

3/20/09
FOSTER
CARE
LEGISLA-
TIVE
SUMMIT

Lynda Zaugg

From: Apache [apache@wwwjnu02.legis.state.ak.us]
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2009 12:07 PM
To: LIO Juneau; Peg Warren; Lynda Zaugg
Subject: Teleconference Order Form

Meeting: new

Sponsor and/or Committee Name: Sen H&SS

Date of Teleconference: 3/20/09

Start Time: 1:15

End Time: 3:15

Chairing Site: Juneau Capitol Building

Juneau Room: #205

Testimony: yes

Testimony Time Limit: no time limit

Executive Session: no

Contact Person: Lynda Zaugg

Telephone Number: 907-465-4906

Email Address: lynda_zaugg@legis.state.ak.us

LIO Sites:

anchorage
fairbanks

Other sites may add: yes

Offnet Name(s):

Subject of meeting and/or Bills on Agenda:

Foster Care Legislative Summit
BPH

Foster Care Legislative Summit
Today's Obstacles To Success, Tomorrow's Solutions
March 20, 2009
1:15PM – 3:15 PM
Senate Health and Social Services Committee

OPENING REMARKS

1:15 – 1:20PM

Senator Bettye Davis & Representative Les Gara:

- Introduce Co-Sponsor Legislators & Panel Members
- Forum Goals, Where We Are Today, Problems and Presenter Solution Ideas
- **Questions and discussion will be held at the end of the panel presentations**

FACING FOSTER CARE IN ALASKA: "REAL LIFE POLICY"

1:20 – 1:40

Amanda Metivier, FFCA:

- FFCA Policy Agenda.

RESEARCH DATA AND ALUMNI PERSPECTIVES

1:40 – 2:00

Amanda Metivier

Peter Pecora, Casey Family Programs

FFCA Youth & Alumni Panel (Kaylee Day, Shilo Valle, Anthony (Tony) Barril, Telora Thompson)

- Alaska Alumni Study highlights – homelessness rates
- Post-Foster Care Independent Living Challenges: Hurdles Foster Youth and Alumni Face After Care
- Available Federal Funding after age 21

EDUCATION AND FOSTER CARE

2:00 – 2:20

Barb Dexter, Anchorage School District

Beth Snyder, Anchorage School District

- McKinney Vento

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICE REVIEWS: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS FOR ALASKA

2:20 – 2:45

John Henderson, U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau (*via phone*)

Tammy Sandoval, Director, Alaska Office of Children's Services (OCS):

- Alaska's Preliminary CFSR Results from September 2008
- Child and family outcomes needing attention most urgently
- Frequency of social worker visits
- Federal Review results
- Performance Improvement Plan – planning and development

CLOSING REMARKS

2:45 – 3:15

Senator Bettye Davis & Representative Les Gara

- Status of current legislation
- Questions & Discussion

*PIP = Performance improvement plan
 Y E Review - complete set for first part of July
 (find # under Fed Law)*



Facing Foster Care in Alaska **Policy Agenda 2008**

In May of 2008, the youth and alumni of Facing Foster Care in Alaska, (FFCA) came together from across the state and gathered in Anchorage to share their ideas and experiences about life in Alaska's foster care system. During their gathering youth/alumni brainstormed ideas on what they thought would be most beneficial to them and others in foster care in Alaska. As a result of these ideas, the members of FFCA voted to create this policy agenda.

Tuition Waivers for ALL foster youth in the state of Alaska

The University of Alaska Anchorage currently offers 10 Presidential Tuition Waivers a year to foster youth who are eligible for the OCS Independent Living Program. A young person must have been in foster care on or after their 16th birthday for six consecutive months in order to be eligible for the waiver program. Since these waivers are competing, not every young person in Alaska who applies will receive one. Youth who are placed in a guardianship, adopted, or reunified before age 16 are not eligible to apply for the waiver. Many states provide Tuition Waivers or other forms of reimbursement for college expenses to foster youth interested in pursuing post-secondary education. The youth and alumni of FFCA feel that by providing All of Alaska's foster youth with tuition waivers there would be a higher percentage of foster youth attending post-secondary education. Studies show that approximately 17% of young people who exit foster care pursue post-secondary education, and only about 1% graduate from a four year degree or certificate program. FFCA would like to see that All of Alaska's foster youth are provided with tuition waivers to reduce the stress of worrying about college expenses and knowing that they are guaranteed a higher education.

Support to foster youth pursuing post-secondary education

Many of the youth and alumni who attend post-secondary education programs in Alaska have complained about not having any supports to help them achieve their goals. FFCA members would like to see that universities and vocational programs have supports put in place for foster youth transitioning to higher education. FFCA members recommended adult or alumni mentors, a family to spend the holidays with, and someone within the

university or vocational program to talk with about stressors. If every youth in Alaska's foster care system made a permanent connection with a caring adult during their stay in foster care this would be less of an issue. FFCA members also recommended implementing the, "Circles of Support Program," to ensure youth in care are making permanent connections with caring adults before exiting from care.

More Independent Living Funds going to youth/alumni

The state of Alaska currently gets approximately \$500,000 a year (FY2008 \$518,814) in Federal Chafee funds to be used for youth in foster care to work toward independent living. There is currently no state match for this money and it is being stretched very thin as the states Independent Living Program grows, and begins to offer more programs and resources to youth in transition. The youth and alumni of FFCA would like to see that more of this money is offered to youth and alumni transitioning from foster care for housing, education, life skills training, and anything that may support them in becoming independent productive members of society. FFCA is also aware that many states provide a match for the Chafee dollars they receive and would like to see that this is made possible by the state of Alaska.

Transitional Living for youth

Alaska currently allows for youth who turn 18 in foster care the option to extend their time in state custody until the age of 20. There many states that allow for youth to extend custody until age 21, or to leave custody and re-enter if they are willing to pursue post-secondary education. According to the Alaskan Alumni Study 38% of Alaska's alumni reported being homeless after exiting foster care. The Covenant House Shelter in Anchorage reports that two-thirds of their current population is comprised of current and former OCS youth. The youth and alumni of FFCA would like to see a stronger focus in the area of transitional housing for youth who exit from the foster care system. FFCA members shared ideas and recommend allowing youth to remain in state custody while living in college dorms, apartments on their own, or other least restrictive environments outside of the traditional family foster home after reaching age 18.

Independent Housing Program

Some states currently allow for foster youth to live, "on their own," after reaching age 18, but to remain in state custody and receive foster care payments on behalf of themselves until the age of 21. This allows for foster youth to continue services with their social worker as well as other services offered to youth in custody, and learn to successfully transition out of state custody. The youth and alumni of FFCA would like to see a program such as this put into place in Alaska, or for the state to consider more creative placements for young people once they reach 18, but are not ready to exit from foster care.

Medicaid increased to age 21 under the Chafee Independence Act

There are currently 17 states that have chosen to enact the Chafee option to extend Medicaid to age 21 for former foster youth, Alaska is not one of these states. Currently, youth in Alaska's foster care system can receive Denali Kid Care until age 19 under the 1115 Waiver. After age 19 these young people can apply for adult Medicaid, but this holds them back from obtaining decent paying jobs and forces them to choose to go without medical coverage. Youth in foster care often attend counseling and have other medical needs, but they are forced to cut off many of these services when they leave custody. The youth and alumni of FFCA would like to see that Medicaid is increased for Alaska's foster youth to age 21 under the Chafee Foster Care Independence Act.

Braces covered under Medicaid

Children and youth in Alaska's foster care system often have only their Basic needs met because there is a strong emphasis on safety and permanency. There is little or no value put on whether a young person in custody needs braces, as this is usually a cosmetic procedure that parents would normally pay for. The youth and alumni of FFCA felt very strongly about this issue and believe that braces should be covered under Medicaid or by OCS. FFCA members discussed how braces could support higher self-esteem for a young person in foster care, and would give them one less thing to worry about besides the social pressures they face as a, "foster youth." FFCA is also aware that braces are covered under Medicaid in the state of Texas, so this could be an option for Alaska.

Decreased use of Psychotropic Medication for Alaska's foster youth

Many of Alaska's youth and alumni complain about being prescribed psychotropic medications after entering the foster care system for symptoms of depression, anxiety, trauma, attachment issues, and misbehavior. The youth and alumni of FFCA feel that these are all normal symptoms of child maltreatment and dealing with all that comes out of being placed in foster care. There has been a national focus on the use of psychotropic medications being over-prescribed for children and youth in foster care. FFCA members have also complained about side-effects caused by these medications resulting in a decreased ability to focus on their education as well as function in everyday society. The youth and alumni of FFCA would like to see that the prescription of psychotropic medications for Alaska's foster children and youth is decreased and reviewed more closely.

Definitions (according to FFCA)

Youth- A young person currently in state custody (foster care).

Alumni- A person who has spent any period of time in the foster care system

Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA)

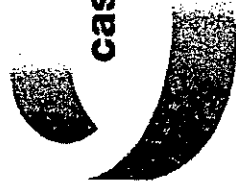
Mission Statement: Our mission is to improve the foster care system through sharing our experiences, supporting and educating youth and social services and implementing positive change in society as a whole.

FFCA is Alaska's only foster care advocacy organization completely run by youth and alumni of the foster care system. Since their inception in 2003, FFCA has been working to improve Alaska's foster care system by sharing their experiences with people who can create positive changes for Alaska's foster youth. FFCA is a statewide organization that provides support to Alaska's foster youth and alumni and, gives them the ability to share their voice and become leaders in their community.

