to pay a portion or all of his housing expenses and other support costs.

(4) The Children's Services Division may make payment grants directly to minors enrolled in an independent living program for food, shelter, clothing and incidental expenses. Such payment grants shall be subject to an agreement between the minor and the Children's Services Division which establishes a budget of expenses.

(5) The Children's Services Division may establish cooperative financial management agreements with a minor and for that purpose may enter into joint bank accounts requiring two signatures for withdrawals. Such management agreements or joint accounts shall not subject the division or any counselor involved to any liability for debts or other responsibilities of the minor.

(6) The Children's Services Division shall make periodic reports to the juvenile court as required by the court regarding any minor who is ward of the court enrolled in an independent living program.

(7) The enrollment of a minor in an independent living program in accordance with the provisions of subsection (1) of this section shall not remove or limit in any way the obligation of the parent of the minor to pay support as ordered by a court under the provisions of ORS 419.513. [1973 c.801 §1; 1977 c. 117]

#### PURCHASE OF CARE

418.480 "Purchase of care" defined. As used in ORS 418.480 to 418.500, "purchase of care" includes the purchase of institutional and foster family care and services, adoptive services, services to the unwed mother and her child and such other care and services as the Children's Services Division, in consultation with the Director of the Department of Human Resources, shall determine to be necessary to carry out the policy stated in ORS 418.485. [1971 c.457 §1]

418.485 Policy. It is the policy of the State of Oregon to strengthen family life and to insure the protection of all children either in their own homes or in other appropriate care outside their homes. In affording such protection, the Director of the Department of Human Resources shall in cooperation with public and private child-caring agencies develop a set of short-range and long-range priorities for the development of needed child care and services, such priorities to be periodically reviewed and revised as necessary. Such priorities are to be set out in a form enumerating the number of children in each category of need, the type of child care and services needed, the areas of the state where such care and services are needed, and the projected costs. The State of Oregon hereby commits itself to the purchase of care and services for children who need care and to encourage private child-caring agencies to develop programs required to meet the needs of the children of this state and money may be appropriated therefor. In developing programs necessary to meet the needs of the children of this state, the Director of the Department of Human Resources shall make every attempt feasible to develop community organizations. Such efforts to develop community organizations are to be documented and presented to the next session of the Legislative Assembly. [1971 c.457 §2; 1975 c.795 §3]

418.490 Coordination of state activities. In carrying out the policies of this state as stated in ORS 418.485, it shall be the responsibility of the Director of the Department of Human Resources to coordinate the activities of all state agencies that have responsibilities for care of children to insure the best care possible and to avoid duplication of effort or conflict in policy. [1971 c.457 §3]

418.495 Authority to purchase care; contract content. Within the limits of funds available therefor, the Children's Services Division may enter into agreements with licensed child-caring agencies and other appropriate facilities, including youth care centers, for the purchase of care for children who require and are eligible for such care, regardless of whether the children are wards of the state or whether the division is their guardian or has their custody or whether the children are surrendered to a child-caring agency or committed thereto by order of a court under ORS chapter 419. The agreement shall prescribe the procedures for payment, the rate of

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REFERENCE: ORS 418.475

PURPOSE (412-75-350)

These rules specify the requirements of the Independent Living Subsidy Program (ILSP) which are in addition to the expectations for all placements.

The Independent Living Subsidy Program is designed for young people 16 years of age and older who are in CSD's custody and who are working toward social and financial emancipation. It is for those young persons who cannot or should not be expected to adjust to a family. The goal is to provide an avenue whereby the older child can work toward self-sufficiency through carefully planned, graduated steps.

POLICYA. Eligibility Criteria. (412-75-355)

ILSP placements are limited to young people who meet all of the following conditions:

1. Are at least 16 years of age;
2. Are in CSD's custody prior to their 18th birthday;
3. Have been in at least one other substitute care placement;
4. Have been determined by CSD that further placement in a substitute care resource or return home would not be beneficial;
5. Have been accepted by the local ILSP Screening Committee for program participation;
6. Have written permission to participate in the ILSP program from the juvenile court if they are wards of the court or from a parent or legal guardian if not a court ward; and
7. will sign a performance agreement required by the program.

B. Acceptable ILSP Plans. (412-75-360)

1. The participant will be engaged in a program of education or employment, or a combination of both amounting to full-time activity which will have the goal of self-sufficiency.

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2. The plan will be limited to one year or less. Any plan lasting longer than one year must be approved by the Branch Manager.
3. The plan shall not extend beyond the child's eighteenth birthday unless the person is in a high school program full time or actively completing his/her high school through part time classes and employment. These classes may include GED courses or high school courses offered by a community college.

**C. Written Agreement. (412-75-365)**

1. A written performance agreement shall be developed and signed by both the service worker and participant. The agreement shall clearly state responsibilities of the participant and service worker and will include:
  - a. Identification of potential problems/barriers and solutions in working toward self-sufficiency.
  - b. A plan for full-time activity (education and/or employment).
  - c. A cooperative financial agreement to: 1) pay a portion of housing (including a statement regarding the decision to establish a joint bank account when applicable) and other support costs; 2) establish a savings or banking account.
  - d. A statement of proposed time span needed to attain the goal of self-sufficiency and review dates to determine progress.
  - e. A statement outlining action that will be taken if the participant does not meet the terms of the agreement or program requirements.
  - f. A statement indicating the participant's right to appeal a decision to discontinue the ILSP.
  - g. A statement that CSD's subsidy will increase or decrease, based on the ability of the participant to meet his/her share of the total living expenses.

**D. Appropriate Living Situations. (412-75-370)**

Appropriate Living residences include, but are not limited to, YMCA, YWCA, boarding house or apartment. The residence shall meet the following minimum standards:

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1. Be located so as to provide reasonably convenient access to schools, places of employment or services necessary for completion of the ILSP plan.
  2. Comply with applicable state and local zoning, fire, sanitary and safety regulations.
- E. Participant's Monthly Budget. (412-75-375)
1. An initial monthly budget will be developed with the participant, and will be reviewed monthly and revised as needed. The budget will be used by the participant to learn money management and by CSD to adjust subsidy payments based on participant income.
  2. The following items will be considered in establishing a monthly budget for ILSP participants: rent, food, utilities (including telephone if needed and advisable), electricity and/or gas, laundry, dry cleaning, transportation, tuition and recreation costs.
  3. The participant will contribute to his or her own support in accordance with the performance agreement.
- F. Subsidy Payments. (412-75-380)
1. Start-up costs may be provided to a participant entering the program. Items such as rent and utility deposits, and household goods (e.g., sheets, towels, blankets, dishes, glasses, tableware, cutlery, pots and pans, pillows, radios) may be approved.  
  
Start-up costs may be paid only for a documented need that cannot be met from any other resource and must be approved by the Regional Manager or designee.
  2. A subsidy payment not to exceed \$304 per month may be made to the participant to supplement the participant's own income or resources.
  3. The subsidy will be determined by subtracting the participant's monthly available income from the participants monthly planned budget need or \$536.00 which ever is less. (Income, gifts, or grants needed for tuition and required school fees will not be considered as available income.)
  4. The CSD subsidy payment must never exceed the monthly amount approved by the Division.
  5. The amount of the subsidy payment is to be reviewed and renegotiated monthly based on the current needs of the youth.

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6. At any time a participant's net income exceeds \$536 or the total cost of the participant's planned budget, whichever is less, the participant shall pay all of the expenses, and the subsidy will end.

G. ILSP Expectations of Staff. (412-75-385)

1. The service worker is expected to ascertain that the minimum requirements of the program are met and documented in the record.
2. The service worker shall work closely with the participant, meeting at least twice a month to provide counseling, support and supervision.
3. Participants in this program will be evaluated in relation to their progress in assuming responsibility and self-sufficiency within a reasonable period of time as outlined in the written agreement.
4. The branch manager or designee shall approve or disapprove the applicant's ILSP plan.

H. Program Termination. (412-75-390)

1. Participation in this program shall be concluded when the participant has:
  - a. Achieved self-sufficiency to the extent that there is no longer a need for financial support and/or social services from CSD.
  - b. Made a voluntary decision to no longer participate in the program.
  - c. Demonstrated inability to meet the requirements of the program or the terms of the agreement.
  - d. Custody is terminated by the Juvenile Court, parent or legal guardian.
2. CSD's decision to remove a participant from the program will require
  - a. A written determination of the termination approved by the Branch Manager.



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- b. Notification to the participant in writing 30 days in advance of the termination of subsidy. The notification shall include the date the subsidy will terminate and the right to appeal the decision.
3. The service authorization will be closed effective the same date as the conclusion of the youth's participation in the program.

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*Department of Human Resources*

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES DIVISION**

196 COMMERCIAL STREET SE.  
SALEM, OREGON 97310-0450

Representative Johnny Ellis  
Alaska State House  
Attention: Angela Salerno  
1024 West Sixth Ave.  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501



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## PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

# Emancipation: The Supervised Apartment Living Approach

PAUL E. FURTH, JR.

*Delinquent and emotionally disturbed adolescents, who have frequently spent years in institutional settings, need practical assistance in their efforts toward a productive adult life. The author describes factors necessary for a residential program that prepares adolescents for independent living by placing emphasis on coping with real-life environments.*

Forced or selected independent living is a reality for many adolescents. This is especially true for delinquents and the emotionally disturbed. A variety of factors affect these adolescents' ability to survive.

