

# Opening Doors

## A California Connected by 25 Initiative (CC25I) Update



### CC25I Development Institute

The CC25I Development Institute was held on March 17, 2009 at the UC Berkeley Faculty Club and included The CC25I Project Team, subject matter experts and key child welfare agency representatives from each of the eight respective county sites. By all accounts, the Institute was a success and participants provided CC25I project management with the necessary ingredients and information to move forward with honing the existing CC25I framework.

Specific break out sessions provided participants opportunities to share information in terms of what’s working across the CC25I focus areas and what are the priorities in theme areas that cut across all focus areas. The morning was devoted to conducting a thorough review of both progress and current status of CC25I and was facilitated by subject matter experts in the areas of permanency, housing, employment and career development, K-12 education, college pathways and financial literacy. The afternoon was devoted to “drilling down” by developing priorities and voting around themes that cut across focus areas. In addition both Deborah Moss from Stuart Foundation and Denis Udall from Walter S. Johnson provided keynotes, which focused on the big picture, how CC25I fits with emerging child welfare trends, most notably with fostering connections related activity, and the overall future direction of the Initiative.

The day concluded with participants voting on the following:

*Continued on Next Page*

### Inside

ETO Convening	Striving towards Self Evaluation
County Highlights	Sampling of Quality Approaches
Achieving Educational Success	AVID Pilot and Ready to Succeed Initiative
CC25I Spotlight	Carin Harkness from CalSWEC

The California Connected by 25 (CC25I) Initiative is a California Family to Family strategy helping public child welfare agencies and their communities build comprehensive services and supports for transitioning foster youth.

## Development Institute - continued

Theme Area Voting Results:

### 1. Youth Centered

- Youth as decision-makers in their own lives
- Variety of youth voice and perspective and meaningfully involved in system change
- Preparing youth for public speaking and leadership

### 2. Teaming & Engagement

- Supporting caregiver in role as transition mentors
- Infusing values such as trust, graciousness and respect
- Developing community awareness

### 3. Community and Resource Development

- Door opener partnerships
- Community awareness and information to further understanding of foster youth
- Youth involvement to act as a bridge with the community

### 4. Comprehensive Continuum

- Combining the CC25I focus areas as the raw ingredients for a local comprehensive continuum
- Working with youth, caregivers and partners to build local principles and CC25I master plan
- Work with youth, caregivers and partners to keep local master plan updated as things change

### 5. Data & Self Evaluation

- Developing protocols for accurate data entry
- Utilizing ETO for tracking important basic outcomes related to transition
- Aggregating data into meaningful charts/tables for all stakeholders to understand and discuss



Break out session from the March 17<sup>th</sup> Development Institute

Using the Development Institute results as a launching point, work has begun to develop a new and honed CC25I framework, and we need your help to further these efforts. *CC25I site leads from each county are invited to participate in a series of quarterly honing forums starting in September 2009 at the Stuart Foundation in San Francisco.* Stay tuned for details.

A warm thank you to our subject matter facilitators: Bob Friend, Michele Byrnes, Tracy Fried, Cynthia Borges-O'Dell, Kellie Noe, Lisa Elliot, and Gwendy Donaker-Brown. *We could not have done this without your support!*

## ETO Convening – Striving towards Self Evaluation

Culminating a full year of planning, problem solving, and ultimate successful implementation of the Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) CC25I database, the ETO Convening was held on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009 in Sacramento. The convening was in response to a unanimous technical assistance request from sites and in recognition of the expectation of CC25I Project Management for all sites to enter assessments into the database.

ETO Founder Steve Butz was on hand and delivered a keynote on Performance Management and understanding the impact of efforts and using this knowledge to continuously improve performance. In addition the data team from Stanislaus presented on their innovative protocols to collect and enter assessment, including the use of youth interviewers. The Santa Clara data team shared their unique use of ETO for case management among several service providers as well as their protocols for capturing assessment data for all transition age foster youth.

Other workshop offerings included Basic and Advanced Query Writing, THP+ Data Collection and Outcomes, Reporting Capabilities in ETO, the Voice of Youth in Data, and the Importance of Self Evaluation.

We applaud each site for all your efforts this past year in collecting and entering the ETO Assessments for self-evaluation purposes.

## County Highlights: Sampling of Quality Approaches from CC25I Sites

**Fresno:** Beginning in the Fall 2008, The DCFS Independent Living Program (ILP) expanded their relationship with local high school districts. By mutual agreement, DCFS arranged to have ILP social workers stationed at various high school districts. With ILP services available to each youth at the schools, youth have better access to services that improve their own academic progress and support their transition into successful adulthood. With each social worker serving a dual role, youth have immediate access to their social worker/ILP worker for the consistent support of their academic well-being and progress.