Acknowledgements

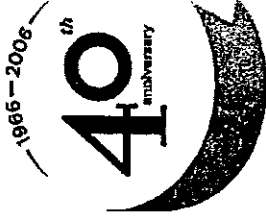
This document was drafted using the feedback from the youth and alumni of Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA). Statistics and information provided by Casey Family Programs and the Office of Children's Services as well as, various other child welfare resources. For questions regarding the content of this policy agenda contact: Amanda Metivier *FFCA President* Ametivier@casey.org

SB 105
AB 126



casey family programs

fostering families. fostering change.®



Outcomes of Youth in Foster Care and Alumni: How to Maximize Success

Alaska State Legislator Briefing
March 20, 2009

Presenters:
Amanda Metivier and Peter Pecora with a panel of foster care alumni consultants

Presentation Overview

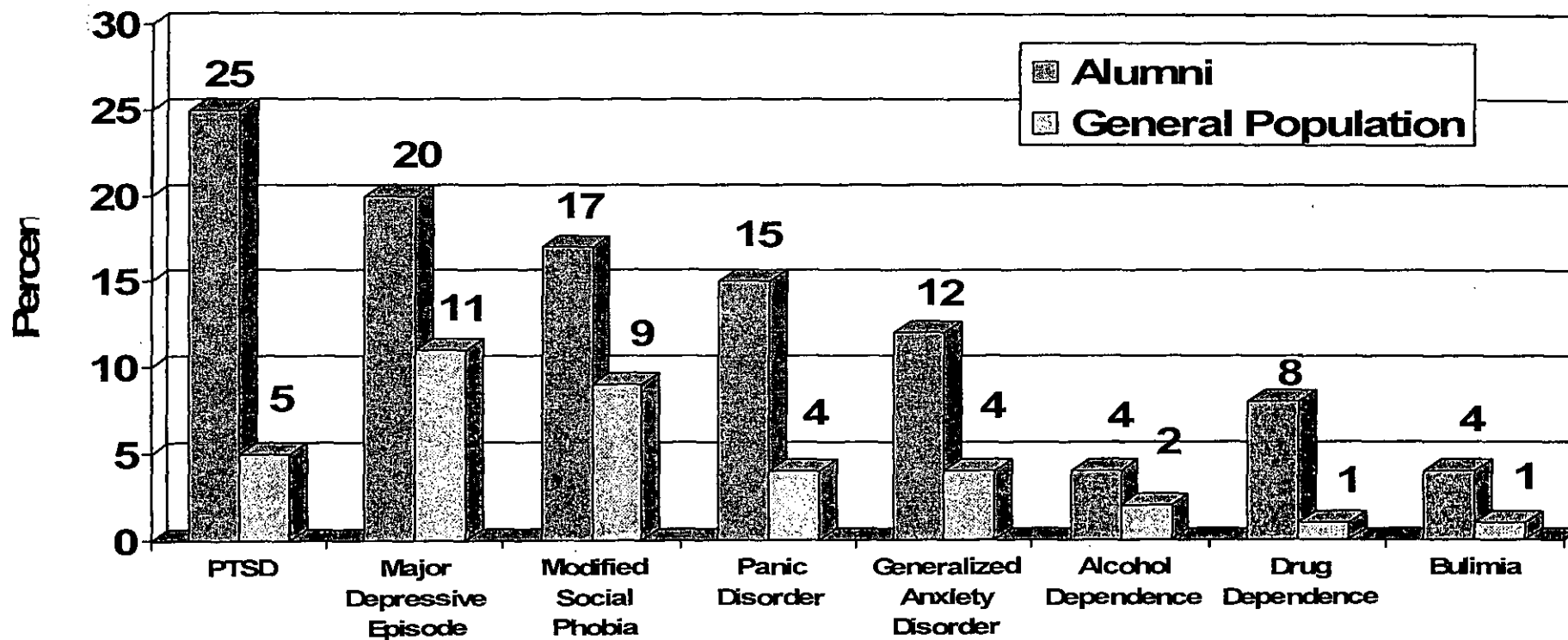
Outcome data are interspersed with foster care alumni panel comments and recommendations for:

- Mental Health
- Education
- Employment



Mental Health (NW Study)

Twelve-Month Mental Health Diagnoses Among Foster Care Alumni and the General Population Matched by Age, Race and Gender



Mental Health Diagnosis

Source: Pecora, P. J., Kessler, R. C., Williams, J., Downs, A. C., English, D., & White, J. & O'Brien, K. (Forthcoming). *What works in foster care?* Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Midwest Study Diagnoses: Last 12 Months (Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin)

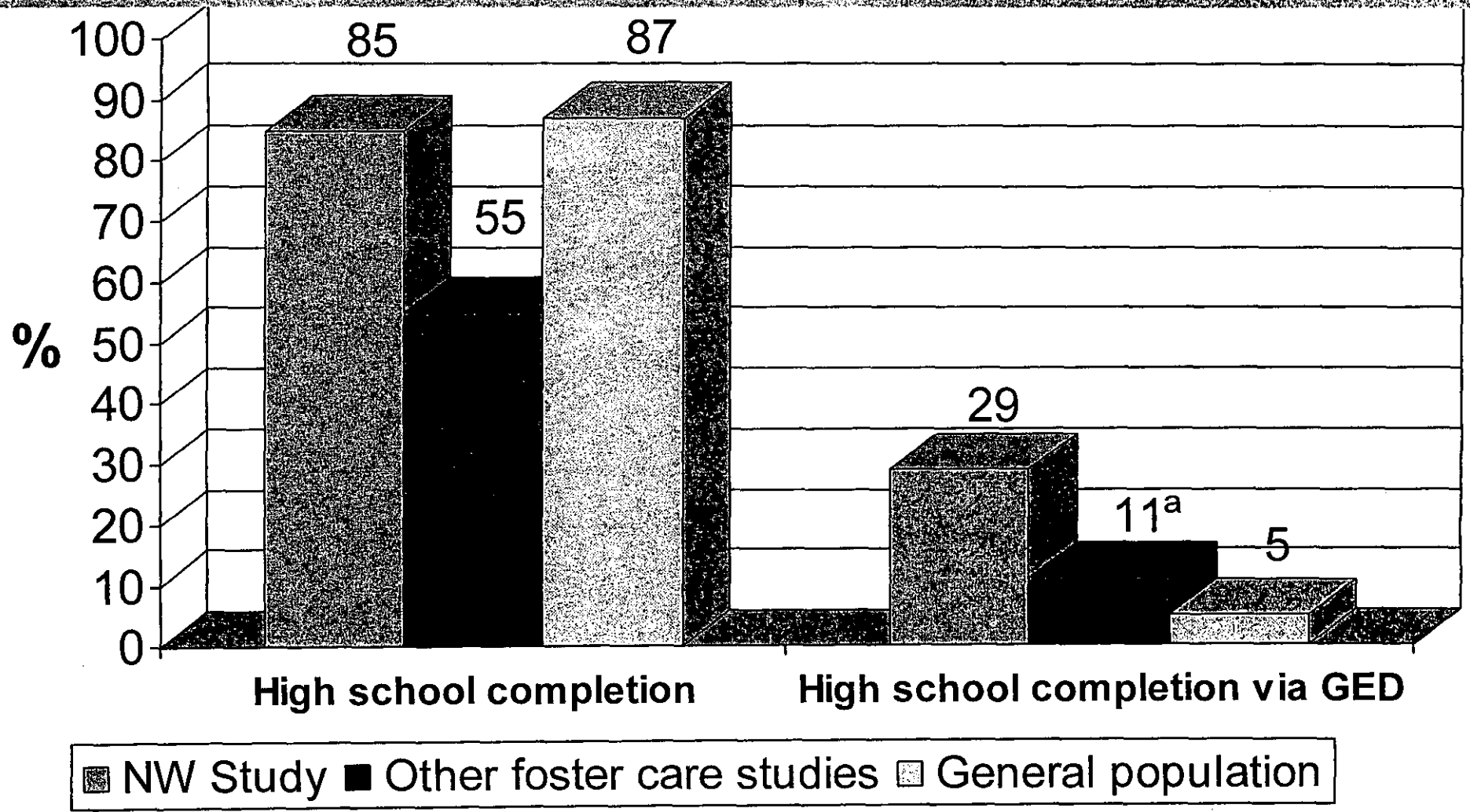
	Females	Males
At least one CIDI DSM-IV diagnosis	14.2 ^b	4.6 ^b
Alcohol dependence	3.5	11.6
Drug abuse	1.9	5.8
Drug dependence	1.0	5.1
Generalized anxiety disorder	0	0
PTSD	7.9 ^d	3.8 ^d

^a Source: Courtney et al. (2007, p. 46).

Alaska Study Mental Health Findings

- Five times as many alumni scored in a clinical range on the SF-12 scale as the general population (10.3 versus 2.3%)
- 1 in 4 of the alumni had used a hotline, support group, counselor or overnight stay for substance abuse or mental health services in the last year.

