Supporting **SUCCESS**

Improving higher education outcomes for students from foster care

A framework for program enhancement

casey family programs
fostering families. fostering change.

About Casey Family Programs

Casey Family Programs' mission is to provide and improve—and ultimately to prevent the need for—foster care.

Established by United Parcel Service founder Jim Casey, the Seattle-based national operating foundation has served children, youth, and families in the child welfare system since 1966.

The foundation operates in two ways. It provides direct services, and it promotes advances in child welfare practice and policy.

Casey collaborates with foster, kinship, and adoptive parents to provide safe, loving homes for youth in its direct care. The foundation also collaborates with counties, states, and American Indian and Alaska Native tribes to improve services and outcomes for the more than 500,000 young people in out-of-home care across the United States.

Drawing on four decades of front-line work with families and alumni of foster care, Casey Family Programs develops tools, practices, and policies to nurture all youth in care and to help parents strengthen families at risk of needing foster care.

For more information, contact Casey Family Programs at info@casey.org or 1300 Dexter Avenue North, Floor 3, Seattle, WA 98109. Visit our Web site at www.casey.org.

© 2008 Casey Family Programs.

Supporting **SUCCESS**

a framework for program enhancement

Improving

HIGHER EDUCATION

outcomes for students from

FOSTER CARE

Table of Contents

Chapter 1—Introduction **1**
Who Are the Children and Youth in Foster Care? 2
Call to Action 2
Current Status of Programs to Support College Students from Foster Care 3
What Support Programs Look Like 5
About the Framework 6

Core Elements at a Glance

Core Elements at a Glance 7
How to Get Started Using this Framework 8

Program Development Elements

Chapter 2—Core Elements Necessary for Program Development **11**
Core Element #1: Designated Leadership 11
Core Element #2: Internal and External Champions 14
Core Element #3: Collaborations with Community Agencies 16
Core Element #4: Data-Driven Decision Making 18
Core Element #5: Staff Peer Support and Professional Development 21
Core Element #6: Sustainability Planning 23

Phase 1 Support

Chapter 3—Three Elements To Provide Direct Student Support — Phase 1 ..... **25**
Core Element #7: Year-Round Housing And Other Basic Needs 25
Core Element #8: Financial Aid 28
Core Element #9: Academic Advising and Career Counseling and Supplemental Support 31

Phase 2 Support

Chapter 4—Three Additional Elements to Provide Direct Student Support—Phase 2 ..... **33**
Core Element #10: Personal Guidance, Counseling, and Supplemental Support 33
Core Element #11: Opportunities for Student Community Engagement and Leadership 35
Core Element #12: Planned Transition to College, Between Colleges, and to Employment 36

Chapter 5—Program Examples **39**
Community Colleges 39
City College of San Francisco 39
Austin Community College 40
Four-Year Colleges 42
California State University, Fullerton 42
San Jose State University 44
California Polytechnic University, Pomona 46

Appendices **49**
Appendix A—Program Development Indicators 49
Core Elements and Indicators for Program Development 49
Core Elements of Student Support: Phase 1 53
Core Elements of Student Support: Phase 2 55
Appendix B—Program Planning and Improvement Guide 59
Appendix C—Bibliography 73
Recommended Reading 73
Resources 74
Endnotes 75
References Cited 77

Chapter 1—Introduction

I will look back at all the struggles and obstacles I hurdled over and overcame with great satisfaction. I will notice how much I've grown and matured into a strong, well-rounded, and independent young lady at college. It will show how much my hard work, patience, and determination paid off.

—Marcia, college student from foster care

Children and youth who are in foster care want to go to college just like many other young adults. Surveys report that over 70 percent of these youth desire a college experience.[1] Our society rightly perceives going to college as a means to good jobs, career advancement, economic independence, and the establishment of important social networks. It is part of the American dream, a dream to which youth in foster care should aspire; and indeed young people in foster care often see higher education as a pathway to a better life than the difficult one they have experienced.

