

Bulletin

May 15, 2006

Minnesota Department of Human Services □ P.O. Box 64941 □ St. Paul, MN 55164-0941

OF INTEREST TO

- County directors
- Social services supervisors and staff
- Tribal social service supervisors and directors
- SELF program coordinators

ACTION/DUE DATE

Please implement best practices.

EXPIRATION DATE

Bulletin expires on May 15, 2008.

A Best Practices Guide for Helping Youth Transition from Out-of-Home Care to Adulthood is now Available

TOPIC

Best Practices Guide for Helping Youth Transition from Out-of-Home Care to Adulthood.

PURPOSE

Recommend best practices and provide resources.

CONTACT

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SIGNED

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Background

Minnesota's county and tribal child welfare workers have a responsibility to assist adolescents in out-of-home care with preparations for successful adulthood. This work is required by Minnesota Statute and is also good social work practice.

Minnesota Statutes, section 260C.212, subd.1, mandates the development of an Independent Living Plan for youth ages 16 and older, who are in out-of-home care because of a permanency disposition. It is important to understand that an Independent Living Plan does not conflict with, nor replaces, the goal of achieving permanency for adolescents. Youth who are state wards, and youth whose permanency disposition is long-term foster care should be the highest priority for services that promote preparation for independent living and permanency. These youth will leave the child welfare system without the support of their birth families. It is a child welfare social workers' goal to assure they leave out-of-home care with:

- a high school diploma
- employment and/or acceptance to post-secondary education
- health care coverage
- a savings account
- a safe and affordable place to live
- a means of transportation
- knowledge of community resources; and
- connections to positive adults and family members.

Best Practices Guide: Helping Youth from Out-of-Home Care to Adulthood

The guide can be found online at

http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/groups/children/documents/pub/DHS_id_003701.hcsp. The

purpose of the guide is to provide child welfare workers with the information and resources to effectively help youth transition from out-of-home care to adulthood. The content of the Best Practices Guide includes:

- Guidance on assessing youth's independent living skills using an online assessment tool
- Guidance on developing a complete and meaningful Independent Living Plan
- Resources for each section of the Independent Living Plan
- Information on teaching youth living skills and where to find curriculum
- An explanation of the Support for Emancipation and Living Functionally (SELF); and program, which offers funding to counties and tribes to help prepare youth for adulthood
- Information on how caregivers and other significant adults can prepare youth for adulthood.

The Minnesota Child Welfare Training System currently offers the following training on helping youth transition from out-of-home care to adulthood:

- For child welfare workers, CSP227-Helping Adolescents Transition to Adulthood; and
- For foster parents and other caretakers, CSP928- Leaving Home Again: A Foster Parent(s) Guide to Helping Youth in Care Transition to Healthy Adulthood.

This training is available by submitting a request to the appropriate area training manager. For contact information, visit <http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/groups/children/documents/pub/dhs-id-000158.hcsp> and click on Minnesota Child Welfare Training System Brochure.

Special Needs

This information is available in other forms to people with disabilities by contacting us at 651-282-5329 (voice) or through the Minnesota Relay Service at 1-800-627-3529 (TDD/TTY), 7-1-1 or 1-877-627-3848 (speech to speech relay service).