Education Outcomes

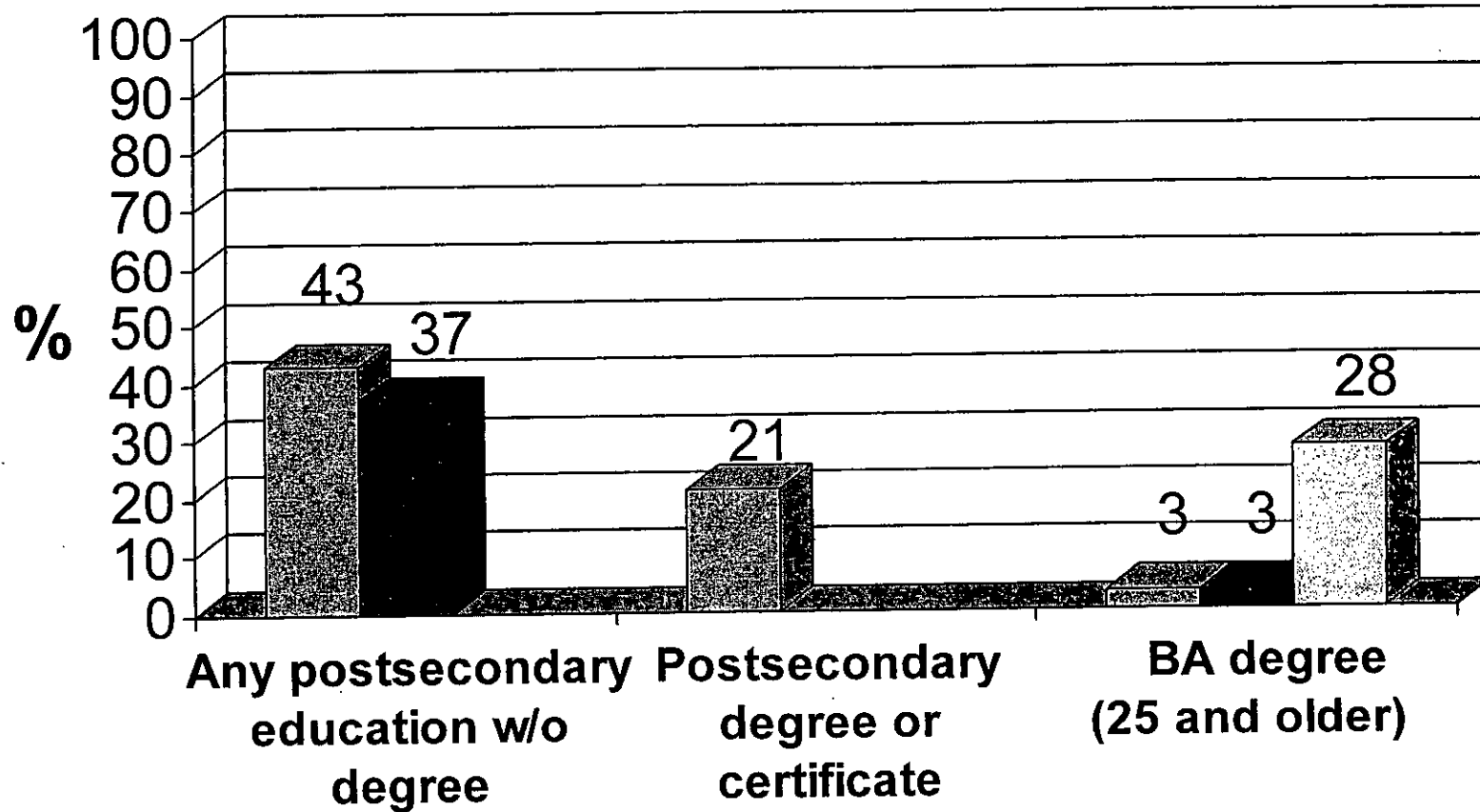


^a (Mech 2003)

Alaska Education Findings

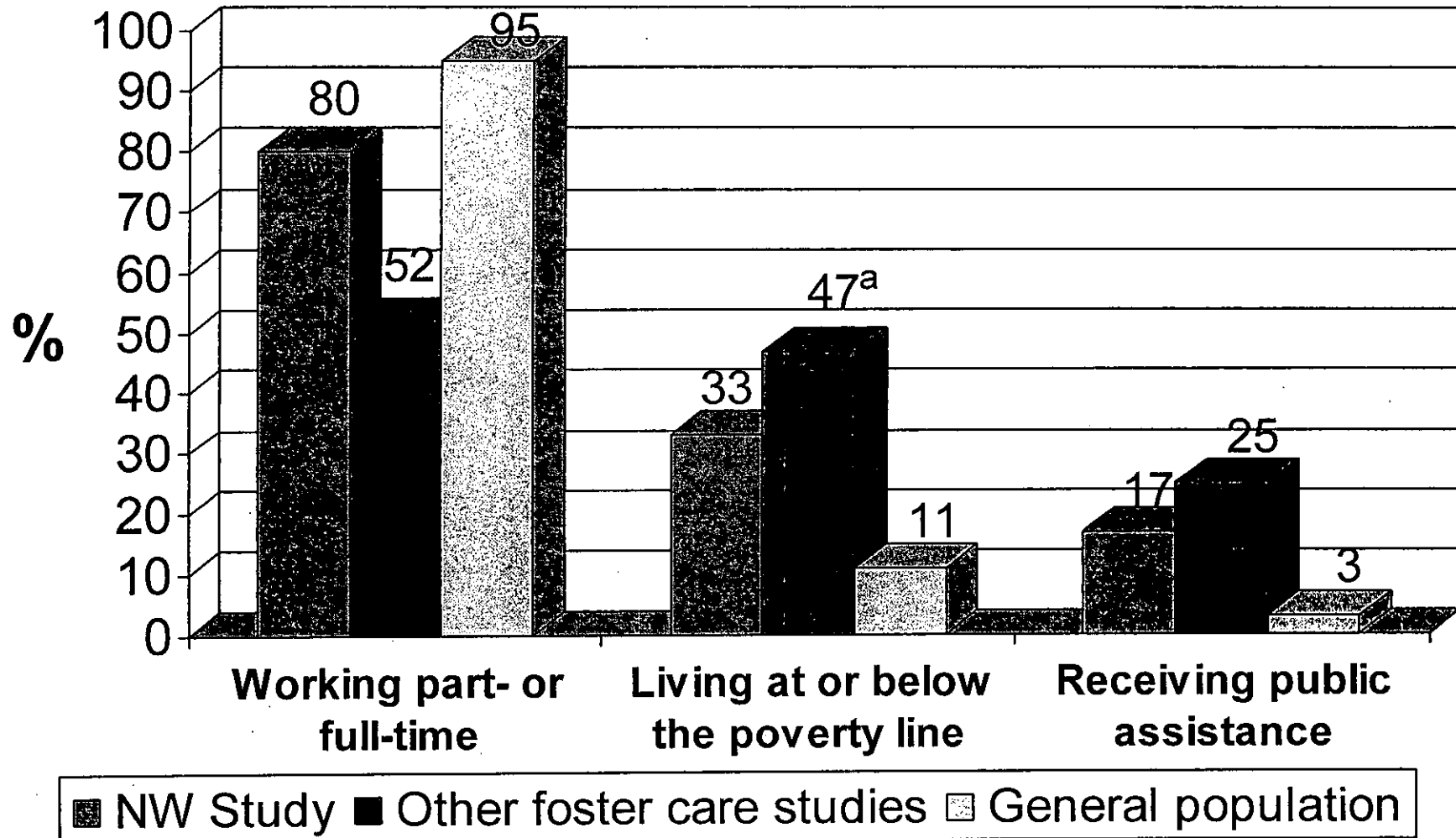
- **In the Alaska study nearly 79% had completed high school by the time of the interview:**
 - **63.6% with a diploma**
 - **15.2% had a GED**

Outcomes: *Education cont...*



Northwest Alumni
 Other foster care studies
 General Population

Outcomes: *Employment and Finance*



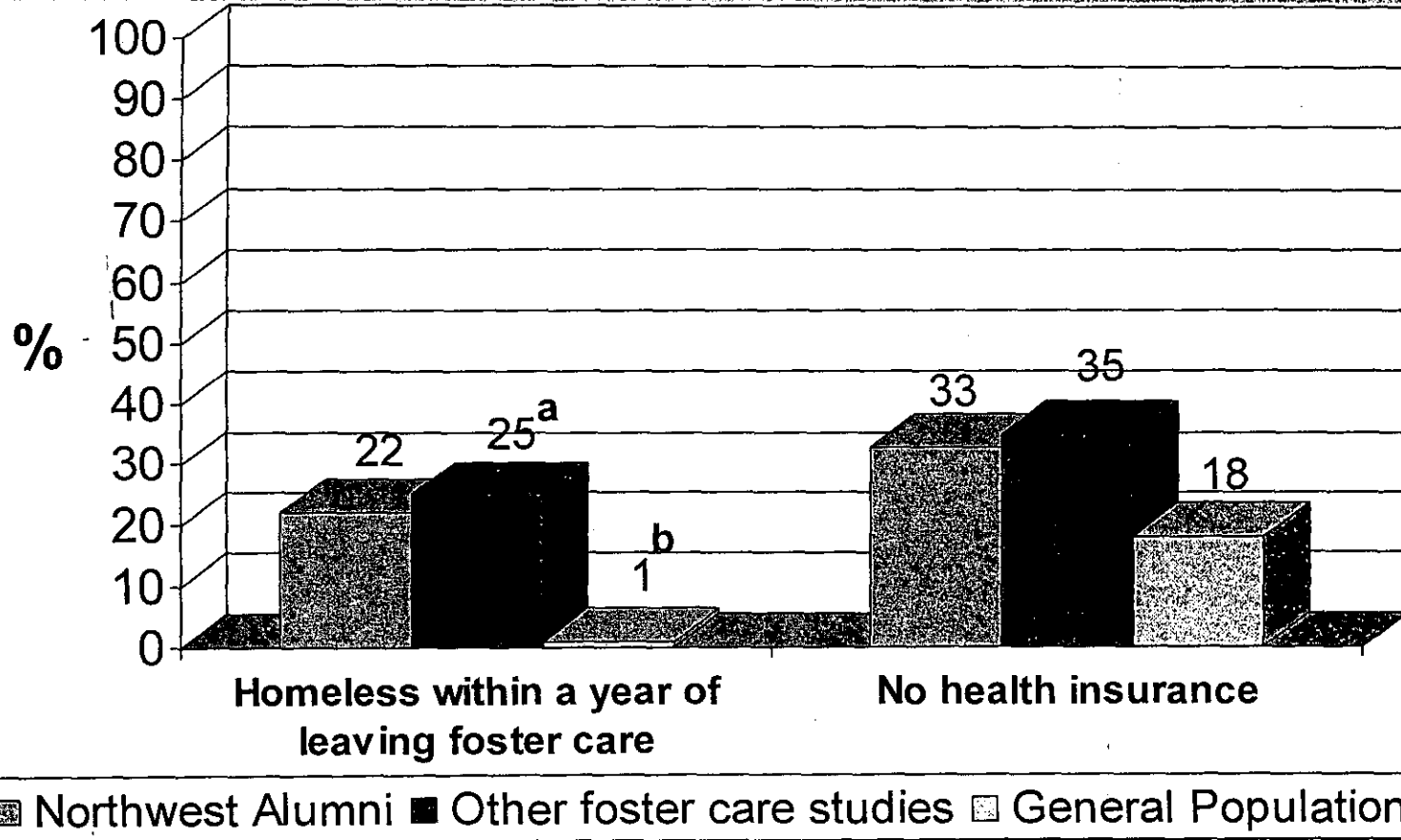
^a (Brandford & English 2004, Washington State data)