No one talks to foster kids about college. Why not?

—Adam, alumnus of foster care and of Georgetown University

Postsecondary education or training is unavailable to many young adults from foster care, however. Few students from foster care ever gain access to higher education programs, let alone graduate from college, a term we use in this framework for all postsecondary education and training options. This includes four-year and community colleges (public and private), and vocational/technical or other post-high school training opportunities. Too many of these youth and their caregivers lack basic information about college that specifically addresses their life circumstances and unique support needs.[2] Their dreams of attaining the lifelong economic, personal, and social benefits that a successful higher education experience can bring are seldom realized. Many of these young adults age out of foster care at an early age (usually 18) and must become financially independent and responsible for themselves almost immediately. It is crucial to quickly gain the skills and knowledge necessary to support themselves.

Youth in foster care often report that few people in their lives ever expected them to attend and succeed in college. These students are seldom provided the kind of guidance and stable supports needed to prepare for and navigate higher education. All too often, unemployment, underemployment, homelessness and life lived on the fringe face young adults after aging out of foster care. Postsecondary education or training provides these young adults with a significant opportunity to improve their lives in a way that few other engagements can. Indeed, not having well-planned and supported higher education

opportunities may relegate these young adults to lives lived on the very margins of their community. The hopeful vision that Marcia has for her future needs to represent the aspirations of many of the other 20 thousand youth who emancipate from foster care each year and want to go to college. College can mean freedom from their past and the ability to choose a future that is rich with possibilities.

Who Are the Children and Youth in Foster Care?

More than 500,000 children and youth are in foster care* on any given day in the United States. A disproportionately high number are children of color.[3] Of the total in care, half are over age 10, with more than one-fourth remaining in foster care for three years or longer. Each year some 20,000 youth age 16 and older transition or "age" out of foster care[4] and find themselves on their own with few prospects. Without adequate independent living skills, resources, or safety nets, too many struggle with their early independence. At a time when the majority of their peers are looking forward to a college, or employment, with support from their extended family, these young adults are often on their own.

Going to college was a wonderful experience. I moved into an apartment by myself at 16 and worked full-time while in my senior year of high school to survive. The jobs were all minimum wage in high school. Well, college was a godsend because I could get loans, scholarships, and work 15 hours a week above minimum wage, rather than forty hours a week of hard labor. My standard of living sky rocketed in college in the dorms :) I had a nice gym, did not have to clean the bathroom or the kitchen, the laundry room was a building away, there were all these activities, and I worked fun jobs for more money. Since I had already been living on my own, I had no homesickness. The dread started when I discovered the dorms close at semester breaks, but I managed. I still think of college as when I came into my own and starting living.

—Alice, college student from foster care

Estimates suggest that only 7 to 13 percent of students from foster care enroll in higher education.[5] Casey Family Programs completed a study that found only about 2 percent of young people from foster care obtained bachelor's degrees, in contrast to 24 percent of adults in the general adult population.[6] Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago, the National Association of Student Financial Aid Advisors (NASFAA), and the Institute for Higher Education Policy all report that the rate of college enrollment and completion for students from foster care is substantially below the rate for their peers and suggest that action be taken.[7] Clearly, young adults who age out of foster care are one of the more underrepresented populations in higher education.

Call to Action

Recently, policymakers, the child welfare community, higher education professional organizations, colleges, and state higher education systems have started to address this issue with calls for policy advances, practice innovations, and influential advocacy. States are responding with policy initiatives that provide targeted financial aid and system-wide support approaches. Federal legislation now provides all states with funds for education and training vouchers to help fund the cost of attendance for students coming from foster care.[8] A growing number of community

* **Note on terminology used:** The term foster care refers to involvement in the foster care system, either currently or formerly, regardless of the type of placement in that system (foster home, kinship home, subsidized guardianship, group home, or other type of placement). We have avoided using the terms *ward of the state, ward of the court,* and *independent student* because their definitions may vary from state to state.

and four-year colleges have set up innovative support approaches, including the designation of campus based individuals who coordinate integrated support services for students coming from foster care.