**Glenn:** In June, Glenn County celebrated the high school graduation for eight youth. The community supported the celebration with all youth receiving generous gifts to set up their own apartments. All of the youth have attended Emancipation Conferences, helped develop their exit plan and have developed permanent connections. Youth are receiving emancipation planning meetings every six months. This is the largest emancipating group ever for Glenn. They have designated one social worker to carry all 15 emancipating youth cases.

**Humboldt:** Humboldt has developed an educational steering committee consisting of Superior Court Judges, attorneys, County Office of Education, Director of Social Services Mental Health, State Adoptions, Social Workers, community volunteers and Chief of Probation. Through the efforts of these committed individuals, Humboldt County now has in place a Standing Protective Order allowing the exchange of health and education information between Local Education Agencies and Child Welfare Services/Probation.

**Orange:** Orange is collaborating with community on a grant proposal related to educational outcomes in which former foster youth, through stipends, will deliver data from the 28 school districts to the Juvenile Court at each of the case review hearings. Orangewood Children's Foundation has employed former foster youth as Peer Mentors to facilitate assessments with foster youth and their caretakers at the time of the Initial Transitional Independent Living Plan.

**Santa Clara:** Santa Clara DFCS, County Office of Education, San Jose State University Connect, Motivate and Educate Society and the local AVID chapter for Region V continue to move forward and strengthen the AVID program. The effort has been renamed COFFY (College Opportunities for Foster Youth) in an effort to connect all 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> graders into AVID like programs. Santa Clara has doubled the number of youth participating in AVID. This year's "kick off" event was held at Stanford University through the coordinated efforts of former foster youth.

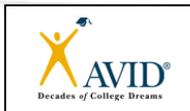
**San Francisco:** San Francisco is developing a citywide strategy for serving foster youth involving the Transition Aged Youth Task Force, Department of Children Youth & Families, Mayor's Office of Employment and Workforce Development, Child Welfare, HSA Workforce Development, and Mayor's Office of Community Development. The goal is to coordinate city and county efforts and resources for foster youth across multiple departments.

**Solano:** An interagency agreement developed by the Education Workgroup delineating the duties and responsibilities of all parties in supporting and upholding the educational rights of youth in foster care has been approved and implemented among Solano County CWS and Probation, the Juvenile Court, Office of Education, all school districts and community partners. Trainings on each agency's roles and responsibilities have been provided to over 120 educators, community partners and court and agency staff.

**Stanislaus:** Stanislaus County has implemented innovative programming the past three years across multiple focus areas. They fully implemented the Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) database over one year ago and were the first county to extract baseline data on youth outcomes. The data findings were presented at the CC25I ETO convening in Sacramento in May 2009. The strategies that contributed to the success are strong community partnerships, implementation of peer interviewers, and a dedicated team at Community Services Agency.

*Congratulations CC25I Sites, on All of Your Outstanding Efforts!*

## Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Pilot



**Ready to Succeed:**  
Improving Education for Children and Youth in Foster Care

**Background:** The Foster Youth AVID Outreach Project began in early 2007, with the support of a planning grant from the Walter S. Johnson Foundation for Fresno, Santa Clara and Stanislaus Counties. An implementation grant to provide Technical Assistance to the above mentioned counties was provided beginning November 2007. Both Orange and most recently Humboldt Counties have also joined this project.

The goal is to increase the number of foster youth students in AVID in CC25I sites. As a result of successful collaboration taking place across sites there has been a dramatic increase from the onset of this project:

- 51 Current AVID youth across the four pilot counties
- 149 youth have been recommended to AVID for the 2009 – 10 school year

Each site developed a Core County Team comprised of AVID Regional Directors, County Office of Education Foster Youth Services Coordinators and Educational Liaisons, and CC25I Site Leads. Teams have grown to include additional school district representatives and other key partners.

**Outreach:** Sites have worked closely with their respective partners to organize outreach events for students who meet the AVID criteria, their caregivers and social workers to come together and learn about the AVID program. Events ranged from Pizza Celebration Nights to University Campus events. This years CC25I County AVID Foster Youth Outreach Events had a significant increase in participation from the prior year.

**Impact:** All four sites have established mechanisms to recommend and track outcomes for potentially eligible foster youth. Each of the original four sites have developed County Implementation Plans which can be easily adapted for other counties interested in establishing a countywide AVID Foster Youth Project. Cross trainings have occurred with AVID teachers and statewide coordinators learning about the needs of students from foster care and with social workers learning about AVID.

We are excitedly preparing for our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual AVID convening this August. Our goal is to extend beyond AVID by indentifying other college bound/college ready programs for students to access as well as creating a seamless transition from high school to college where students can pursue post secondary and/or vocational degrees to help prepare for their futures.