Alaska Alumni Employment

- **Alumni unemployment rate: 29.6%**
- **General population: 7.1%**

How can more alumni obtain living wage jobs with health care benefits?

NW Alumni Homelessness and Health Insurance



^aHomeless at any point since leaving foster care. ^bHomeless at any point in past year.

Outcomes: *The Glass IS half-full!*

- ***Mental Health***

- 45.6% Have **no** 12-month mental health diagnosis

- ***Education***

- 85% Completed high school

- ***Employment/Finance***

- 21.3% Have household income at least three times the poverty level
- 83.2% Do not currently receive cash public assistance
- 74.0% Are working now or in school
- 63.6% Have volunteered in their communities or church

Predictors of Success:

What helps?

- 1. Stabilize a child's placement experience to build life-long connections with supportive adults and peers.**
 - 2. Increase youth access to high quality therapeutic services & support.**
 - 3. Targeted educational services.**
 - 4. Extracurricular experiences.**
 - 5. Life skills development and work experience.**
-

Appendix A: Recommendations

Mental Health

Increase youth and alumni access

to evidence-based mental health treatment:

- Provide health insurance coverage through Medicaid,
- Increase availability of group work & evidence-based treatment approaches (e.g., trauma-focused cognitive therapy).

Minimize placement change:

- Via better child-family matching & more responsive services.
- Association between fewer changes and fewer mental health problems.

Increase education services and experiences:

- Stability and support in the school environment can cause a positive effect on adult mental health

Recommendations: *Education*

- Set high but realistic expectations for youth in care to complete high school via a diploma if at all possible.
 - Help young adults enroll in local college-preparatory programs.
(E.g., GEAR-UP, TRIO, and Upward Bound)
 - Ensure staff and youth are aware of good vocational options that pay well.
-

Recommendations:

Employment & Finances

Strengthen housing programs:

- To prevent homelessness.
- Increase supervised transitional housing.

Overhaul independent living preparation:

- Evidence shows that alumni vary widely in their level of readiness for emancipation.

Provide youth in transition with concrete resources:

- Begin life skills training at an earlier age.
 - Involve youth in real-life work, housing and other situations.
-

Acknowledgements

This presentation is based on research conducted by:

- Casey Family Programs
- Harvard Medical School
- The Universities of Washington and Michigan
- Oregon Department of Human Services
- Washington Department of Health and Human Services
- The Northwest Alumni Studies team is grateful to and has learned much from the youth, alumni, parents and field staff including:
 - **Project Coordinator:** Kirk O'Brien: kobrien@casey.org
 - **Co-Principal Investigators:** Ronald Kessler, Diana English, James White, Chris Downs

Additional Information

Casey Family Programs: www.casey.org

Search "Northwest Alumni Study"

Contact Information:

Casey Family Programs
1300 Dexter Avenue North, Floor 3
Seattle, Washington 98109-3547

Phone: (206) 270.4936.

Website: www.casey.org

Peter Pecora: ppecora@casey.org

Presenters

Amanda Metivier is an alumni of foster care and, the president of *Facing Foster Care in Alaska* (FFCA). Amanda is currently pursuing her BSW at University of Alaska at Anchorage, and works for Casey Family Programs.

Peter Pecora is the Principal Investigator for the Northwest and National Alumni studies, Senior Director of Research Services with Casey Family Programs, and Professor at the School of Social Work, University of Washington.

*Frank Amarduri
Hansel D.
4766*

Lynda Zaugg

From: Katie Conway
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2009 8:08 AM
To: Lynda Zaugg
Subject: FW: Foster care hearing

What do you think of doing a press release or formal, building wide invitation for Friday's foster care event?

Katie Conway
Staff to Representative Les Gara
State Capitol Room 500, Juneau, Alaska 99801
Phone: (907) 465-6591
Fax: (907) 465-3518

From: Rep. Les Gara
Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2009 6:04 PM
To: Katie Conway
Subject: Foster care hearing

Can you encourage Bettye's office to do a press release, or at least send a notice to all legislators to invite them?

Tx. What day is it?

Representative Les Gara
Alaska State Legislature
716 W. 4th Avenue, Suite 310
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
Phone: 907-269-0106
Fax: 907-269-0109
www.akdemocrats.org

FOSTER CARE SUMMIT MEETS IN JUNEAU FRIDAY **'Today's obstacles to success; tomorrow's solutions**

JUNEAU – Sen. Bettye Davis and Rep. Les Gara (both D-Juneau) will host a foster care summit on Friday from 1:15 to 3:15 p.m. in the Senate Health and Social Services Committee room at the State Capitol. The forum will address the state of foster care in Alaska and identify challenges and solutions.

Presenters will include Amanda Metivier, president of Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA); Peter Pecora from Casey Family Programs and representatives from the Anchorage School District the US and Alaska Departments of Health and Human Services and a panel of youth and Alumni from FFCA.

Sen. Davis, who chairs the H&SS Committee, has worked hard to bring this summit to fruition. "This is an important issue in Alaska, and we're trying to inform the public and to get people working together for solutions to the challenges facing these young people. I encourage everyone to attend this summit and help us make Alaska a better place for everybody."

When 38 percent of Alaskans coming out of foster care become homeless, and less than 10 percent end up making it through college, that's a call for action," said Gara who grew up in foster care. "There's a lot we can do to create opportunity for foster youth, and the purpose of the conference is to brainstorm together to find meaningful solutions – now rather than later."

38 percent of foster children go homeless after leaving state custody. Less than 10 percent make it through college. Children bounce between schools as they bounce between families. Policymakers are looking for solutions.

A copy of the agenda is attached for your convenience.

For more information about the summit or foster care please contact Sen. Davis or Rep. Gara.

Sen. Bettye Davis: sen.bettye_davis@legis.state.ak.us , (907) 465-3822

Rep. Les Gara: rep.les_gara@legis.state.ak.us , (907) 465-2647

HB 126: FOSTER CARE/CINA/EDUCATION OF HOMELESS

SPONSOR(S): Representative(s) GARA, Crawford, Kerttula

CURRENT STATUS: (H) HSS

FISCAL NOTE:

- 1) Zero – ACPE
- 2) FY10: 204.2 – OCS
- 3) FY10: 725., FY11 – FY15: 445.2 – OCS
- 4) FY10: 1,971.4, FY11 – 15: 953.9 – OCS

BILL HISTORY/ACTION:

(H) EDC 2DP: Gardner, Buch; 2NR: Seaton, Keller

BILL SUMMARY: Continuing the secondary public education of a homeless student; relating to the purpose of certain laws as they relate to children; relating to tuition waivers, loans, and medical assistance for a child placed in out-of-home care by the state; relating to foster care; relating to children in need of aid; relating to foster care transition to independent living; and relating to juvenile programs and institutions."

ISSUES (pros & cons):

TALKING POINTS (if any):

COMMITTEE/DATE: 3/11/2009

Roll: Seaton, Gardner, Buch, Keller
Action: Moved
Next Referral: HSS
Amendments: none
Change in CS: none

Amendments/Changes:

Committee Discussion/Action:

No discussion. Only moved the bill.

Testimony Summary:

No testimony today.

COMMITTEE/DATE: 3/9/2009

Roll: Seaton, Gardner, Buch, Munoz, Keller, Edgmon
Action: Heard and held
Next Referral: HSS
Amendments: 4 adopted
Change in CS:

Amendments/Changes:

- 1) Adds two provisions to say non-state entities are not required to participate in this program if they do not receive the funds for it.

CONFIDENTIAL – FOR INTERNAL CAUCUS USE ONLY – DO NOT DISTRIBUTE

- 2) First two parts make it clear that we are adopting McKinney Vento concept. Clarifying language. Part 3 adopts McKinney Vento, but if federal law changes, we don't have to until we know what it is and if it is beneficial. Part 4 clarifying language on who is covered.
 - a. Amendment to Amendment – Deletes page 3 through 4 that increases foster youth age to 21.
- 3) Deletes "and for providing comparable education" from page 1, line 11.
- 4) Deletes "adequate" from page 3, line 31.

Committee Discussion/Action:

Testimony Summary:

Theresa Lombardo, Director of the Casey Family Program, supports bill.

Barb Dexter, Anchorage School District Child District Transition, supports the bill. When you allow a child to stay in their school, they do not have that few months of falling behind when transitioning to another school.

