

April 1, 2005

YTFG Newsletter

Volume 2, Number 3

YTFG Member Spotlight

Kevin Walker, a program director at the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, recently had an opinion editorial published in the Flint Journal (MI) on March 20, 2005. In the article, he argued that the high drop out rates from public schools in Michigan and across the country require immediate attention and a major commitment to systems change. The article can be accessed using the link below.

May 11th YTFG Meeting!

Don't forget to make **hotel reservations** for the May YTFG action group meeting no later than **April 15th** to receive the discounted rate for YTFG members. Need more info? Contact Lisa McGill at lmcgill@ytfg.org.

Legislation in the News

March was a busy month for reauthorization proposals and more! Here are some highlights from last month:

Job Training Improvement Act – Workforce Investment Act. On March 2, the House passed a bill for the Job Training Improvement Act (H.R. 27), legislation designed to improve resource and training for U.S. job

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE:

- YTFG Member Spotlight
- Out-of-School Youth / Struggling Students
- Juvenile Justice
- Foster Youth
- Cross-Cutting Issues
- Legislation in the News

Out-of-School Youth/Struggling Students

The Manhattan Institute recently released its study on high school graduate rates, citing that the graduation rate for all public school students remained flat over the past decade at about 71-72%. The study looked at graduating classes from public schools from 1991 to 2002. The report is available at http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/ewp_08.htm

[Back to top](#)

Juvenile Justice

In partnership with ten organizations, the **Council of State Governments** just released a report on how to effectively support the re-entry of ex-offenders to communities. The report offers recommendations for increasing public safety and reducing spending. The report can be found online at: <http://www.reentrypolicy.org> .

On March 1, the **Supreme Court** ruled that the Constitution forbids the execution of killers who were under 18 when they committed their crimes. Background on the case is available from the American Bar Association at <http://www.abanet.org/crimjust/juvjus/juvdp.html>.

[Back to top](#)

Foster Youth

training for U.S. job seekers. The Job Training Improvement Act would build upon reforms made in the 1998 Workforce Investment Act (WIA). On March 3, it was referred to the Senate committee. It was later referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

WorkForce

Investment Act. On March 25, Elaine L. Chao, U.S. Secretary of Labor, announced \$4.2 billion in state allotments for 2005 workforce investment funds. \$986.3 million have been allotted for Workforce Investment Act Youth Activities to help unemployed and underemployed youth through employment and training programs. The program year begins on July 1, 2005. For addition information, click on the link [below](#).

Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education

Act. On March 10, the Senate passed a bill to reauthorize the 1998 Perkins Act, the vocational and technical education program, through 2011. Perkins provides supports for technical and career educations that prepare students for higher learning and careers.

Community Development Block

Grant. On March 17, the Senate adopted an amendment to the FY2006 Budget Resolution to fully fund the Community Development Block Grant and to

National Foster Care Month is scheduled for May 2005 to raise awareness about youth in foster care and to show appreciation and recognition to foster families. The efforts to raise awareness about foster care in May are supported by Casey Family Programs in partnership with 13 other organizations. In 2004, 41 states and territories reported Foster Care Month proclamations from their governors, an increase from 32 in 1999. For more information on National Foster Care Month and activities across the country, go online to www.fostercaremonth.org.

[Back to top](#)

ON THE BUDGET: HOUSE AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

House-Senate Conference, April 5

The House and Senate recently approved their respective budget resolutions for the 2006 fiscal year.

Some highlights include:

- The House proposes \$21.4 billion in cuts, over five

maintain it at HUD.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

On March 15, the Human Resources Subcommittee of the House Ways and Means Committee approved a bill to reauthorize the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant and related programs (H.R. 240). TANF is currently on an extension until June 30, 2005. The legislation would extend TANF until fiscal year 2010. For more information, click the link [below](#).

[Back to top](#)



See [Legislation in the News](#) for more details on reauthorizations, state allocations, amendments and more.

Interested in understanding more about the budget resolutions and what they may mean for vulnerable youth? Here are some recent analyses from cultural pundits, think tanks, and youth advocacy organizations:

- <http://www.cbpp.org/pubs/fedbud.htm>
- www.national.unitedway.org (See full link below)
- www.results.org/website/article.asp?id=1433
- www.childadvocacy.org (See full link below)

AT THE LOCAL LEVEL: COMMUNITY FOUNDATION SPOTLIGHT


Grand Rapids - Using grantmaking, convening, collaboration, data analysis, lobbying and one-on-one work by staff with local and state policy makers, for more than ten years, the Grand Rapids Community Foundation (GRCF) has helped reform the county's child welfare system. Earliest local reforms, aimed at child abuse and neglect, became part of a 1996 overhaul of Michigan child welfare policies, a move that stimulated \$7 million in new state funding.

GRCF expanded its work to include foster care and adoption with special priority given to addressing the overrepresentation of minority children in the county foster care system. More recently, GRCF has turned its attention to the needs of youth transitioning from foster care and into adulthood.

GRCF, working with local partners, used a \$5,000 **Connected by 25** grant from the Coalition of Community Foundations for Youth (CCFY) to lay the groundwork for a comprehensive community plan to ensure that youth between the ages of 16 and 25 make a successful transition from foster care to independence. Completed in December 2004, the Connected by 25 Plan is based on the following three strategies:

- Data tracking system for youth as they prepare to exit the foster care system.
- Mentor resource system to provide support, education, training, identification of services in the community to enhance potential stable housing, employment, and other day-to-day needs in the community.
- Crisis respite placements in partnership with community agencies.

For more information on the Grand Rapids Community Foundation, go to www.grfoundation.org. For more information on the **Connected by 25** grant from Coalition of Community Foundations for Youth, go to www.ccfy.org.



Full Links for Featured Information:

YTFG Spotlight - Kevin Walker

<http://www.mlive.com/search/index.ssf?/base/news-0/1111324829157700.xml?fljournal?NEV>

Workforce Investment Act Youth Activities 2005

www.doleta.gov/usworkforce

TANF

<http://waysandmeans.house.gov/legis.asp?formmode=read&id=2552>

United Way Budget Resolutions Analysis

http://national.unitedway.org/publicpolicy/docs/uwa_fy06_budget_res.pdf

Voices for Americas Children Budget Analysis

http://www.voicesforamericaschildren.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Childrens_Policy/Federal_Updates_2005/_!-c--_Challenges_for_Children_in_2005.htm

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

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