For more information, contact: Tracy Fried & Associates at [tracy@tracyfried.com](mailto:tracy@tracyfried.com).

When counties intervene by removing a child from his or her parents, they do so in order to protect the child from abuse or neglect. Yet, placement of a child in foster care has lifelong repercussions. Prominent is the lack of focused attention to the child's educational needs. The results of a fragmented approach to supporting educational needs of children in foster care are overwhelming. Compared with other children, children in foster care are more likely to have academic or behavior problems in school, higher rate of absenteeism, perform below grade level, not complete high school and fail to attend 4-year college.

Based on a state stakeholder analysis, recommendations and publication of Ready to Succeed, Changing the Systems to Give California's Foster Children the Opportunities They Deserve to be Ready for and Succeed in School, in 2008, the Stuart Foundation launched *Ready to Succeed: Improving Education for Children and Youth in Foster Care*, a three-year, comprehensive initiative, established to continue the effort to improve education outcomes for California's children in foster care.

Demonstration sites include *Fresno, Sacramento and Orange* and each have collaborated to launch innovative projects by focusing on interventions that span from preschool through college. An in depth impact analysis of the county projects will be conducted to describe and compare different components of each project and feasibility of replication in other jurisdictions.

The counties will come together over the next three years to share resources, lessons learned and promising practices.

For more information, contact: Randi Gottlieb, Project Manager – Ready to Succeed at 310.310.0089 or [rgottlieb@stuartfoundation.org](mailto:rgottlieb@stuartfoundation.org)

## Meeting the CC25I Technical Assistance Needs – Carin Harkness from CalSWEC

This edition we spotlight Ms. Carin Harkness from the California Social Work Training Center (CalSWEC) out of UC Berkeley. Carin is a Curriculum Specialist/Senior Public Administration Analyst for CalSWEC, and coordinates the CC25I technical assistance efforts for the eight participating counties. Carin works closely with CC25I Project Management and the respective sites to identify specific technical assistance needs and to develop valuable training in all focus areas. Carin has successfully identified and utilized national and local experts to provide technical assistance and established a peer-to-peer training model for all participating counties and their community partners. Carin has coordinated multiple CC25I convenings and is working on the AVID III convening in August (to also be attended by Ready to Succeed participants) and a Youth Leadership convening later this fall.



Carin Harkness has coordinated technical assistance and support for CC25I since 2007. For specific CC25I technical assistance needs or questions, contact Carin at 510.643.9845, or [charkness@berkeley.edu](mailto:charkness@berkeley.edu).

We all appreciate Carin's tireless efforts in planning our CC25I technical assistance and convenings!

### Denis Udall Transitions to Hewlett Foundation

Due to the economic downturn The Walter S. Johnson Foundation Board of Trustees have decided upon a one-year grant making hiatus from August 2009 to summer of 2010. All commitments to current grantees will be honored; including all WSJF funded CC25I sites. Denis Udall will continue as the WSJF program officer so nothing will change with current grantees.

The Trustees have also decided to lend Denis to the Hewlett Foundation Education Program during this period, where he will focus on increasing the success rate of underprepared college students, as well as helping with the Education Program strategic plan. Denis will work at WSJF one day a week and Hewlett four days a week. We wish Denis the best in his new endeavor and look forward to his full-time return.

### CC25I Housing Report Release

We are pleased to announce the release of a new report "California Connected by 25: Efforts to Address the Housing Needs of Transitioning Foster Youth." This report is the second in a series documenting the challenges, accomplishments and lessons learned thus far among the Initiative's early implementing counties

In California. The Systems Change Assessment Team at UC Berkeley produced the report for the CC25I funding partners – The Annie E. Casey Foundation, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The Walter S. Johnson Foundation. The Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation and The Stuart Foundation. The executive summary of the report and the full report can be found on the CC25I page of the California Family to Family website at: [www.f2f.ca.gov](http://www.f2f.ca.gov).

#### Contact Us:

James Anderson, Project Manager – CC25I  
[jamesanderson.cc25i@gmail.com](mailto:jamesanderson.cc25i@gmail.com) or 408.916.7479

Lyssa Trujillo, Youth Alumni Technical Assistant  
[ltrujillo.cc25i@gmail.com](mailto:ltrujillo.cc25i@gmail.com) or 408.656.6673

#### Coming in the Fall 2009 Edition:

- Presentation of New CC25I Framework
- Youth Engagement Activities and Convening
- ETO Outcomes Reports
- California Co-Investment Partnership

For more CC25I information:  
[www.f2f.ca.gov/California25.htm](http://www.f2f.ca.gov/California25.htm)