Adolescent independence is not a new phenomenon. America, with its expanding frontiers, had historically allowed and even encouraged adoles-

*Paul E. Furth, Jr., J.D., Attorney at Law, is Deputy Director, East Texas Legal Services, Nacogdoches, TX.*

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cents to leave home. Although it is difficult to determine if proportionally more adolescents are living independently at present than in the past, it seems fair to say that in a more complex society, greater technical and legal skills are required for an adolescent to maintain an independent life [Goodman 1980].

Developmentally, adolescence is an age of transition. Society and the legal system are often unsure of how to deal with the adolescent and are uncertain of how to determine if an individual adolescent is suited to independent living. It is also difficult to say what types of programs can be effective in preparing adolescents for independent living, as this facet of child care has not received much attention. All adolescents need buy-ins and markers to plot their course to independence, and the program described within emphasizes this concern.

The program material presented is based on the author's experience in developing the Supervised Apartment Living Program of Hope Center for Youth in Houston, Texas. Hope Center for Youth is a private, nonprofit agency commissioned by the Texas Legislature and the Texas Department of Human Resources to create a range of innovative community alternatives to institutionalization for delinquent and emotionally disturbed adolescents. The agency serves adolescents and families referred by public mental health, child welfare, juvenile probation, and correctional and educational agencies. It currently operates two wilderness camps, an alternative school, a family therapy program, and two supervised apartment living programs. It previously operated foster and group home programs.

### Foundations for the Program

A review of the applicable law and how it affects adolescents in Texas provides the following information:

1. they can quit school at age 17 [Texas Education Code 1972: § 21.032];
2. they can legally live away from home at age 17 [Texas Family Code 1980 Supplement: § 51.02];
3. they can work in most jobs at age 16 [Fair Labor Standards Act 1938, Pub. L. 93-259, May 1, 1974, 88 Stat. 72, U.S. Code, Vol. 29 § 212, 1974; Texas Revised Civil Statutes Annotated, Art. 5181 1980 Supplement];
4. they can give consent for medical treatment at age 16 [Texas Family Code 1980 Supplement: § 35.03];
5. they can marry at age 16 [Texas Family Code 1980 Supplement: § 1.51, 1.52, 1.53].

6. they can contract on a limited basis, especially for necessities [Texas Jurisprudence 2d 1962], or they can petition to have disabilities of minority removed at age 16 [Texas Family Code 1980 Supplement, § 31.01]

All of these are important considerations in designing a program that prepares adolescents for independent living. The age factor is particularly pertinent to the legitimacy of the program. Generally, the adolescent will need to be 17 years of age in order to live on his or her own.

The skills a program teaches should reflect the legal requirements for such things as contracting, employment, and planning for school. The physical setting for such a program should simulate real-life experiences as often as possible. The Supervised Apartment Living Program addresses a composite of these concerns.

### Description of the Program

Supervised Apartment Living is a program developed to prepare delinquent and/or emotionally disturbed adolescents for independent living upon their return to the community. They frequently come from other placements, such as wilderness camps, group homes, foster homes, local detention centers, state child care facilities, and other residential child care. They usually have no alternative to independent living, such as family or other agency placement. For this reason, the program is not a treatment facility in the traditional sense, and places emphasis on the adolescent's present and planned living environment. Residents are a minimum of 16 years of age and are expected to be 17 years of age prior to "moving out" of the program.

Two apartment complexes in the central part of the city, with convenient access to shopping, bus lines, and jobs, house the program. One facility is for males and one for females. Both facilities are licensed as halfway houses by the Texas Department of Human Resources. Capacity is 20 per facility, and 40 adolescents are normally on alternate status at any given time. The average length of stay per adolescent in the program is approximately 6 months. Counselors live in the apartment complex with a staff/resident ratio of 1 to 5 and are available to residents around the clock.

Each facility is headed by a program director licensed by the Texas Department of Human Resources as a child care administrator. Other professional resources on staff or contract include: a master's level social worker, a licensed psychotherapist, a psychologist, a psychiatrist, and a physician. Family involvement is encouraged, and counseling by qualified

program staff is available. Use of community resources is also emphasized and encouraged.

For each adolescent in care, an individualized, goal-oriented treatment plan is developed. All program staff share responsibility for the implementation of treatment plans. An essential program task is the creation of a therapeutic living environment. This is accomplished by the counselors who are responsible for the direct care, supervision, and coordination of efforts toward the youth's successful "move out" into independent living.

The goal of independent living is accomplished by simulating real life conditions and teaching living skills. All residents are involved in some combination of school, vocational training, and employment while in the program. The thrust of the program is toward acquiring and using independent living skills, such as maintaining an apartment, shopping and cooking, finding and holding a job, learning to budget and save money, locating one's own apartment, and effectively using community resources.

Group and individual instruction and counseling are used to develop these skills and competencies and training modules are developed by program staff to provide meaningful instruction. Skills are taught by the counselors, but practice is necessary to achieve effective learning and competency. Program staff provide constant evaluation and feedback on each resident's progress toward the goal of independent living.

The program is reality-based, with a necessary interest in day-to-day problem solving. Attention is given to modifying inappropriate social behavior, especially that which the community may find disruptive. The basic approach is that advocated by Glasser's *Reality Therapy* [1965]. Involvement, responsibility, planning, and commitment are all essential qualities in the counselor-resident relationship. Desired competencies in this area include the ability to control temper and regulate impulses, recognition of authority and self-enhancing ways to deal with it, the ability not to mislead or be misled by others, the ability to refrain from lying and stealing, and the ability to control the use of alcohol and/or drugs [Worath and Brendlin 1974].

These competencies are not readily measurable, but can be identified and are dealt with as they provide a foundation for other independent living skills. For instance, if adolescents cannot stay on a job because they lose their tempers and are fired, the program must deal with their ability to control their tempers.

Residents are involved in decision making to prepare them for living in the outside world and are assisted in the planning of tasks so that success is the probable outcome. Logical consequences are often employed as discipline so that residents are involved in a learning process even when they make mistakes [Dreikurs and Grey 1968]. Responsibility and good judgment are

emphasized. Adolescents are assisted in finding and moving into their own apartments upon completion of the program.

A counselor who has worked with each adolescent individually in the past coordinates with a case worker to provide intensive aftercare and support during the first month of "move-out" independent living. This includes frequent visits with the adolescent and possibly his or her employer to enable the adolescent to make a smooth transition. Often adolescents are assured that their placement in the program will be left open for a period of time until everyone is comfortable with their moving out.

After this first month, periodic visits and phone calls provide the bulk of aftercare services. The adolescents are made aware that other program services are open to them, such as information on community resources, job placement, or just someone to listen. The aftercare plan is maintained for a minimum of 6 months after the youth leaves the program.

### Skill Development Outline

The following outline, while not exhaustive, covers most of the training activities in the program.

Counseling staff will:

- A. Develop financial responsibility by
  1. Assisting each resident to
    - a. obtain a Social Security number
    - b. obtain a Texas Department of Public Safety Identification Card
    - c. complete Supervised Apartment Living vocational skill training sequence
    - d. be placed on a job
    - e. retain employment during residence
  2. Teaching each resident the need for budgeting (living within one's means and planning expenditures) by
    - a. purchasing apartment supplies (sheets, towels, dishes, etc.)
    - b. being placed on Supervised Apartment Living subsidy plan
    - c. completing Supervised Apartment Living budget training sequence
    - d. turning in budgets and receipts
    - e. beginning planned savings program
    - f. being phased off Supervised Apartment Living subsidy
    - g. continuing budgeting process after phase off

3. Teaching each resident the importance of a bank and checking account by assisting each resident to
  - a. complete Supervised Apartment Living saving and checking account training sequence
  - b. open a savings and/or checking account
  - c. maintain savings and/or checking account
- B. Develop knowledge and use of vocational skills and competencies needed for independent living by:
  1. Assisting residents in recognition of job interests and aptitudes through testing and counseling
  2. Teaching recognition of basic job skills necessary to obtain and retain a job by assisting the resident to complete Supervised Apartment Living vocational training sequence (including work attitude and habits applicable to job retention, career and trade counseling, use of employment agencies, adaptation to work environments and co-workers)
  3. Teaching necessary preparation for successful job placement by assisting resident to
    - a. complete Supervised Apartment Living job interview training sequence (including resume and application writing and practice, job interview methods, verbal and nonverbal behavior, interview role playing, etc.)
    - b. complete actual job interviews
  4. Teaching importance of job experience by assisting resident to
    - a. gain employment
    - b. retain employment
    - c. seek new position while retaining previous position where applicable
- C. Develop knowledge and use of consumer skills needed for independent living by:
  1. Providing information on contracts, leases, credit, insurance, comparison shopping, and quick and nutritious meal preparation by assisting resident to
    - a. complete Supervised Apartment Living training sequence in consumer skills
    - b. practice these skills
  2. Teaching apartment locating concepts by assisting resident to
    - a. complete Supervised Apartment Living training sequence in apartment locating
    - b. find his or her own apartment
- D. Develop knowledge and use of community resources needed for independent living by:
  1. Providing information on transportation systems by assisting resident to