COMMITTEE/DATE: 3/2/2009

Roll: Seaton, Gardner, Buch, Wilson, Munoz, Keller, Edgmon

Action: Heard and held

Next Referral: HSS

Amendments: none

Change in CS: none

Amendments/Changes: none

Committee Discussion/Action:

Rep Seaton only opened up public testimony.

Testimony Summary:

Lauren Rice, Director of Advocacy for Covenant House Alaska, testified in support of HB 126. Most foster youth show up at Covenant House with absolutely nothing. They do not have the resources or skills to make the transition into adulthood. We know more today what foster youth need. This data comes back from foster youth. This bill increases the likelihood of their success.

Carol Comeau, Superintendent for Anchorage School District, Supports this bill. Over 2000 students who have been identified in the Anchorage School District. Concerned about it being defined as one school year instead of every year. Concerned about the "academic exception" exemption clause. Needs more definition.

COMMITTEE/DATE: 2/25/2009

Roll: Seaton, Gardner, Buch, Wilson, Munoz, Keller, Edgmon

Action: Heard and held

Next Referral: HSS

Amendments: none

Change in CS:

- 1) Sections 4, 14, & 16: Adopt statutory definition of 'out of home' care
- 2) Section 10: Provide immunity for social worker if they fail to complete their monthly visit to the foster youth

- 3) Section 13: revised conforming language to allow the age of foster youth to be extended up to 21 year olds.
- 4) Section 17: Provides transitional housing of up to a year for when foster youth come out of foster care.

Amendments/Changes:

Committee Discussion/Action:

Rep. Gardner stated that in section 1, it states that the student may change schools if it is in their best academic interest. Sometimes, it is in a child's best overall interest to be moved. There are more reasons than academic.

Testimony Summary:

Rep. Gara presented the bill. After coming out of foster care, most foster kids end up homeless at one point in their life. When we move them from school to school to school, studies show that the foster youth will do poorly academically. 65% have been in 3 or more elementary schools. These happen during the middle of the school year. This bill helps foster youth to stay in the same school if they move. It provides transportation funding for them if they end up staying in the same school if they move homes.

Lynda Zaugg

From: Katie Conway
Sent: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 8:04 PM
To: 'Henderson, John (ACF)'; 'Theresa Tanoury'; 'Amanda Metivier'; 'Sandoval, Tammy K (HSS)'; 'Lesmann, Mike (HSS)'; 'PPecora@casey.org'; 'Dexter_Barb@asdk12.org'; 'Snyder_Beth@asdk12.org'
Cc: 'Laughlin, Wilda J (HSS)'; Lynda Zaugg; David Theriault
Subject: RE: repeat, trimmed down foster care conference in Juneau, March 20th?

Hi folks,

We have a date and a time for the mini-foster care conference! The event will be **March 20th from 1:15 to 3:15PM** in the Senate HSS committee. It was difficult securing a two hour block of time for this event so it is absolutely critical that we stay within the assigned time and not use more than we have. That being said, I think it's time we set an agenda! Below is a list of presenters and topics we can use as a starting point for that agenda. This list is in no particular order, and the topics are not set in stone. I'm eager to hear your thoughts.

1. John Henderson: Face to face visits and the Federal review
2. Peter Pecora: homelessness study, and available federal funding for care up to age 21
3. Barb/Beth: McKinney Vento in ASD and whether there is still a need for supplemental state funding
4. Amanda Metivier/FFCA: Reasons behind the FFCA policy agenda items this year
5. OCS: Federal Review, role of OCS in transition from foster care (ILP programs), Tammy's discretion.

Thank you!
 Katie

Katie Conway
 Staff to Representative Les Gara
 State Capitol Room 500, Juneau, Alaska 99801
 Phone: (907) 465-6591
 Fax: (907) 465-3518

From: Katie Conway
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2009 11:25 AM
To: Henderson, John (ACF); Theresa Tanoury; Amanda Metivier; Sandoval, Tammy K (HSS); Lesmann, Mike (HSS); PPecora@casey.org; Dexter_Barb@asdk12.org; Snyder_Beth@asdk12.org
Cc: Laughlin, Wilda J (HSS); David Theriault
Subject: RE: repeat, trimmed down foster care conference in Juneau, March 13th?

Hi again everyone,

As the 13th wasn't available for everyone I'm now checking to see if March 20th works instead.

Thanks!

Katie Conway
 Staff to Representative Les Gara
 State Capitol Room 500, Juneau, AK 99801
 Phone: (907) 465-6591
 Fax: (907) 465-3518

From: Henderson, John (ACF) [mailto:john.henderson@acf.hhs.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 19, 2009 11:58 AM

To: Katie Conway; Theresa Tanoury; Amanda Metivier; Sandoval, Tammy K (HSS); Lesmann, Mike (HSS); P Pecora@casey.org; Dexter_Barb@asdk12.org; Snyder_Beth@asdk12.org
Cc: Laughlin, Wilda J (HSS); David Theriault
Subject: RE: repeat, trimmed down foster care conference in Juneau, March 13th?

Katie, Thank you for the invitation and I'd be pleased to participate at least by phone if that would suffice but I'll need to take a closer look at our travel budget to see if I could manage a trip up to Juneau in person.

John Henderson
Child Welfare Regional Program Manager
DHHS/ACF Region X
2201 Sixth Ave., Suite 300, MS 73
Seattle, Washington 98121-1827
ph: 206-615-2482
fx: 206-615-2575

From: Katie Conway [mailto:Katie_Conway@legis.state.ak.us]
Sent: Thursday, February 19, 2009 11:58 AM
To: Theresa Tanoury; Henderson, John (ACF); Amanda Metivier; Sandoval, Tammy K (HSS); Lesmann, Mike (HSS); P Pecora@casey.org; Dexter_Barb@asdk12.org; Snyder_Beth@asdk12.org
Cc: Laughlin, Wilda J (HSS); David Theriault
Subject: repeat, trimmed down foster care conference in Juneau, March 13th?

Hi folks,

Last week Representative Gara and Senator Bettye Davis filed comprehensive Foster Care bills relating to education funding, transitional housing, and extending care. This bill is largely the result of the absolutely stellar Foster Care summit this fall in which you were all key contributors. Thank you again! Les and Sen. Davis, co-chair of the Senate Health and Social Services Committee, are now speaking about the possibility of having another Foster Care conference in Juneau during this session. During their brief, preliminary conversation they selected March 13th as a possible date, and the venue would likely be the Senate HSS committee. The idea would be to have similar presentations as during our fall day-long summit but in just two hours. We're hoping you would all be interested and able to participate. The intention with this email is to feel you all out for the possibility of putting this together. Ideally we'd have John Henderson, Peter Pecora, OCS, and FFCA speaking in Juneau, and Barb and Beth by phone from Anchorage (unless you think you could make it here), for a total of five short presentations and a brief intro/conclusion from Rep. Gara and Sen. Davis. What are your thoughts?

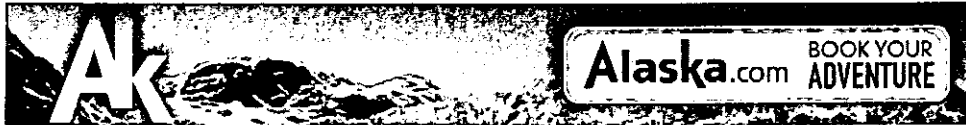
Thank you!
Katie

Katie Conway
Staff to Representative Les Gara
State Capitol Room 500, Juneau, AK 99801
Phone: (907) 465-6591
Fax: (907) 465-3518

register | create a profile | log in | e-mail news | help

ALASKA'S NEWSPAPER

alaska.com



Anchorage Daily News



Wildlife galleries
Collection of photos and video of wildlife roaming Alaska.
[video | reader sightings](#)



17° 24° | 15°
forecast | statewide
Daylight : 8:19 AM - 6:09 PM



Subscribe | manage subscription | E-Edition

adn.com Web search powered by YAHOO! SEARCH

find »

Last Update: 11:42 AM

News Sports Outdoors Features Money Entertainment Opinion Blogs Multimedia Classifieds

Home | Alaska Newsreader | Obituaries | Archives TV Listings | Movies | Music | Restaurants | Submit Event Deals Jobs Homes Cars Rentals

State called to do a better job with its kids in foster care

COMPASS: Other points of view

By REP. LES GARA and AMANDA METIVIER
Published: February 22nd, 2009 06:48 PM
Last Modified: February 22nd, 2009 06:49 PM

It's time for reform in Alaska's foster care system. Just doing the same as last year isn't working. The State of Alaska is custodian to 2,000 foster youth. We're supposed to create hope and opportunity. Instead 40 percent of Alaska's foster youth end up homeless at some point in adulthood.

More Compass stories »

- State called to do a better job with its kids in foster care
- GOP backs stimulus plan but not Democrats' version
- New recovery package is good for Alaska and America
- Abundance-based fish, game management can benefit all
- It's easy to miss what's in plain sight

Statistics paint a picture of blocked opportunity. Foster youth are more likely than their peers to end up in jail at a taxpayer cost of \$40,000 a year. The smarter option is University of Alaska job training and college courses at \$15,000 a year. Our children should benefit from federally mandated, monthly face-to-face meetings with social work staff who are trained in helping youth succeed. A recent federal review of Alaska foster care says many of our youth get this support once every eight months, not monthly. That's thanks in part to chronic staff turnover, poor pay and crushing workloads at the Office of Children's Services.

