

February 2005

YTFG Newsletter

Spotlight on New Grants

The Big Picture Company Receives Grant from the Lumina Foundation to Establish a National College Transition Team. The Lumina Foundation, a member institution of YTFG, awarded the Big Picture Company (RI) a three-year grant to establish a network that will build programs, systems, and relationships to ensure the transition of primarily low-income, first-generation college students from Big Picture Schools to college and other post-secondary programs. The Big Picture Company is a non-profit education organization dedicated to a fundamental rethinking of schooling in the United States. For more info, go to www.bigpicture.org.

Policy Briefs

CLASP has published a new policy brief on federal policy for immigrant children as part of its **Future of Children Policy Brief Series**. The policy brief focuses on how public policy can improve outcomes for immigrant children in the U.S. The policy brief can be found at www.clasp.org or by clicking the link below.

Legislation in the News

Maryland Governor

Volume 2, Number 2

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Out-of-School Youth

A New Collaborative Will Focus on Alternative Education in Santa Clara County, CA. A new group in Santa Clara County, CA, will focus its attention on increasing the availability of alternative education for youth. Led by the Silicon Valley United Way, the collaboration will work to hold the county office of education accountable for its pledge to increase alternative education offerings by 10% each year. The first phase of the plan will be the development of a student tracking system as a baseline to measure improvement for being responsive to the needs of at-risk youth. The collaborative promises better coordination among providers and the creation of an easier process for inter-district transfers.

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Juvenile Justice

The teleconference, **Mental Health and Juvenile Justice Youth – Problems and Solutions**, is scheduled for February 28 at 4 pm EASTERN.

Many young people in the juvenile justice system have serious mental health problems that need treatment; and many young people with such problems end up in juvenile justice facilities because they lack access to treatment in their communities. On February 28, 4-5 pm EST, Connect for Kids and YTFG are hosting a conference call to discuss the problems and solutions for improving mental health screening, assessment and services for youth involved with juvenile justice systems. Lourdes Posada, attorney with the

Maryland Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. announces Year of the Child Initiative.

On January 24th, Gov. Ehrlich unveiled his new legislative agenda to improve foster care placements and increase community-based services for youth in the juvenile justice system. His package of proposals includes \$44 million in new money to fund foster care and adoption programs. A \$5.2 million increase is proposed for juvenile justice services to children and youth to expand effective community placement.

On February 16, 2005, **the Federal Youth Coordination Act of 2005** was launched by Rep. Tom Osborne (R-NE), Sen. Norm Coleman (R-MN), and Rep. Donald Payne (D-NJ) at a press conference in Washington, DC. The legislation was introduced by Rep. Osborne and Sen. Coleman and original co-sponsors include Senators Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Mike DeWine (R-OH), and Representatives Payne, Harold Ford (D-TN) and Pete Hoekstra (R-MI). The Act establishes a Federal Youth Development Council to improve communication among federal agencies serving youth, assess their needs, set goals for helping them, and establish best practices for improving services. For more information, click on the link below.

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juvenile justice systems. Lourdes Rosado, attorney with the Juvenile Law Center in Philadelphia, will talk about the numbers of kids in juvenile justice who are there because of (in whole or in part) mental health issues, and about appropriate use of screenings. Barry Krisberg, head of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, will talk about mental health services throughout California's county-based juvenile justice system. William Glick, head of Indiana's statewide advocacy organization, will describe research that assessed the mental health status and substance use history of a large sample of detained youth in Indiana, and the lack of real coordination among service providers and juvenile justice officials. RSVP to Jan Richter, jan@connectforkids.org.

Foster Youth

Children's Defense Fund Releases Fact Sheets on Foster Care and Other Child Welfare Programs.

On February 17, 2005, the Children's Defense Fund released national and state fact sheets on child abuse and neglect in the United States. The fact sheets highlight expenditures and trends within the Title IV-E Foster Care Program, the single largest source of federal child welfare funding. To access the fact sheets, go to www.childrensdefense.org.

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Cross-Cutting Issues

President Bush Announces 2006 Spending Plan. This month President Bush proposed a 2006 spending plan to Congress that included:

- The end to forty-eight education programs (including vocational training) coupled with an increase in support to "school choice" programs that help parents send their children to private or parochial schools instead of public schools.
- A \$50-million cut to a Department of Justice program that worked to keep youth out of gangs, with \$50-million proposed funding for a program that would be financed through the Compassion Capital Fund and that has similar goals to those outlined by the Department of Justice program.
- A recommended reduction of funding for programs that encouraged foster care and adoption.
- An increase in grants to community health centers.

The White House has published a report identifying the rationales behind the President's 2006 spending plan. That

report can be found at:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2006/pdf/savings.pdf>

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Full Links for Featured Information:

CLASP Policy Brief

http://www.brookings.org/es/research/projects/wrb/publications/pb/foc_14_2.htm

Federal Youth Coordination Act

<http://www.nydic.org/nydic/policy/fyca.htm>

The YTFG Newsletter is a monthly e-newsletter published by the Youth Transition Funders Group. For more information, contact Lisa McGill at lmcgill@ytfg.org.

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