- a. ride a bus
- b. use bus schedule
- c. take driver education and plan toward purchase of car where applicable
2. Providing information on health care facilities by assisting resident to
  - a. determine services available to them
  - b. visit and use facilities
  - c. develop procedure for emergency care
3. Providing information on the availability and use of community vocational counseling by assisting resident in using the Texas Rehabilitation Commission, the Texas Employment Commission, and other agencies
4. Providing information on various helping agencies and services available in the community by assisting resident to
  - a. learn the use of directories
  - b. complete Supervised Apartment Living sequence on community resources
  - c. use agencies
- E. Develop knowledge and use of adequate social and interpersonal skills and competencies needed for independent living by:
  1. Maintaining close daily contact with residents on a problem-solving and planning basis (continuation of other treatments)
  2. Teaching decision making by requiring residents to assume responsibility for much planning and problem solving
  3. Teaching success orientation by
    - a. assisting residents in planning their tasks so that success is probable
    - b. providing evaluations that allow residents to view and acknowledge their success
  4. Teaching problem analysis in group and individual conferences based on
    - a. ability to control temper and regulate impulses
    - b. recognition of authority and self-enhancing ways to deal with it
    - c. ability not to mislead or be misled by others
    - d. ability to refrain from lying
    - e. ability to refrain from stealing
    - f. ability to control use of alcohol or drugs

#### Data, Assessment, Evaluation

The Supervised Apartment Living Program began in 1975. In its first 5 years

of operation, the program has served 402 adolescents (210 males, 192 females). The racial breakdown was 64.2% white, 24.8% black, and 11.0% Mexican-American. Primary referral sources were 50.5% from state juvenile justice agencies, 25.0% from state child welfare agencies, and 24.5% from the open community (generally parents).

Approximately 70% of the adolescents entering the program moved into approved independent living. Approximately 20% returned to their families or extended families. The primary reasons for returning to the family were a desire to continue formal education or vocational training or a desire to assist in financially supporting their families. The remaining 10% were either returned to the care of another agency or could not be accounted for.

In the spring of 1979, the Texas Department of Human Resources completed an evaluation on adolescents terminated from the program during 1977 and 1978. The study concluded that Supervised Independent Living had been well accepted in the community, had successfully met its goals, and could effectively serve as a model community-based treatment alternative [Hope Center for Youth Impact Evaluation 1979: 108, 113]. ♦

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(Address requests for a reprint to Paul E. Furth, Jr., % Hope Center for Youth, 4115 Yorklum, Houston, TX 77006.)

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## PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

# Emancipation From Foster Care: The Independent Living Project

HILDEGARDE A. MAUZERALL

*To assist in the transition from foster care to independent adulthood, this division of the Casey Family Program developed a group living program for adolescents that emphasizes survival and socialization skills and encourages the use of the agency as an "extended family" resource. The author lists the psychological stages in adolescent emancipation and reasons for success or failure.*

The Casey Family Program is a private foster care agency that offers specialized casework services to adolescents in need of long-term foster family placement. Primary services include assessment of adolescents referred to the agency; recruitment and training of long-term foster families; matching of adolescents and families; and case planning and supportive services to enable the adolescent to grow toward productive adulthood within a family setting.

The Idaho Division of The Casey Family Program was established in 1972. By 1979, approximately half of the 50 adolescents involved in the foster care program had reached ages 16 to 18, and were facing the decisions and

*Hildegard A. Mauzerall, M.S.W., ACSW, is Director of The Casey Family Program, 5858 Emerald, St. Boise, ID 83704.*

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vicissitudes of independence. It became rapidly evident to social workers and families that the difficulty the young people were experiencing in their transition to independent adulthood called for the same intensity of planning and support that was necessary earlier to support them in adjusting to a new family.

### Issues of Emancipation

Young people face a complex world that demands sophisticated planning and decision-making skills. They enter a difficult economy and have grown up at a time when there is a decrease in the historic rites of passage by which one learned how to become an adult.

The transition to independence awakens the separation anxiety common to all humans. Individuals characteristically face this challenge with anticipation laced with fear of the unknown. A predominant concern is one's "fit" in the uncharted territories of living. A background of security and love from which to face the fear, take the risks, learn from experience, and grow is central to productive human development.

For young people in foster care, there is often no such legacy of security and love. Each has faced at least one rejection, leaving lasting scars and weakening the resiliency with which to face independence. The majority of these teenagers have low self-esteem. They are torn by the struggle to establish the sense of individual purpose and identity that is the focus of emerging adulthood. Many of these young people demonstrate difficulty in acting assertively for themselves; some are passively, others aggressively, resistive.

The successful emancipator needs little formal support. These are the adolescents who, despite a troubled history, have had through their developmental years a series of positive experiences in school, work, or relationships that enables them to fight for themselves and perceive themselves as in positive control of their lives. The Casey Family Program's Independent Living Project was developed for the resistive emancipators, those who fight against themselves.

### A Groupwork Approach

A groupwork approach was used with the older teen-agers. Seven teen-agers met with a social worker for 8 weeks in an educational group focusing on skill

development. An Independent Living Skills workbook that included information about working papers, checking accounts, and employment applications was developed. Strategies for renting apartments, budgeting, finding jobs, and successful employment interviewing were also included. A landlord, a restaurant manager, and an employment counselor from the community spoke to the group about how to obtain housing and jobs.

Audiovisual equipment helped the teen-agers learn to interview effectively for employment. By role playing an employer interviewing a potential employee, each adolescent was helped to develop confidence and ease, encouraging each to become involved in the more vulnerable position of being interviewed. Guided peer feedback was used by the group leader to evaluate the taped role plays, focusing on two questions: (1) What were the areas of strength demonstrated in the taped role play? (2) What suggestions can be given for improved interviewing performance?

Video equipment became an effective vehicle for learning self-presentation skills. Improvements in posture, eye contact, and grooming were obvious. All group members demonstrated increased confidence, poise, and verbal skill in interview situations. They also learned the questions to ask the employer about salary and benefits. The same techniques were also used to develop skills in dealing with landlords.

In addition to practical skills, the young people identified and addressed issues within the group that had been in some cases unknown, and in others, resistive to individual casework or foster family help: feelings about foster care, identity, self-esteem, and independence. It was evident that these adolescents could be a valuable support and resource to one another.

In a second coed group of seven, the group leader interspersed values-clarification material throughout the skills-development curriculum to encourage broad discussion. Group members initiated discussions about their biological parents and their personal experiences in foster care. They discussed what it was like to go to a new home or leave a home, and shared their thoughts about independence. Many had huge gaps in their knowledge of their life history. Often they had no continuous historical sense of how they had arrived at this particular point in their lives. This process of putting together the pieces of their past and present gave support to the effort toward independence of the group as a whole.

#### Lemmon Grove Emancipation Home

The Lemmon Grove Home for six adolescents was the outcome of planning

for a living situation halfway between family life and total independence. The home is owned by licensed foster parents who act as landlord/landlady of a boarding home. A board and room per diem is paid for each participating teen-ager. The foster parents and the agency social worker, assigned to supervise the Independent Living Project, are considered resource consultants to resident teen-agers. The home functions as a structured independent living situation geared to developing:

1. awareness of the realities of total independence;
2. a plan for independent living;
3. a life experience whereby each adolescent can work out fears and questions about independence, in which the inevitable bruises can be experienced in an atmosphere of support, encouraging adolescents to start again in the event of failure.

Each adolescent is expected to develop a contract with his or her caseworker, stipulating the adolescent's definition of and commitment to specific goals in vocational training, academic education, employment, independent living skills, and responsibility for oneself. A monthly budget covering the clothing, transportation, work or educational expenses, and recreation is developed by the adolescent and the caseworker, and is submitted for approval to the agency staff. Staff approval gives a formal aura to the contractual process and a sense of serious purpose to the adolescent and confirms for the social worker that Lemmon Grove is the best case plan for the young person.

The social worker retains all case responsibility for the young person, and for monitoring and renegotiating the contract as necessary. The Lemmon Grove staff members provide information on the progress of each adolescent to the Project Supervisor and the adolescent's social worker. They also participate in agency staff meetings and act as trainers and consultants to agency foster parents.

Within the home, the teen-ager has freedom within legal limits and responsibility for implementation of his/her contract. Chores, laundry, meal planning, and cooking are rotated on a weekly basis by house staff. The teen-ager has a key to the house and is responsible for his or her individual budget and commitments to school, work, and the agency.

The landlord and landlady help the young person learn the "how to do" things required of young adults, but do not provide transportation, make appointments, or wake anyone for school or work. The adolescents are responsible for their own choices and actions and are expected to face the consequences. Their ambivalent, "holding on—letting go" struggles lead

them to try to maneuver the resource consultants into a Mom-and-Dad position, in an attempt to avoid the responsibility for and the consequences of their own decisions. Lemmon Grove provides a structure and staff through which their struggles can be acted out.

#### Workbook

*On Your Way To On Your Own*, a resource book for independent living based on the experience gained in groups and in Lemmon Grove, was developed. It includes planning for independent living and information necessary for a teenager living independently. It was illustrated by a teen-ager living at Lemmon Grove and is a compilation of the ideas and needs of young people in the project.

A section titled "About Yourself" contains problem-solving, planning, and values exercises geared toward self-assessment, identity formation, self-awareness, and goal setting. A section called "About Boise" contains information about community agencies and resources, to increase familiarity with the community and a sense of competence in obtaining assistance. "Job-Finding Skills" contains information about interviewing for employment and planning exercises for successful interviewing. The "Educational Opportunities" section contains academic, vocational, and military service information. "Independent Living" sections help the teen-ager with plans for budgeting, housing, furnishings, and meals. A final section contains recipes, which are economical, nutritious, and geared to teen-agers' tastes.