It's time for new ideas that will work. That's why we, and Sen. Bettye Davis (D-Anchorage), are pushing House Bill 126 and Senate Bill 105. The bills are products of last fall's Foster Care Summit and information from experts who've advised us about reforms being pushed in other

Story tools

- Comments (9)
- Recommend (0)
- E-mail a friend
- Print
- Share on Facebook
- Digg this
- Seed Newsvine
- Send link via AIM
- MY YAHOO!
- Yahoo! Buzz
- Font size : A | A | A

states.

So, what can we do?

- **Stop bouncing foster youth between schools:** In Alaska we bounce foster youth between schools, as they bounce between homes, too often. Moving children between schools during the school year is a proven indicator that a child will underachieve. With each disruptive mid-semester change a child can fall behind in school by another four to six months.

Federal law provides partial funding to keep youth in the same school. The state needs to act so all children can, where it makes sense, stay in their school.

- **College and job training:** Alaska provides minimal support for those who'd seek success through a degree or job training at the University of Alaska. The university and state provide a small number of tuition-only scholarships to foster youth. Beyond that, foster youth face a problem all Alaskans face -- the second-stingiest financial aid system in the nation.

Foster youth have an additional problem. Most children can call their parents when they need a place to stay or when they need support. Foster youth don't have that lifeline. We should make sure all foster youth know that if they want to go to college or get job training, we will help them with tuition, fees and a place to live. Alaska's second-worst in the nation college aid plan needs to be fixed for all youth.

Sell It today | Place an ad | Find an ad

IN A CRUNCH?

Calworthington Body Shop

CLICK HERE!

334-6651

Top Jobs all 68 top jobs

- Health Care Services
- Speech Language Pathologist (Outpatient) Providence Health and Services Alaska
- Internet Specialist
- Internet Specialist The Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
- Health Care Services
- Pharmacist Kodiak Area Native Association
- Health Care Services
- RN Staff - CVIU Providence Health and Services Alaska
- Management/Professional
- Leadership Opportunities Southcentral Foundation

Advanced search » | Place an employment ad

Homes By Prudential more

20385 Tulwar Drive

- \$509,000, 3BR, 3.5BA, 3-car garage, 1196sf living space, 138,563sf lot.

3 of 9

HomeFinder

find

Search ADN Real Estate | Place a homes ad
Realtor Market Place | Homebook

Top Rentals more

Continental Apartments

ADVERTISEMENT

Kathy J. Fernandez
AND TEAM

\$239,900 - HOME WARRANTY
0943 O'Brien Street #10 D, 3 Bedrooms, 2 Bathroom, 1,404 +/- SF Home w/ Fully Fenced Backyard, 2-car Garage, End Unit in Small 12-Unit Project, Very Open Floor plan Upstairs, Vaulted Ceilings, Spacious, Open Kitchen w/ Island and Gas Range, Refrigerator, Washer, and Dryer Stay, Gas Fireplace, Master Bedroom Downstairs w/ Private Bath and Large WIC, Upstairs Bedrooms w/ Spacious Closets
Yahoo # PRU 073M MLS # 09-1518

CLICK HERE
907-441-9000
kathyj@alaska.net

Prudential
Join Where You're Real Estate

• **Homelessness:** Today the state provides minimal funding for youth coming out of care. They get a month's rent, and then a half month's rent for two months. If you're 18 and have no parent or caring adult to call for support, you need a hand getting on your feet. That's just a fact of life.

We should let foster youth know we'll help with basic housing their first year coming out of care if they need it. And we should offer a steadier hand, with mentoring, to steer them toward the success they want. Parents do this for most children. Foster youth don't have this "luxury."

And, though we have a chronic shortage of foster parents, we should allow foster youth, if they have a good foster home, to stay until age 21 if they feel they need the support. Ending foster care and health coverage at age 19 and then putting youth out on the street with no parental support just isn't working.

The governor says "we have to live within our means." We agree. But we disagree if that means the solution for every aspect of state policy is to do what we did last year. Not when real solutions are cost-effective and cheaper than less important projects that always find their way into Alaska's \$7 billion budget.

Things need to change. Keeping them the same costs too much, both financially and to our moral standing.

Rep. Les Gara is an Anchorage Democrat, and grew up in foster care. He can be reached at Rep.les.gara@legis.state.ak.us. Amanda Metivier lived in foster care, is coordinator of Facing Foster Care Alaska and recently earned her Social Work degree from UAA.

Penn Foster College
- Official
Earn an Associate
Degree at home in
today's fastest growing
pennfostercollege

**Anchorage Luxury
Auto Rental**
Anchorage Luxury Auto
Rental Deals. Cheap
Prices With No Booking
Sidestep.com

**Anchorage Luxury
Auto Rental**
Anchorage Luxury Auto
Rental Deals. Book
Direct Without Fees.
Kaysk.com

Ads by Yahoo!

Comments

UPDATE ON COMMENTS POLICY: Read before posting | Edit your profile and avatar »

By submitting your comment, you are agreeing to adn.com's user agreement.

You must be logged in to leave a comment. [Login](#) | [Register](#)

POWERED BY PLUCK

Comments: 9

Showing: Newest first



Alaskamom5boys wrote on 02/23/2009 11:48:57 AM:

treewatchin

You seem to leave out the details on how your kid ended up in foster care in the first place? There must be a reason why they wouldn't allow you to have your own child. And behavior issues don't just magically appear out of no where, they stem from many years of child's life. Just thinking your comment is leaving out a lot of details.

Anyways, I totally agree with this article. Foster parents aren't given enough support, and I don't necessarily mean financial support. Social Workers don't keep tabs on these kids enough, and it has been said over and over again these workers are over worked and under paid.

But excuses aren't going to do anything for these kids now are they. Something needs to be done to give these children a chance at success.

My husband and I have talked about becoming foster parents, but to tell you the truth it scares us. Not necessarily because of the kids(maybe a little), but mostly because of the system that seems pretty messed up.

Recommend (0) Report abuse

Midtown: Our property features lush landscaping in a quiet, peaceful environment.

12 of 13



[Advanced Search](#) | [Place a rentals ad](#)

Top Autos all autos

Affordable Used Cars - Anchorage



2007 Chevrolet TrailBlazer
\$14,994
Affordable Used Cars -
Anchorage

7 of 10

Powered by cars.com

[Search for a New or Used Car](#) | [Place an auto ad](#)

Featured Advertisers all



Alaska Native Arts Foundation
A fine arts gallery featuring traditional and contemporary Alaska Native artwork.



Charter College
Charter College offers Degree and Certificate courses, providing technical skills in Health / Medical, Business / Management and Technology.



Alaska Center for Pediatrics
We specialize in Childrens Immunizations/Vaccines, Asthma, ADHD, and Physicals.

Best Deals more deals »

Pets
Find puppies, kittens, and all pet supplies and services here. More...



Other Transportation
Find great deals on bicycles, snowmachines, ATV's, watercraft and airplanes. More...



Merchandise, Miscellaneous
Antiques, apparel, even the kitchen sink. Find deals on general merchandise here. More...



More great deals »

[Advanced Search](#) | [Place an ad](#) | [Social Sections](#)



treewatchin wrote on 02/23/2009 09:32:34 AM:

I also think the foster care system is totally twisted. My kid was in foster care with a 70 something year old man alone. Then when I tried to get her back from North Star Hospital because this old man warped her mind and gave her behavior issues they didn't release her to me her biological mom who has a job and a place to live and everything that the state required they released her to some girl that had just moved out of her parents house and just turned 21. That in my opinion has no idea about how to raise a kid that has behavior problems and requires counseling. It just goes to show how hard at work our tax dollars are. So yea i guess you could say I hate OCS and their pea brained ways. I think this to them is just a high paying job and not "all about the kids" thing.

Recommend (3) Report abuse



toklat2 wrote on 02/23/2009 06:44:56 AM:

Read this story..this representative on this issue spelled out the wrongs of the present foster care system..It was hard to believe that these wrongs were still in place..they cannot contact by phone their biological parent or parents?.disgraceful.. as well as the other wrong issues this very well written story gave. Good grief Charlie Brown..no state or system that has this it..should ever give the false pat on the back..we are doing such a good job for the children or their parents.. that is so much spin..

Recommend (2) Report abuse



toklat2 wrote on 02/23/2009 06:29:41 AM:

In all due respect to Social Service workers..are they understaffed ..are they simply not paid as well as their work should require..do they actually understand well the very at times complex and the truth about each issue they try to help with? The each issue with the particular person..one can see ..the one size does not fit all. situations. Question also with the majority of people working long hours plus every adult in the family the full time job situations..where would one get a knowledge able person..In the foster home situations. Does the money given to foster care providers in todays economic situations .. is it adequate to cover the the necessary costs of providing for the foster care children?

Recommend (1) Report abuse



fsmith wrote on 02/23/2009 06:15:01 AM:

I worked for DFYS (named changed to OCS) through the end of Cowper's, all of Hickel's and most of the Knowles' administrations. What I saw generally, though not always, were flaky supervisors, incompetent managers spending more time junketing than managing, and workers who did their jobs and found themselves overwhelmed, or who ignored their jobs without consequences. Most of the losers were delusional, convinced they were doing terrific work. When Hickel took over in many agencies, he replaced competent managers with scam artists and sycophants, from the two Lloyds and Frank Prewitt in Corrections to Mike Price and his sorry crew in DFYS.

Many of the best workers, unable to stomach the dysfunction, became whistleblowers. I never saw a single whistleblower protected. Left to endure chronic abuse, sometimes for years, they were isolated and even unlawfully fired. The system wouldn't and couldn't protect vulnerable kids. I can't imagine Palin's nepotism improving things.