*On Your Way To On Your Own* is designed to be used individually, in groups, or in families. The format easily translates to other communities.

In conjunction with the resource book, the project developed another service—consultation of Lemmon Grove staff members with foster families who wished to emancipate adolescents directly from their own homes. This consultation was also used to help foster families evaluate the use of Lemmon Grove as part of emancipation preparation for their teen-agers.

#### Reflections

The project has worked directly with 20 young persons who are or who anticipate living on their own, and has provided direct consultation and planning to 15 foster families. *The On Your Way To On Your Own* workbook has been adapted by many other agencies to their communities.

Of nine adolescents who have lived in Lemmon Grove for periods up to 6 months, six completed their contracts and are now successfully living

independently. They are encouraged to use Lemmon Grove and the agency as an extended family. Several act as peer consultants to younger teen-agers considering independent living. All have participated in video group discussions of their experiences in living on their own. These films are used in counseling other adolescents, preparing foster parents for the realities of emancipation, and in workshops on independent living. These six adolescents have had no community adjustment problems or legal difficulties.

The three residents who left Lemmon Grove because of inability to handle self-responsibility had several commonalities. All had poor peer and adult relationships. Two had intermittent hostile-dependent contacts with biological parents. One had no knowledge of her parents. Two had not been able to adjust to long-term foster families and had had several placements. All three were poor risks for the Lemmon Grove program, but staff felt each needed to be given the opportunity to prepare for independent living. All were placed out of a crisis situation. None had prior group process or workshop experience with independent living. They have had continuing problems.

The successful residents have no commonality with regard to biological parents. All were able to establish lasting ties with foster families, although all of them had had at least one previous placement. All had relationships of trust with the staff, and entered the project with a positive, well established relationship with their social worker. All had previous group process experience with the ideas, values, and skills of independent living. All have continued to have contact with the agency.

#### Conclusions

The path to independent living is a psychologically tumultuous process for troubled young persons. It involves the reawakening of separation fears, struggles toward a sense of identity, and often the paralyzing awareness that self-responsibility is the counterpart of freedom.

Lemmon Grove staff members have observed several psychological "states" experienced by the adolescents. Initially, they experience a "whoopie" phase in which they are intensely involved with the freedom aspects of independent living: a house key, no hours, no one to tell them what to do, a monthly check to spend, and so on. This stage seems to last anywhere from a few weeks to a couple of months; it terminates as the teen-ager is confronted with one's own responsibility for oneself, that is, bills that have to be paid, threat of losing a job, facing the school principal over one more truancy. As the natural consequences of his or her choices impinge upon the

adolescent, sadness and anger frequently develop. Resistance to consequences is evidenced by angrily blaming others (one referred to his gentle, supportive social worker as "that big black buzzard hanging over my shoulder"), oversleeping, and dependency behaviors. This stage often lasts several months and features job losses, poor budgeting, bounced checks, school failures, suspensions, or expulsions. It is in this stage that the supportive function of Lemon Grove comes into play, for it is at this time particularly that nonjudgmental support helps the young person pick up, reassess, and start again.

The 6-month contract of residency provides some necessary structure to the process. As the fifth month approaches, the youth is faced with the imminence of departure. She/he is confronted with staff expectation and receptivity to plans for how to leave, where to go, and what to do. In effect, the time limit imposed by the contract propels the adolescent toward concrete planning for independent living at a time and within a situation in which support systems are still readily available.

The goals of the Independent Living Project may be summed up as follows:

1. Survival Skills
  - a. self-presentation
  - b. taking initiative
  - c. job interviewing
  - d. networking or accessing information and resources
2. Survival Knowledge
  - a. renting
  - b. budgeting
  - c. community resources
  - d. job applications
3. Socialization Skills
  - a. group process and peer interaction and feedback
4. Increased Self-Esteem and Sense of Competence
  - a. self-assessment
  - b. mutual problem solving
  - c. reduced sense of loneliness and alienation through discussion and sharing
  - d. intense experience of being a valued, productive, responsible group member

The agency's definition of successful emancipation has expanded to: (1) constructive utilization of freedom and responsibility; (2) finding and maintaining employment; (3) making and maintaining friends and love relationships; (4) ability to weather short-term frustration to attain long-term

goals; (5) willingness to trust adults sufficiently to seek and utilize necessary information; (6) ability to handle the awesome responsibility of freedom [Jackson 1980].

#### Reference

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(Address requests for a reprint to Hildegarde A. Mauzerall, 5075 Sunderland Dr., Boise, ID 83704.)



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# Emancipation Services for Adolescents in Foster Care

Richard P. Barth

**B**Y 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, and more than younger children enter foster care because of their behavioral problems rather than because of inadequacies in the home (Bernstein, Snider, and Mezzan, 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

*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.*

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-

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 19 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 300 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-esteem was 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.

Harran'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 reported needing or seeking mental health services, and about 5 percent of the sample were hospitalized for a mental illness at some time after foster care. A preponderance of these young adults appraised their lives as currently satisfactory or hopeful. Those discharged from foster care after a long stay were more likely to be among the better functioning group.

Festinger's (1983) recent findings are the most sanguine of the outcome studies. Lacking an optimum control group, Festinger could only draw comparisons between the outcomes for the ex-foster children she studied (now adult respondents) and the norms of the population at large. She found no differences between her sample and the population at large on most characteristics, including number of arrests, self-esteem, happiness, and satisfaction with life. However, she did find dramatic differences between the sample and the general population in educational achievement (especially for males, who completed college at a rate of 2.3 percent of the former foster children compared to 22.1 percent of the general New York City population) and in employment (especially for black youths formerly in foster care, of whom 53.1 percent were employed as compared 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 (Panshel and Shinn, 1978; Lennberg et al., 1981; Zimmerman, 1982)—foster children are at risk of abridged futures and, therefore, are deserving of assistance during their struggle through 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 case workers 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 (Guernsey, 1976a; Guernsey 1976b; Guernsey and Wolfgang, 1981). Euster and Noble (1981) developed and successfully implemented a program to prepare case workers 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 (Mauzerail, 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 Altorfer 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 and guidance during the students' transition from their high school years to the semi-independent college years. The Foster Children's Scholarship Foundation of San Mateo County, California, provides financial assistance for foster children seeking to enroll in technical training, community college, or university programs (Reiden, 1983). Students with at least a C average in high school are eligible for scholarships underwritten by contributions from foundations and individual donors.

### Pre- and Postemancipation Services

Services to prepare adolescents for independent living are largely restricted to specialized independent living programs. Adolescents who do not participate in such programs—the majority of emancipating 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 and 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-

Empowering 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 (Guernsey, 1978) to a standard foster parent training program that focuses on adolescents (Guernsey, 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-be emancipated 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, Schanick 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 achieve-

ments, 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 children's 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 services is vital. Harrari (1980) found that adolescents discharged from foster care perceived a need for services that were not offered. Social workers, in contrast, judged that 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 additions 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.

*Richard P. Barth, DSW, is Assistant Professor, School of Social Welfare, University of California, Berkeley. The University of California, Berkeley, Committee on Research provided support for this article.*

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# ON THEIR OWN

An Oregon Experiment by Brian Simonitch and James L. Anderson

The Independent Living Subsidy Program, established in Oregon in 1973, helps young people on the verge of independence make the transition from foster home or institution to full self-sufficiency. Recognizing that teenagers in foster care are not prepared to take care of themselves in all respects upon turning 18, when foster care maintenance payments normally stop, the Oregon Legislature authorized the Children's Services Division to establish certain older teenagers in independent residences and to make payments directly to them for food, shelter and other living expenses.

Considered for the program are those young people for whom foster homes, group homes and institutions have not worked or are inappropriate but who demonstrate a capacity to become self-sufficient. Since self support is the goal for all participants, they must be able to obtain and hold a job, and, if possible, continue their education at high school or community college.

Participants can remain in the project for two years, during which time their maintenance allowance decreases gradually as they become more and more able

to support themselves. By the end of the two years, if not before, their need for support from the program should have ended, at that time, they are fully independent and have attained adult status. If wardship still exists, the Children's Services Division requests the court to vacate it, so that all trappings of dependency are dropped.

## Filling a Service Gap

Before the program began in Oregon, caseworkers had few choices in providing services to older teenagers nearing emancipation who were not succeeding in or were completing a substitute placement. Many of these young people were essentially homeless. They may have lived in several foster homes and perhaps in a group home or institution. The only option continued to be the same round of foster home-group home institution, all of which had already been demonstrated to be inadequate for them. So these youngsters moved through one failed placement after another and, on reaching 18, were turned loose in society, ill equipped to cope with independence responsibly.

Often these adolescents had suffered disastrous relationships with their parents. They had rarely stuck with any task or maintained a relationship with anyone for any length of time. They were untrained in the common social amenities. Although in some respects

they seemed older than their years, they were still immature and liable to be victimized by the unscrupulous. They did not know how to manage money, to cook or clean house, to avoid being cheated, to find and keep a job, to study and learn. They needed the chance to learn these things if they were to become truly independent.

It was for young people in this limbo between childhood and adulthood that we developed the Independent Living Subsidy Program. As far as we know, it is the only program in the country to receive legislative funding to make payments directly to a minor in the custody of a child welfare agency, although caseworkers throughout the country regularly make informal arrangements to achieve the same goals for their youngsters. Originally funded as a small demonstration program at \$50,000 for a 2-year period, the program now operates statewide in Oregon with a \$270,899 legislative appropriation.

Obtaining funding for the program was difficult. Legislators were concerned that the Children's Services Division (CSD) had no legal authority to make payments directly to a minor. They questioned our theory that we could promote maturity among adolescents by reducing rather than intensifying controls and they argued about the justice of rewarding youngsters for failing in their foster home or institutional placements.

The merits of our proposal could only be proven once the project was put into operation and it was the successful demonstration project that persuaded the

legislature to fund it as a regular program.

At a legislative hearing in 1975, Marcia, one of its graduates, described the program and her life before she entered it.

Marcia's parents were dead and she had run away from relatives and foster homes. When she entered the program she was a part-time prostitute, living on the street, selling drugs and stealing.

"How long have you been in the program?" a Senator asked.

Marcia: I've been in the program about a year and there wasn't any place to put me. I was on my own and I had to quit school to support myself because the program wasn't all the ground yet. Since then I've completed my high school, got my diploma. I'm going to business school right now and I hope real soon to find a job to get off the program.

Senator P: What did you mean when you said you were on your own before that?

Marcia: Well, I'd been in foster homes and I really didn't need the structure of the foster home so I left home and got out of that. I was still a ward of the Court but

Senator R: And you've had a lot of contact with Children's Services and the juvenile program. How many times have you been moved from one place to another?

Marcia: About four or five times.

Senator R: That was in how many years? A couple?

Marcia: The last two years.

Senator R: Could you talk a little bit about your background, what kind of placements you had and how you would compare this program with those placements?

Marcia: I feel I'm more responsible now. I'm taking care of myself, and when I was in the homes I wasn't very responsible.

Senator P: You're 18 years old now and you've finished high school. How

much high school had you had — you've been in this program for a little over a year.

Marcia: I wasn't going to public high school. I went through the high school completion program at Portland Community College. After my foster homes and my sister's home, I thought about it and saw I wasn't getting anywhere, so I decided to go back and finish up.

Senator P: What do you think would have happened to you if you hadn't been in the program?

Marcia: I'd have been in jail.

## Selecting Participants

Some participants, like Marcia, enter the program because other placements have not worked. For others, foster care seems inappropriate, as in the case of a 17-year-old whose foster parents called CSD one day to inform the caseworker that they were moving from the county in one month and would be unable to provide for her beyond that time. The young woman had been in two previous foster homes and had not lived in her own home since she was 13 years old. She was very distressed by this turn of events and resisted the idea of yet another foster home. She had no record of delinquency. From the caseworker's point of view it seemed unfair to expect her to adjust to a new foster home when she was only a year away from completing high school and needed to concentrate on the problem of emancipation.

Still other participants have successfully completed foster or institutional care but cannot return home and need some training before being completely on their own.

Ann, now 22, is a graduate of the program. Her worker sees her frequently

at his neighborhood grocery store where she is a full-time check-out clerk. When the worker first knew her, Ann was 16 years old and in detention for drug abuse and theft. After about 10 months in a group home, where she learned to live without drugs, returned to school and earned money at part-time work, Ann became a participant in our program. At 17, she was too old for foster care, her home was not a feasible resource, and the only other alternative was to leave her in the group home, which was very expensive and would not train her for independence. Under the Independent Living Subsidy Program, Ann attended community college to get her high school diploma and began work in the grocery store.

All participants must pass a screening process prior to acceptance in the program. A screening committee composed of three or five caseworkers and administrative staff members meets to hear an applicant state his or her case for admission. The committee also receives a recommendation from the client's caseworker, but the applicant must take major responsibility for planning his or her budget and educational and work

Brian Simonitch is a caseworker with the Children's Services Division, Oregon Department of Human Resources. James L. Anderson formerly supervisor of the Children's Services Division, is supervisor, Residential Treatment Program, Department of Child Psychiatry, Primus Children's Medical Center, Salt Lake City.



Photos: Brian Simonitch



Two participants in the Independent Living Subsidy Program enjoy their new apartments.



programs. To do this, applicants need to look into apartment rentals and utility costs, means of transportation, job possibilities and schools. The caseworker helps the applicant prepare a plan but tries as much as possible to let the youngster learn by doing. The first big success for applicants comes when their careful, realistic planning is rewarded by their acceptance into the program.

#### Living Arrangements

An unusual and at first controversial feature of the program is the fact that the participants live, usually alone, in apartments they find for themselves in the community. There are no special residences licensed by the state or any other arrangements that would provide more supervision for participants. The program's philosophy is that young people need the opportunity to learn by experience and the freedom to make mistakes.

For example, one young person had moved into a commune. His caseworker assessed the situation and made discreet inquiries about the people running it. Since it seemed to be a placement that would offer positive support to our client, he was allowed to stay. In such situations, the agency must support the judgment of client and caseworker. (Fortunately, its support did not become an issue in this case and "State pays 17 year old to live in commune" was a newspaper headline that never appeared.)

In spite of the financial constraints of the program, roommates for participants are discouraged. Experience has shown that most roommates are likely to be at least as inexperienced and unstable as the participants. And when two people live together, they tend to rent an apartment that is more expensive than either could pay for singly. If the roommate leaves, the participant is left with an apartment he or she cannot afford.

Although loneliness is a very real factor in the adolescent's experience, especially during the first few months in the program, we have found that the friends he or she brings to the apartment tend to exacerbate the situation.

They often use the apartment as a crash pad, or as a place to take drugs or engage in other unacceptable activities. They have been known to run up large long-distance phone bills, to eat all the food in the apartment, to take the participant's furnishings and otherwise deplete his or her meager resources. Those participants who survive the program usually shed their original friends after a few bad experiences, and by the time

they leave the program they have usually made new ones, who function in a mutually supportive way.

#### Costs

The participants' allowances are determined individually, based on their expenses for housing and other necessities and their own contribution to the budget through earnings. The maximum allowable is \$265 a month, which we are trying to have raised to \$350, especially for those living in urban areas. In addition, participants receive a one-time start-up payment, usually from \$100 to \$180, to buy linens, cooking utensils and other household items. This compares with the \$709 maintenance cost for teenagers in foster care and the approximately \$1,050 monthly cost for each child in a group home. At State Senator Mary Roberts, a program supporter, said at a committee hearing, "I'd like to know whether or not by expanding this program we take the risk of saving money while providing better service."

#### Casework Support

The job of the caseworker is to be around when needed without seeming to hover. Initially, this means dropping in every two days or so, just to see how things are going. Later, the visits taper off to biweekly check-ins, usually initiated by the participant. If friends seem too persistent as visitors, the worker helps the teenager get rid of them. If the client seems immobilized, the worker gets him going, helping him look through the want ads, enroll in school, find a grocery store, plan a week's meals. The help is mostly of a practical nature and in response to problems that the adolescent himself recognizes. One young man felt unequal to job hunting. His worker drove him to a street with many small businesses and told him to go up one side and down the other, stopping at each site until he got a job. The worker waited for him, and he returned elated at having found a temporary job, which later turned into regular employment.

Drawing the line between guidance and officiousness is not easy. One young woman, for example, had her heart set on an apartment which unfortunately was infested with ants. The worker knew that they would be a problem but decided to let the participant get the apartment and learn for herself. She very soon did, and was so shaken by her experience that she lacked confidence to stay in the program. In retrospect, the worker wishes he had steered her more forcefully away from that apartment.

Being a caseworker in our program also means being parent and friend to a lonely teenager who usually has no one else to fall those roles. In addition, the Court and community expect the worker to always know where the youths are and what they are doing, an impossible task since clients are unpredictable. Jenny, for example, had usually shown pretty good judgment but suddenly took her FBI check and hitchhiked to Montana. She was charged with a crime along the way, and much agency effort was expended to help the Court understand that although Jenny was living alone she should not be tried as an adult. (She was proven innocent of the charge, by the way.)

Diane was another participant who required extraordinary casework support. A bright, usually responsible participant, Diane had become so depressed at being alone that she called the county suicide prevention center one night. Since the young woman had no close friends or relatives, the center contacted her caseworker, who spent the night with Diane and, of course, later arranged counseling for her.

Although Diane's case was an extreme one, it illustrates the fact that loneliness is one of the foremost problems these youths face. With help, Diane was able to overcome the problem and today, after successfully graduating from the program, she is enrolled in college and working part time to support herself.

A written agreement is signed by each caseworker and participant. It spells out the program goals for the client and what client and worker will do to meet those goals. A job, school attendance, paying the bills on time, taking care of the apartment, food shopping and cooking nutritious meals are common provisions of agreements.

An evaluation of the program in 1978 showed that 60 percent of the participants were rated as meeting most or all of their educational goals, the same percentage were meeting most or all of their employment goals.<sup>1</sup> No formal follow-up of the 30 graduates has yet been done, so we don't know how many are still following the course set during the program. However, an informal survey of participants shows that they are pursuing careers in electronics, forestry (2 year course in a community college), counseling, park and recreation work (a blind participant) and cosmetology. One graduate is a teacher's aide and another is working to become a recreation director.