Recommend (6) Report abuse



nickolas wrote on 02/22/2009 11:49:05 PM:

get arid of the federal incentive system to steal children for money and you will see a lot less foster care,,oh wait then the state wouldn't get the federal funding..ahhh dam...we have come full turn and are now living the depression era of DFYS where stealing kids and putting them in institutions was very profitable,,to bad to many people never revue history and its plagues.

Recommend (1) Report abuse



cat_train2 wrote on 02/22/2009 10:00:54 PM:

Just out of curiosity, since it seems to be all about equality these days, how about providing equivalent benefits for non-foster children?

Recommend (2) Report abuse



Istrm wrote on 02/22/2009 07:55:40 PM:

I agree with all of these recommendations. I hope the legislation passes.

Recommend (1) Report abuse



EskimoEvie wrote on 02/22/2009 07:14:09 PM:

Yeah Amanda! Proud to say I knew you as a teen & young adult... and that you are now making a difference for a lot who will follow your foot-steps. Never take NO for an answer!!!

Recommend (0) Report abuse

More comments on this story:

1

Top stories >	Most read	Most e-mailed	Most-viewed galleries
Suspect arrested in East Anchorage slayings	Suspect arrested in East Anchorage slayings	Four die in White Mountain house fire	2009 Oscars
Race leader penalized for mushing on road	Snowmachiner collapses and dies after digging out near Petersville	Crab comeback in Kachemak Bay	Senshi-Con 2009
Man dies in fall from balcony during fight	Three decades later, murderer on trial for killing again	Passengers describe planes sudden crash into mountain	Suspect arrested in East Anchorage slayings
Redoubt's every move tracked from above and below	Redoubt's every move tracked from above and below	State called to do a better job with its kids in foster care	The Good, bad and ugly of Anchorage
Where are the northern lights this winter?	Four die in White Mountain house fire	Family to seek guardianship of chimp attack victim	Bear sightings
Pay raises move into legislative cross hairs			

⚠ Important warning about e-mails purporting to be from the adn.com staff.

© Copyright 2009, The Anchorage Daily News, a subsidiary of The McClatchy Company

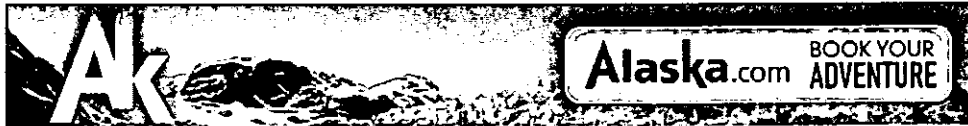
Contact Us | Newsroom Contacts | Communication Forms | Subscriptions | Advertising | Featured Advertisers | Terms of Use

Daily News Jobs | RSS Feeds | ADN Store | Newspapers in Education | Privacy Agreement

register | create a profile | log in | e-mail news | help

ALASKA'S NEWSPAPER

alaska.com



Anchorage Daily News



Wildlife galleries
Collection of photos and video of wildlife roaming Alaska.
[video | reader sightings](#)



17° 24° | 15°
forecast | statewide

Daylight : 8:19 AM - 5:09 PM



Subscribe | manage subscription | E-Edition

© adn.com Web search powered by YAHOO! SEARCH

find »

Last Update: 11:42 AM

[News](#) [Sports](#) [Outdoors](#) [Features](#) [Money](#) [Entertainment](#) [Opinion](#) [Blogs](#) [Multimedia](#) [Classifieds](#)

[Home](#) | [Alaska Newsreader](#) | [Obituaries](#) | [Archives](#) [TV Listings](#) | [Movies](#) | [Music](#) | [Restaurants](#) | [Submit Event](#) [Deals](#) [Jobs](#) [Homes](#) [Cars](#) [Rentals](#)

State called to do a better job with its kids in foster care

COMPASS: Other points of view

By REP. LES GARA and AMANDA METTIVIER

Published: February 22nd, 2009 06:48 PM

Last Modified: February 22nd, 2009 06:49 PM

It's time for reform in Alaska's foster care system. Just doing the same as last year isn't working. The State of Alaska is custodian to 2,000 foster youth. We're supposed to create hope and opportunity. Instead 40 percent of Alaska's foster youth end up homeless at some point in adulthood.

More Compass stories »

State called to do a better job with its kids in foster care

GOP backs stimulus plan but not Democrats' version

New recovery package is good for Alaska and America

Abundance-based fish, game management can benefit all

It's easy to miss what's in plain sight

[Sell it today](#) | [Place an ad](#) | [Find an ad](#)

IN A CRUNCH?
Cal Worthington Body Shop
CLICK HERE!
334-6651

Story tools

- Comments (9)
- Recommend (0)
- E-mail a friend
- Print
- Share on Facebook
- Digg this
- Seed Newsvine
- Send link via AIM
- MY YAHOO!
- Yahoo! Buzz
- Font size: A | A | A

Statistics paint a picture of blocked opportunity. Foster youth are more likely than their peers to end up in jail at a taxpayer cost of \$40,000 a year. The smarter option is University of Alaska job training and college courses at \$15,000 a year. Our children should benefit from federally mandated, monthly face-to-face meetings with social work staff who are trained in helping youth succeed. A recent federal review of Alaska foster care says many of our youth get this support once every eight months, not monthly. That's thanks in part to chronic staff turnover, poor pay and crushing workloads at the Office of Children's Services.

It's time for new ideas that will work. That's why we, and Sen. Bettye Davis (D-Anchorage), are pushing House Bill 126 and Senate Bill 105. The bills are products of last fall's Foster Care Summit and information from experts who've advised us about reforms being pushed in other

states.

So, what can we do?

• **Stop bouncing foster youth between schools:** In Alaska we bounce foster youth between schools, as they bounce between homes, too often. Moving children between schools during the school year is a proven indicator that a child will underachieve. With each disruptive mid-semester change a child can fall behind in school by another four to six months.

Federal law provides partial funding to keep youth in the same school. The state needs to act so all children can, where it makes sense, stay in their school.

• **College and job training:** Alaska provides minimal support for those who'd seek success through a degree or job training at the University of Alaska. The university and state provide a small number of tuition-only scholarships to foster youth. Beyond that, foster youth face a problem all Alaskans face -- the second-lingest financial aid system in the nation.

Foster youth have an additional problem. Most children can call their parents when they need a place to stay or when they need support. Foster youth don't have that lifeline. We should make sure all foster youth know that if they want to go to college or get job training, we will help them with tuition, fees and a place to live. Alaska's second-worst in the nation college aid plan needs to be fixed for all youth.

ADVERTISEMENT

Kathy J. Fernandez AND TEAM

\$239,900 - HOME WARRANTY
6943 O'Brien Street #110 D, 3 Bedrooms, 2 Bathroom, 1,404 sq. ft. Home w/ Fully Fenced Backyard, 2-car Garage, End Unit in Small 12-Unit Project, Very Open Floor plan Upstairs, Vaulted Ceilings, Spacious, Open Kitchen w/ Island and Gas Range, Refrigerator, Washer, and Dryer Stay, Gas Fireplace, Master Bedroom, Downstairs w/ Private Bath and Large WIC, Upstairs Bedrooms w/ Spacious Closets
Yahoo # PRU 013AM MLS # 09-1518

CLICK HERE
907-441-9000
kathyj@alaska.net

Prudential
Just What You Need Realty

Top Jobs all 68 top jobs

- Health Care Services
Speech Language Pathologist (Outpatient)
Providence Health and Services Alaska
- Internet Specialist
Internet Specialist
The Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
- Health Care Services
Pharmacist
Kodiak Area Native Association
- Health Care Services
RN Staff - CVIU
Providence Health and Services Alaska
- Management/Professional
Leadership Opportunities
Southcentral Foundation

[Advanced search](#) | [Place an employment ad](#)

Homes By Prudential more

20385 Tulwar Drive
\$509,000, 3BR, 3.5BA, 3-car garage, 1196sf living space, 138,563sf lot.



3 of 9

HomeFinder

find

[Search ADN Real Estate](#) | [Place a homes ad](#)
[Realtor Market Place](#) | [Homebook](#)

Top Rentals more

Continental Apartments



• **Homelessness:** Today the state provides minimal funding for youth coming out of care. They get a month's rent, and then a half month's rent for two months. If you're 18 and have no parent or caring adult to call for support, you need a hand getting on your feet. That's just a fact of life.

We should let foster youth know we'll help with basic housing their first year coming out of care if they need it. And we should offer a steadier hand, with mentoring, to steer them toward the success they want. Parents do this for most children. Foster youth don't have this "luxury."

And, though we have a chronic shortage of foster parents, we should allow foster youth, if they have a good foster home, to stay until age 21 if they feel they need the support. Ending foster care and health coverage at age 19 and then putting youth out on the street with no parental support just isn't working.

The governor says "we have to live within our means." We agree. But we disagree if that means the solution for every aspect of state policy is to do what we did last year. Not when real solutions are cost-effective and cheaper than less important projects that always find their way into Alaska's \$7 billion budget.

Things need to change. Keeping them the same costs too much, both financially and to our moral standing.

Rep. Les Gara is an Anchorage Democrat, and grew up in foster care. He can be reached at Rep.les.gara@legis.state.ak.us. Amanda Metivier lived in foster care, is coordinator of Facing Foster Care Alaska and recently earned her Social Work degree from UAA.

Penn Foster College - Official Earn an Associate Degree at home in today's fastest growing pennfostercollege	Anchorage Luxury Auto Rental Anchorage Luxury Auto Rental Deals. Cheap Prices With No Booking Sidestep.com	Anchorage Luxury Auto Rental Anchorage Luxury Auto Rental Deals. Book Direct Without Fees. Kayak.com
---	---	--

Ads by Yahoo!