Of the 30 who had completed the program at the time of the study, case plan

goals were achieved in 20 cases and partially attained in seven. Even those who did not achieve their goals gained some benefits from the program.

#### Getting Through the Program

Like all young people on their own, those in the program have setbacks and crises. The caseworker's view is that an adolescent achieves emancipation by successfully completing the program. The adolescent tends to feel that emancipation takes place when he or she enters it. For the adolescent, independence means freedom from adult controls, especially those of a parental nature. For the adult, it means assuming the responsibility to take care of oneself.

Participants seem to pass through four stages as they progress through the program. The first is anxiety about becoming accepted as a participant and the anxiety continues until the youngster is in his or her own apartment. Once accepted, the participant is impatient to move into the apartment and quite intolerant of delays. When the program was first initiated and everyone was unfamiliar with it, we took from two to three weeks to deliver a check after it was ordered. This time has since been reduced to three to five days. Even this improvement, however, is insufficient to induce anxiety. Once accepted, the youngsters burn to get into their own living quarters.

The second stage—*isolation*—usually lasts less than a month. The worker generally counsels moderation, on the theory that the higher these young people soar emotionally, the harder they crash. The youngsters tend to ignore or overlook potential problems; workers must always anticipate them.

The third stage is characterized by *loneliness and fear*. All of the problems of independence, familiar to adults, are now encountered by the youngsters. Maintaining a routine becomes boring. Dreams of having great wealth evaporate by the middle of the month. The youngster finds he or she has little time or money for entertainment. Indeed, the first sign of trouble often comes over money. The great sum turns out to be paltry indeed, and youngsters find themselves with two weeks remaining in the month and very little money for food. Budget counseling and help in planning expenditures are important casework services with these youths.

In time, the main problem comes down to loneliness. Friends, especially the delinquent ones, start to drop away and few new friends are made. For some young people, a caseworker becomes

their main contact and chief provider of guidance and support. Some young people resort to drugs and their performance at work and school begins to slide. Some, like Diane, become clinically depressed. These youths are outside the mainstream of adolescent activities. While other young people are living at home and pursuing normal adolescent activities, residents of this program are trying to earn a living, and they accurately perceive themselves as different.

During this period we have frequently been successful in repairing relationships between a youngster and his or her parents. We always encourage this, even though the participant may have had great difficulties with parents in the past, and the youth often gravitates homeward out of a need to have contact with and receive support from someone significant. Even if a youngster cannot live at home, the receipt of even limited emotional support and encouragement from parents is an asset. The worker must pay close attention to fulfilling a youngster's need for relationships, filling the gap personally when necessary but always trying to help him or her establish as many contacts as possible. On occasion we have held group meetings for residents of the program to allow them to compare experiences and support one another.

The fourth stage is one of quiet confidence (as opposed to loud confidence, which is characteristic of the second stage). The transition to this stage is gradual. One day the caseworker realizes that it has been some time since the youngster has called, that he views those problems which arise with less alarm, that he has frequently thought out solutions before the caseworker learned of the problem, and that he has less need for emotional support. Another sign of this stage is the appearance of new friends who are true associates and not part of a desperate need for any kind of companionship. These signs indicate that it is time to emancipate the youngster and close the professional relationship.

#### Unresolved Policy Issues

In general, the Independent Living Subsidy Program can be considered a success. It gives an adolescent the support he or she needs to make the transition from substitute care to independence. Some policy issues remain unresolved, however, and will be subject to further program study. For example:

\* To what extent does admission into the program reward failure? One requirement for admission—that applicants must have had two previous un-

successful placements—is now being reconsidered. The point of such a policy was to limit the program to those for whom more traditional living arrangements didn't work but in practice it has created an unnecessary barrier to admission for other prospective applicants. Whether the program should be viewed as a last resort, after all other alternatives have been tried, or as a positive step toward independence for those who demonstrate the maturity to handle it is still at issue in our agency.

\* The question of roommates still looms large. At present participants are not allowed to share apartments, except, occasionally, with other participants. Roommates have often been found to be unreliable, a "bad influence" and a drain on the participant's limited resources. On the other hand, they can share expenses and help offset loneliness. Most young people seem to want close companionship with others of their own age when they first venture into the adult world, and the clients in our program are no different. However, this is resolved, we expect that roommates of different sexes will continue to be forbidden.

\* We are still experimenting with the best way to handle the program administratively. Whether there should be special program workers assigned to independent living caseloads or an agency worker should keep a client who moves from substitute care to the independent living program is still open to question.

Creating the program was an arduous struggle, one that continued nearly two years. In the course of this effort we learned to define the need for it with great precision. Those who seek to implement similar programs in their regions are advised to gear up for a political battle that may not be easily won. Nevertheless, we think the initial success of the Oregon Independent Living Subsidy Program justifies further experimentation in other parts of the country. We know of no similar programs in the United States. If others do exist, we would like to hear from those involved. ■

<sup>1</sup> All names of participants in the program have been changed for this article.

<sup>2</sup> Testimony before the Joint Ways and Means Committee Hearing, Subcommittee 4, Oregon Legislative Assembly, March 20, 1978.

<sup>3</sup> J. Albrecht and B. O'Donnell, *Report of Independent Living Subsidy Program Review, Sept. 1, 1978*, Oregon Children's Services Division, 198 Commercial St. S.E., Salem, Oregon 97310.

## BRIDGING

## THE GAP:

12(5)



From Foster Care  
To Independent  
Living

By Patricia Rowe

There are almost half a million children in the youth foster care system and every year 110,000 of them must leave the system because they are too old. Most youth foster care programs are prohibited by state laws supporting program beyond age 18, and because these children—the products of broken, dysfunctional or abusive homes—have spent their formative years in foster family care or institutions, they are often ill prepared for the responsibilities of adulthood. Project Bridge, a pilot project for the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area that will be replicated in other states and localities, is addressing a need of orphans and adolescents in foster care nearing emancipation by pairing them with trained counselors or adult orphans who have successfully made the transition to independent adulthood. For several years following emancipation, during the critical transition period from dependency to economic and

psychological self-sufficiency, these volunteers serve as role models and surrogate parents for the emancipated adolescent, offering support and friendship, as well as guidance and assistance in such areas as locating housing, employment and loan opportunities.

Project Bridge was launched by the Orphan Foundation, a national, private, nonprofit organization spearheaded by Joseph Rivers in October 1981 to represent the interests of orphans. With financial, administrative and program consulting support from a corps of local businesses, government and the private sector, Rivers, an orphan himself, established the organization to foster mental, physical, emotional and economic self-sufficiency among young adult orphans and provide research, information and education programs. Several other programs developed by the Orphan Foundation operate in conjunction with Project Bridge to aid the emanci-

pated adolescent. These include the Orphan Sponsor Program, which furnishes emergency loans to cover initial costs of independence following emancipation, the National Orphan Foundation Scholarship Vocational Assistance Program, Holiday Programs and Outings, which provide surrogate family gatherings during traditional holidays and group recreation and educational experiences, the National Orphan Foundation Library, Research and Resource Center, and the Legal Assistance Program.

Rivers believes a crucial role of a community-based volunteer early intervention program like Project Bridge lies in reducing costly government subsidy programs and welfare dependency. The number of children and adolescents dependent upon the child welfare system is growing each year, he says, and more than a third of the approximately half million children now in foster care are over 15. This percent-

age is growing as the population ages and more adolescents enter the system relatively late in their childhood as throwaways or runaways. An estimated annual 150,000 youths who are pushed out or are otherwise homeless become dependent upon child welfare services when released by the juvenile justice system. Because the emancipated young adult is ill prepared for the responsibilities of independence, lacking a nurturing family system or job skills, he is a likely candidate for welfare dependency, Rivers explains. "It may be that for every child helped through the transitional period from dependency on the child welfare system to independence, there will be fewer persons on the welfare rolls, and that could mean a savings in tax dollars and a reduction in the need for government intervention through the adult years."

After emancipation—which the Orphan Foundation terms the second orphaned phase—the youth is faced with the sudden loss of provision for such essentials as food, clothing, shelter, medical care and counseling. Working with caseworkers and a staff of public and private child welfare agencies, Project Bridge volunteers receive training so they can assist the emancipated adolescent in those areas where help is needed most: individualized goal planning, independent living and life skills, career development, job search, maintaining employment and recreation. The Big Brothers/Big Sisters program of the metropolitan Washington, D.C. area—which served as a model for Project Bridge—also provides some of the training for its volunteers, and an evaluation of the project is being completed by American University in Washington, D.C.

Project Bridge volunteers are screened by the project director and agency caseworker to complete information on their personalities profile so that the best possible match between volunteer and youth can be made. The match itself occurs before emancipation, when agency caseworkers, Orphan Foundation staff, the emancipated youth, and volunteer meet to initiate formation of the relationship between the

youth and volunteer. Individual counseling sessions and regular group meetings among emancipated adolescents, volunteers and Orphan Foundation staff offer opportunities for communication, identification of specific problems and discussions by traumas and guest speakers.

Foundation volunteer Pamela Washington defines Project Bridge as "a Friendship Program. You meet someone, show them you care, invite them into your home and build a friendship—something we do every day. Project Bridge is based on the premise that a one-to-one relationship with an adult can provide the support a young adult needs to grow and mature in a positive way."

Mrs. Washington—a former foster parent who is a counselor in foster adolescent Victoria Bryant—believes the key to effective counseling is friendship between the youth and volunteer. She advises that the volunteer "Get to know the person, their ideals, wants and needs, keeping in mind that these young adults grew up in a series of institutions or foster homes. Many grew up without dreams or aspirations, without joy."

Victoria, who shared the last Christmas season with Mrs. Washington, describes how the project has been a positive force in her life: "The people at the Orphan Foundation have been very kind and helpful to me. They have done things no other person has done for me and they are helping me in my time of need. We are very good friends."

Eighteen year old emancipated youth Ellie V. Christy, who left the child welfare system last October, expresses her feelings about entering the adult world: "Leaving the child welfare system is a very scary thing. The closer I got to that point, the harder it was to accept the fact that I had to make it on my own—sink or swim. There is no home to turn back to if I fail in the world. There is no family to support me if I need help and there is no feeling of security on my part."

"There are many things emancipated youths need that aren't made available to them. We need decent

jobs, college funding, low income housing, and many other things, just to survive. We are not asking anyone to do it for us. We just need someone to help us do it ourselves."

Rivers feels that the approach of the Orphan Foundation is uniquely effective because it utilizes trained volunteers who themselves were products of the child welfare system and reduces the need for a social worker to be actively involved with each individual adolescent after emancipation. Research by the Orphan Foundation indicates that many private child welfare agencies try to continue either formal or informal care for those adolescent orphans over age 18 who are unable to adjust to the responsibilities of adulthood. For those child welfare agencies which do provide counseling and surrogate parenting for the adolescent orphan beyond age 18, an added burden is placed on the caseworker.

Established in 1973, one of the earliest programs to help troubled emancipated adolescents make the transition to full self-sufficiency through monthly subsidy payments and continued supervision by a social worker was an experiment in Oregon called the Independent Living Subsidy Program.

Rivers summarizes another advantage of his program: "Project Bridge offers a worthwhile alternative to the youth who is alienated from the child welfare system, as many are, because we are not a child welfare agency or foster care provider. The Foundation can serve as a resource and referral center for emancipated young people who need help but don't want to return to their child welfare agency. For many troubled, aimless youths, a volunteer based program may be the only hope."

Further information on Project Bridge is available from Joseph Rivers, President, Orphan Foundation, 15 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Suite 448, P.O. Box 14241, Washington, D.C. 20014.

See "On Their Own: An Oregon Experiment" by Brian Simonich and James E. Anderson, CHILDREN TODAY, Sept/Oct 1979.

# Stepping Out of Foster Care Into Independent Living

15(2)

by Eileen Mayers Pasztor, Jean Clarren,  
Elizabeth M. Timberlake and Linda Bayless

**A**lthough the overall foster care population continues to decrease, the proportion of adolescents in foster care has increased to the point that adolescents now comprise nearly half of the foster care population as compared to 20 percent a decade ago. Moreover, a large number of youths are remaining in the foster care system until the legal age for emancipation.<sup>1</sup>

To address the needs of older youths in foster care, the Children's Bureau,ACYF, funded a project in 1983 designed to prepare older adolescents to move out of foster care into responsible living. The project, entitled "Stepping Out Of Foster Care Into A More Self-Sufficient Independent Living Network," was conducted by the Baltimore County Department of Social Services.<sup>2</sup> In addition to accomplishing its primary objective, the research and demonstration project realized three secondary objectives: It combined resources from the public social services, the business and the academic sectors to meet local needs and reduce a potential drain on community resources; it integrated aspects of the model into agency policy and service delivery to youth and families; and it assessed the replicability of the model by other agencies and communities. In addition

to the authors, core project staff included three child welfare associates from the National Catholic School of Social Service, Deborah Brittain, Jane Park Cutler, D.S.W., and Judith Sheagren.

Project Stepping Out focused on increasing adolescents' competence in performing daily life management tasks, using resources to achieve economic self-sufficiency, improving social skills and developing psychosocial coping strengths. Based on an understanding of late adolescence as a transition period, the project sought to enhance the fit between the youths and their future social environment. Project social workers emphasized strengths and needs and provided "thinking," "feeling" and "doing" opportunities with respect to adult role functioning and social networking.

For adolescents who had experienced stressful life situations, uprooting and developmental difficulties, the project forged social support networks, which functioned as sources of support and encouraged the sharing of goods and services. Through these networks, the youths learned survival strategies, values and skills necessary for accomplishing developmental tasks.

## Target Population

Project Stepping Out provided services to 31 adolescents in family foster

homes and group homes. The youths ranged in age from 15 to 20, with an average of 17.1 years. There were slightly more females (54.8 percent) than males, and two-thirds of the youths were white and the remainder black. Academically, 15.2 percent were performing at a below average level, 35.5 percent at an average level and 49.4 percent, above average. Ninety percent were attending school, with 38.7 percent in the 11th or 12th grades. Three quarters of the youths said they had previous work experience, but only a little more than a quarter had held a part-time job over four months.

Their time in foster care ranged from two months to 20 years, with an average of 6.5 years in care and 2.4 placements. Sixty-one percent were initially placed during adolescence, usually between the ages of 14 to 16 years. At the time of the project, the youths had established few bonds with their birth families. Half saw their birth mothers less than several times a month, and almost half had no contact with their fathers. Although the majority had birth siblings, only one quarter lived in a foster care situation with a sibling.

**A**lmost half (48.4 percent) of the youths remained in care because of behavioral, health or intellectual problems related to the child. The majority, however, remained in care because of such family-related reasons as abandonment, family inability to plan and follow through, danger of abuse or neglect, financial or housing problems and a parent who was under arrest or who had a physical or mental illness.

## Service Delivery

Six service components were used to meet the project's objectives:

**Project social workers.** Three graduate students and three agency child welfare workers were assigned to Project Stepping Out on a part-time basis. They provided each young person with regular agency social work services as well as the project's special intervention services. Prior to the project's imple-

mentation, the service providers participated in a 28-hour training program presented by Nova University's Institute for Social Services to Families, and they received ongoing training, supervision and consultation from a field instructor provided by Catholic University's National Catholic School of Social Service.

**Strengths/Needs Assessment.** Adolescents' strengths and needs were explored in the areas of special interests, social and personal assets, education and employment, support systems of family and friends, values and attitudes, physical and mental health, and emancipation plan.

One assessment tool used by the adolescent and social worker was the life space diagram, which uses symbols to create a picture of the young person's experiences and feelings. On the diagram, a circle symbolizes a person, a square indicates a place and a triangle represents a situation.

For example, Jack—who had been suspended from school for fighting—drew a life space diagram that contained circles representing himself, his classmate sparring opponent and his teacher; a triangle symbolizing the problem of suspension for fighting; and a square signifying school. In the process of drawing the diagram with his social worker, Jack was able to perceive how his anger concerning the fight that led to his suspension was related to the underlying problem of conflicts with his brother, which he viewed as the cause of his own placement in foster care. Jack realized then that his angry feelings and striking out at friends represented "baggage" from the past that he carried in the present.

**B**y contrast, another assessment tool, the life history chart, provided an opportunity for the adolescents to probe earlier experiences with their birth families, reasons why they had entered and remained in foster care and their experiences in care.

Together, these tools enabled the youths to review the past, examine the

present and plan for the future.

**Task Groups.** These groups, co-led by project and agency staff, included six to 12 young people who identified, discussed and practiced skills for independent living. In a session on goal identification and planning, for example, youths discussed preparation for such occupations as veterinarian, beautician and construction worker. Activities in related sessions focusing on job search, career development and maintaining employment included resume writing, practice in asking a work supervisor for assistance and discussion of how to dress appropriately for work.

A session on daily living skills stressed practice in renting an apartment, writing checks and grocery shopping, while another on social networking centered on enhancing the youths' skills in meeting and keeping friends, living with roommates, reconnecting with birth parents and siblings and maintaining ties with foster families.

**One Day Workshop.** The workshop, conducted by project and agency staff, was designed to compress the knowledge and skills learned in the task groups into an extensive examination of three primary topics: housing, vocational skills and independent living skills. The youths divided into small groups that rotated among the three discussion topics, and afterwards, they prepared and shared a meal—which, participants agreed, was a highlight of the day.

**Volunteers.** Adults to act as role models or mentors were recruited from local civic clubs and businesses to work with adolescents who needed a one-to-one relationship with a mature, responsible adult. Volunteers completed a 4-hour training program—conducted by the Baltimore County Department of Social Service's volunteer coordinator, the National Catholic School of Social Service's volunteer trainer and a Nova University Institute for Social Services to Families trainer—to prepare them to support the adolescent's growth toward autonomy and to teach remedial skills in selected areas.

One young person in residential care

was able to be discharged into family foster care because a volunteer provided transportation for the youth to out-patient treatment. Another adolescent, who found a job in a bakery, practiced making change with his volunteer while a third youth worked with her volunteer to make a new dress.

**Apprenticeships.** Community leaders were asked to approach potential apprenticeship providers on behalf of the project in general as well as individual youth. Profiles that included information about the young person's interests, strengths and needs regarding employment were shared with potential employers. The project was able to generate six additional apprenticeships apart from fast food services and the usual community summer employment, but only two-thirds of the youths who wanted jobs were able to obtain them. Two of the youths were placed in jobs through existing community projects.