Comments

UPDATE ON COMMENTS POLICY: Read before posting | Edit your profile and avatar »

By submitting your comment, you are agreeing to adn.com's user agreement.

You must be logged in to leave a comment. [Login](#) | [Register](#)

POWERED BY PLUCK

Comments: 9

Showing:



Alaskamom5boys wrote on 02/23/2009 11:48:57 AM:

treewatchin

You seem to leave out the details on how your kid ended up in foster care in the first place? There must be a reason why they wouldn't allow you to have your own child. And behavior issues don't just magically appear out of no where, they stem from many years of child's life. Just thinking your comment is leaving out a lot of details.

Anyways, I totally agree with this article. Foster parents aren't given enough support, and I don't necessarily mean financial support. Social Workers don't keep tabs on these kids enough, and it has been said over and over again these workers are over worked and under paid.

But excuses aren't going to do anything for these kids now are they. Something needs to be done to give these children a chance at success.

My husband and I have talked about becoming foster parents, but to tell you the truth it scares us. Not necessarily because of the kids(maybe a little), but mostly because of the system that seems pretty messed up.

[Recommend \(0\)](#) [Report abuse](#)

Midtown: Our property features lush landscaping in a quiet, peaceful environment.

12 of 13



[Advanced Search](#) | [Place a rentals ad](#)

Top Autos all autos

Affordable Used Cars - Anchorage



2007 Chevrolet TrailBlazer
\$14,994
Affordable Used Cars -
Anchorage

7 of 10

Powered by cars.com

[Search for a New or Used Car](#) | [Place an auto ad](#)

Featured Advertisers all



Alaska Native Arts Foundation
A fine arts gallery featuring traditional and contemporary Alaska Native artwork.



Charter College
Charter College offers Degree and Certificate courses, providing technical skills in Health / Medical, Business / Management and Technology.



Alaska Center for Pediatrics
We specialize in Childrens Immunizations/Vaccines, Asthma, ADHD, and Physicals.

Best Deals more deals »

Pets
Find puppies, kittens, and all pet supplies and services here. More...



Other Transportation
Find great deals on bicycles, snowmachines, ATV's, watercraft and airplanes. More...



Merchandise, Miscellaneous
Antiques, apparel, even the kitchen sink. Find deals on general merchandise here. More...



More great deals »

[Advanced Search](#) | [Place an ad](#) | [Special Sections](#)



treewatchin wrote on 02/23/2009 09:32:34 AM:

I also think the foster care system is totally twisted. My kid was in foster care with a 70 something year old man alone. Then when I tried to get her back from North Star Hospital because this old man warped her mind and gave her behavior issues they didn't release her to me her biological mom who has a job and a place to live and everything that the state required they released her to some girl that had just moved out of her parents house and just turned 21. That in my opinion has no idea about how to raise a kid that has behavior problems and requires counseling. It just goes to show how hard at work our tax dollars are. So yea I guess you could say I hate OCS and their pea brained ways. I think this to them is just a high paying job and not "all about the kids" thing.

Recommend (3) Report abuse



toklat2 wrote on 02/23/2009 06:44:56 AM:

Read this story...this representative on this issue spelled out the wrongs of the present foster care system..It was hard to believe that these wrongs were still in place..they cannot contact by phone their biological parent or parents?.disgraceful.. as well as the other wrong issues this very well written story gave. Good grief Charlie Brown..no state or system that has this it..should ever give the false pat on the back..we are doing such a good job for the children or their parents.. that is so much spin..

Recommend (2) Report abuse



toklat2 wrote on 02/23/2009 06:29:41 AM:

In all due respect to Social Service workers..are they understaffed ..are they simply not paid as well as their work should require..do they actually understand well the very at times complex and the truth about each issue they try to help with? The each issue with the particular person..one can see ..the one size does not fit all. situations. Question also with the majority of people working long hours plus every adult in the family the full time job situations..where would one get a knowledgeable person..in the foster home situations. Does the money given to foster care providers in today's economic situations .. is it adequate to cover the the necessary costs of providing for the foster care children?

Recommend (1) Report abuse



fsmith wrote on 02/23/2009 06:15:01 AM:

I worked for DFYS (named changed to OCS) through the end of Cowper's, all of Hickel's and most of the Knowles' administrations. What I saw generally, though not always, were flaky supervisors, incompetent managers spending more time junketing than managing, and workers who did their jobs and found themselves overwhelmed, or who ignored their jobs without consequences. Most of the losers were delusional, convinced they were doing terrific work. When Hickel took over in many agencies, he replaced competent managers with scam artists and sycophants, from the two Lloyds and Frank Prewitt in Corrections to Mike Price and his sorry crew in DFYS.

Many of the best workers, unable to stomach the dysfunction, became whistleblowers. I never saw a single whistleblower protected. Left to endure chronic abuse, sometimes for years, they were isolated and even unlawfully fired. The system wouldn't and couldn't protect vulnerable kids. I can't imagine Palin's nepotism improving things.

Recommend (6) Report abuse



nickolas wrote on 02/22/2009 11:49:05 PM:

get rid of the federal Incentive system to steal children for money and you will see a lot less foster care,,,oh wait then the state wouldn't get the federal funding..ahhh dam...we have come full turn and are now living the depression era of DFYS where stealing kids and putting them in institutions was very profitable,,to bad to many people never review history and its plagues.

Recommend (1) Report abuse



cat_train2 wrote on 02/22/2009 10:00:54 PM:

Just out of curiosity, since it seems to be all about equality these days, how about providing equivalent benefits for non-foster children?

Recommend (2) Report abuse



Istrm wrote on 02/22/2009 07:55:40 PM:

I agree with all of these recommendations. I hope the legislation passes.

Recommend (1) Report abuse



EskimoEvie wrote on 02/22/2009 07:14:09 PM:

Yeah Amanda! Proud to say I knew you as a teen & young adult... and that you are now making a difference for a lot who will follow your foot-steps. Never take NO for an answer!!!

Recommend (0) Report abuse

More comments on this story:

1

Top stories >	Most read	Most e-mailed	Most-viewed galleries
Suspect arrested in East Anchorage slayings	Suspect arrested in East Anchorage slayings	Four die in White Mountain house fire	2009 Oscars
Race leader penalized for mushing on road	Snowmachiner collapses and dies after digging out near Petersville	Crab comeback in Kachemak Bay	Senshi-Con 2009
Man dies in fall from balcony during fight	Three decades later, murderer on trial for killing again	Passengers describe planes sudden crash into mountain	Suspect arrested in East Anchorage slayings
Redoubt's every move tracked from above and below	Redoubts every move tracked from above and below	State called to do a better job with its kids in foster care	The Good, bad and ugly of Anchorage
Where are the northern lights this winter?	Four die in White Mountain house fire	Family to seek guardianship of chimp attack victim	Bear sightings
Pay raises move into legislative cross hairs			

Important warning about e-mails purporting to be from the adn.com staff.

© Copyright 2009, The Anchorage Daily News, a subsidiary of The McClatchy Company

Contact Us | Newsroom Contacts | Communication Forms | Subscriptions | Advertising | Featured Advertisers | Terms of Use

Daily News Jobs | RSS Feeds | ADN Store | Newspapers In Education | Privacy Agreement

Lynda Zaugg

From: Katie Conway
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2009 7:38 AM
To: Don Burrell; Lynda Zaugg
Subject: RE: Foster Care conference March 20th?

Thank you Don! Lynda, as soon as you know what the time parameters are for the March 20th meeting please let me know. I'm eager to set the agenda so the participants know exactly how much time they have for presenting, and so they can more confidently arrange their air travel.

Thank you both!
Katie

Katie Conway
Staff to Representative Les Gara
State Capitol Room 500, Juneau, AK 99801
Phone: (907) 465-6591
Fax: (907) 465-3518

From: Don Burrell
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2009 7:21 PM
To: Katie Conway
Cc: Lynda Zaugg
Subject: RE: Foster Care conference March 20th?

Now that we have a positive date, I've discussed extending the hearing time to 2 hours as requested with Senator Davis and Lynda Zaugg, the H.S.S. Committee Aide. I suggested to Lynda that we might try and start the meeting earlier rather than run it later. I'm for sure the Senate Resources committee will be meeting in full force in March and there will be very little chance they will allow us to cut into their meeting time, which begins at 3:30. Follow up with Lynda to see if 1pm could work, scheduling-wise and I think everything will work fine to confirm the meeting once that's completed.

Thanks!!!

Don Burrell Jr.
Legislative Aide
Office of Senator Bettye Davis
State Capitol Building, Rm. 30
Juneau, Alaska 99801
P 907-465-3822
F 907-465-3756
don_burrell@legis.state.ak.us

From: Katie Conway
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2009 3:21 PM
To: Don Burrell
Subject: Foster Care conference March 20th?

Hi Don,

I canvassed the potential participants for the mini Foster Care conference our bosses spoke about. I think everyone can make it that day, March 20th, including OCS, FFCA, Casey Family Programs, and others. Now we need to find out the time so they can book travel and we can figure out how much time each presentation would be allotted. Ideally, we'll have two hours for the entire thing. When we put on the full-day foster care conference this fall in Anchorage the presenters had a much longer amount of time to present, and the audience (including many legislators) had a longer amount of time for asking questions. Limiting us to two hours will already be a stretch. I think anything less than that will be quite challenging, though I understand the scheduling will be hard. Please let me know as soon as you do the time available for this event so I can work with the participants on finalizing an agenda.

Thanks!



Katie Conway

Staff to Representative Les Gara

State Capitol Room 500, Juneau, AK 99801

Phone: (907) 465-6591

Fax: (907) 465-3518