## Implementing the Project

During the 9 month period of service delivery, each of the 31 adolescents participated in an average of three of the six service components. To assess the impact of these services, researchers from the National Catholic School of Social

*Eileen Mayers Pasztor, who was co-director and trainer for Project Stepping Out under the auspices of the National Catholic School of Social Service, Catholic University of America, and Nova University's Institute for Social Services to Families, is currently a Child Welfare Associate with the Child Welfare Institute, Atlanta. Jean Clarren, the project's principal investigator, is Assistant Director for Child Welfare, Baltimore County Department of Social Services, Towson, Md. Elizabeth M. Timberlake, D.S.W., the project's principal researcher and program consultant, is Associate Professor, National Catholic School of Social Service, Washington, D.C., and Linda Bayless, Ph.D., the project's curriculum developer and trainer, is Assistant Director, Institute for Social Services to Families, Nova University, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.*

Service compared the project participants with a control group of 29 adolescents who were also in the foster care program of the Baltimore County Department of Social Services but were not receiving project services. To control for the influence of possible differences between the two groups, a pre- and post test design was used. The experimental group's growth was measured by a psychosocial functioning scale and an emancipation social functioning scale.<sup>1</sup>

**O**n the emancipation social functioning scale, the difference between the experimental and control groups was substantial. Adolescents receiving project services achieved significantly more growth in the social functioning skills needed for emancipation, as measured by their total score in the areas of independent living, employment and social network skills, than did those adolescents who received no project services.

On the other hand, the percent of difference between the two groups on the psychosocial functioning scale was not significant. Adolescents participating in project services did not grow significantly in psychosocial functioning as measured by eight indicators: self-image, peer relationships, adult relationships, self-control, motivation, handling the learning demands of school and home, learning style and expression of feelings.

### Impact on Adolescents

That the experimental group achieved substantially more positive changes than the control group in social functioning was not surprising for a variety of reasons. Five of the services focused primarily on the knowledge, values and skills basic to social functioning after emancipation. Since the social functioning tasks and skills necessary for sorting out early career interests, functioning well on the job and handling day-to-day experiences are

concrete, they are probably learned and incorporated early.

Experiences dealing with employment skills and issues are also likely to capture the young person's interest since jobs and spending money are considered both current and future needs. Nor should satisfaction derived from the immediate monetary rewards of the job be overlooked. While their actual skill development in the areas of employment, independent living and social networking may have been slight, these youths perceived themselves as having grown in their ability to step out of foster care into independent living.

The lack of significant, positive changes in the general level of psychosocial functioning was disappointing but not surprising, since only the social work service component addressed psychosocial issues as well as issues related to social functioning and coping with independent living. The foremost reason for this lack, however, was that the project was designed to meet the short-term goal of preparing adolescents for independent living rather than addressing their residual developmental conflicts and problems. Given the youths' vulnerability, the psychosocial developmental tasks inherent in the transition from foster care to independent living take on special significance for them and require more than short-term social work remediation and personal growth.

### Impact on the Agency

The six service components have been integrated into agency policy, programs and practices to varying degrees. The need for a core unit of social workers with specialized training to provide individualized services and mobilize supplementary resources for older youths in foster care has been clearly identified, and Baltimore County has an established Specialized Adolescent Program Unit which provides most of the Stepping Out service components. For agency staff with clients not served by the Specialized Unit, the project offered some exposure to the knowledge, values and skills basic to competence-oriented emancipation services. Thus,

all adolescent clients could be encouraged to complete life space diagrams, strengths/needs assessments and a mutual action plan.



Although the adolescents responded well to the task groups, this component is difficult to incorporate into standard agency service delivery because of scheduling and transportation problems. While it is also difficult to coordinate transportation for youths who participated in the one day workshop in independent living skills, agency staff members felt that evaluations from the workshop were positive enough to replicate this service periodically.

**A**lthough there were fewer volunteers than desired, agency staff believed the volunteers were positive role models for the youths and, as a result, the agency volunteer coordinator is establishing a volunteer mentorship program for adolescents in foster care. As with the volunteers, there was a scarcity of apprenticeships. Because time constraints hampered the project's community liaison efforts to set up apprenticeship opportunities, most jobs came from an established county program for youths with special needs.

### Replication

Although the project's combination of resources was quite effective in meeting the needs of the target population, there were organizational, scheduling and transportation problems that developed when service providers were brought in from the outside. Overcoming these obstacles required great expenditure of time and effort that is cause for concern in setting up future service delivery programs. While the project's emancipation services achieved positive results, the age-old child welfare dilemma of time, cost and staff remains to inhibit replication.

### Recommendations

Both the positive outcomes and barriers encountered in service delivery have implications for future foster care policies, programs and practices.

These implications are the basis for the following recommendations:

- To help move youths in foster care into independent living, agencies need to provide the six service components of Project Stepping Out. Agency social workers, for example, need specialized caseloads and training to provide individualized services and mobilize resources for older youths in foster care. Instead of focusing on problem-oriented assessment and intervention, the emphasis should be on each adolescent's strengths and needs. To make task groups and workshops accessible as well as available, agencies need to develop support systems to solve scheduling and transportation problems. Agency staff should also invest time and energy in community development, education and liaison activities to mobilize apprenticeship and volunteer resources.

- Agencies need to create training programs for foster parents that would provide information about the developmental needs of older adolescents in foster care and the goals of independent living. Such programs have to teach skills that would prepare foster parents to support adolescents' growth toward self-sufficiency, as well as skills for working with volunteers and other community resources available to youths in foster care.

- Since service providers have been sensitized to issues of separation and loss, and identity development and emancipation, by their own experiences, approaches should be developed to facilitate service providers' self-awareness and help them keep their own issues distinct from those of the youths with whom they work.

- Agencies need to begin to work with youths toward the goal of emancipation at a much earlier point in their foster care experience. Adolescents in foster care need help to resolve residual developmental conflicts and problems as well as current problems in making the transition into independent living.

- For clarity in planning, service delivery has to be divided into three phases: intake, continuing service and termination. Many service structures

and technologies are common to all three phases and serve different emphases or uses in each phase.

- Support and rehabilitative services for both families are crucial to achieve permanency, planning goals and to develop their ability to serve as support networks when their adolescents move out of foster care into independent living.

- Finally, agencies have to approach the goal of emancipation not simply as movement from one place to another but as a multidimensional process designed to enhance the young person's growth toward autonomy and mastery of life experiences. Transitional funding must be provided for older youths in foster care to meet basic needs and enable them to build resources toward the goal of full emancipation.

### Conclusion

Without an explicit policy commitment to individualized service planning for older youths in foster care, agency programs and social work practice will not meet their critical needs. Without clearly defined federal, state and local foster care policies and allocation of funds, it is difficult for agencies to establish or sustain programs and resources. It is only with such programs as Project Stepping Out that social work staff can create and use appropriate intervention techniques to help older adolescents move out of foster care into responsible living. ■

<sup>1</sup>See R. Hubbell, *Foster Care and Families* (Philadelphia: Temple Press, 1981); E. Tomberlake, J. Cutler and J. Strohms, *A Study of the Children in Foster Care in One County Department of Social Services* (Washington, D.C.: National Catholic School of Social Service, 1980); A. Gruber, *Children in Foster Care* (New York: Human Sciences Press, 1978); A. Shine and A. Schneider, *A National Study of Social Services to Children and Their Families* (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Child Advocacy, Westat, 1978).

<sup>2</sup>Baltimore County Department of Social Services, National Catholic School of Social Service, Institute for Social Services to Families, *Final Report: Project Stepping Out of Foster Care Into a More Self-Sufficient Independent Living Network* (DHHS, OHS, ACYF Children's Bureau Grant 90-CC-0223-01, 1985).

<sup>3</sup>These measures are described in the project's *Final Report*.



# Alaska Foster Parents Association

P. O. BOX 140651 • ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99508



## POSITION PAPER HB 177 PRE-EMANCIPATION SERVICES FOR MINORS

The Alaska Foster Parent Association supports the concept and intent of this legislation, which is to provide pre-emption 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-emption setting or supervised independent residence, all youth need to have access to pre-emption 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-emption 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*  
Miriam Sumner  
President

*Frank H. Wasmer*  
Frank H. Wasmer  
Vice President

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Copies of minutes listed below were originally included in this file. The minutes are available on the STAIRS database CMPR. In order to save space copies of minutes have not been left in the files.

Mary Van Nimwegen

H. HESS 3-10-89

6-0691H  
Lauterbach  
4/17/89

Original sponsor: Health, Education and  
Social Services Committee

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY THE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND  
SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

2 CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 177 (HESS)

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5 A BILL

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

24 (1) order the minor committed to the department for place-  
25 ment in an appropriate setting, which may include a supervised in-  
26 dependent residence, for a period of time that does not [TO] exceed  
27 two years and that does not extend [OR IN ANY EVENT] past the minor's  
28 19th birthday [DATE THE MINOR BECOMES 19 YEARS OF AGE], except that  
29 the department may petition for and the court may grant in a hearing

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

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

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

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

1 [PERSON] consents to it; or

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

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

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

18 (1) assistance in completing academic or vocational train-  
19 ing designed to make the child employable;

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

23 (3) training and supervision in skills needed for indepen-  
24 dent living;

25 (4) assistance in petitioning for removal of the disabili-  
26 ties of minority; and

27 (5) social support and services coordination.

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

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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.