Influential higher education organizations and advocacy organizations have recognized the importance of this issue and are providing information, resources, and suggested strategies to implement effective support services. Articles and position papers on improving higher education opportunities for students from foster care have been published by the National Association of Financial Aid Administrators (NAFAA), the American Bar Association's Legal Center for Foster Care & Education, and Casey Family Programs.[9] Other organizations and publications (e.g., the Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education/NASPA, the National Association of Financial Aid Administrators, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* and the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition[10]) have addressed the issue in their journals. The Orphan Foundation of America (OFA) has expanded its vMentor program for college students.

Awareness is growing. Innovative college support approaches have led to increased opportunities for students to enroll and succeed in postsecondary education and training programs. These programs need to spread so students from foster care in every state can benefit. This framework provides guidelines for starting, building, and refining an approach to supporting students from foster care. It also provides a structure from which to answer two important questions:

1. How are students from foster care doing in our college or higher education system?
2. What supports do we have in place that contribute to their success?

When you have to think about "what am I going to eat and how am I going to survive?" you can't put your full attention on four classes. I was still in survival mode my first year, and astronomy just wasn't a class that was helping me to survive.

—Roberta, college graduate from foster care

Current Status of Programs to Support College Students from Foster Care

College students coming from foster care require more attention than most other first generation students because of their background and their independent status. Many, like Roberta in the sidebar, arrive at college in a survival mode, focused on basic needs such as safe and stable housing (especially during school breaks and summers), food, transportation, healthcare, and adequate financial aid. Over the past few years, a number of colleges have pioneered innovative approaches to assist their students coming from foster care. These early efforts have contributed to our understanding of how to support these students and have set a high standard for support services. Chapter 5 describes these programs in some detail.

Foster Youth Success Initiative (FYSI)—A State System Wide Approach

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) found that coordinating existing support resources, programs, and services can make an important difference in the lives of students who have come from foster care. The CCCCO developed the Foster Youth Success Initiative (FYSI) to create this coordination. This statewide program designates a campus staff member, called a Foster Youth Liaison, to take lead responsibility for identifying and supporting youth from foster care. Through the training provided by the CCCCO, these individuals have become familiar with the unique challenges faced by these youth and are able to establish a trusting guidance relationship them. The National Association of Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA), recognizing the national need and the importance of California's seminal work, has brought this model to the attention of financial aid administrators across the country. Other state higher education systems are looking to this initiative to assign, train, and support student affairs staff to take the lead on their campuses. For more information visit www.cccco.edu/SystemOfficeDivisions/StudentServices/studentFinancialAssistancePrograms/FosterYouthSuccessInitiativeFYSI/tabid/997/Default.aspx

Many colleges, higher education professional organizations, and advocates recognize the need for innovative and effective approaches to support youth from foster care. California, Washington, Georgia, Vermont, and Virginia have formed planning coalitions that include college and university staff, child welfare agencies, and external advocacy organizations. These groups focus on comprehensive strategies to address the challenges youth from foster care face in college. Although their support models may differ, they have a common focus on the systematic delivery of institutional and community-based supports that recognize the unique needs of these young adults.

Student support services, designed to improve student persistence, retention and program completion, play a central role in developing an integrated support approach for students. However, without coordination and staff training, colleges are unlikely to package and deliver these services in a way that will serve students from foster care in a timely and effective manner. Davis, in a report commissioned by the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) and supported by the National Educational Loan Network (Nelnet), states: "A series of systematic changes need to occur at institutions of higher learning to ensure the needs of undergraduates from foster care are being recognized and fulfilled before and after they are admitted."[11] Davis goes on to recommend that colleges designate one person to have lead responsibility for students from foster care. These youth benefit from a single individual on campus who understands how their background and early independence affects their academic success and social integration. They need someone to help them to take full advantage of all campus support resources as well as appropriate community-based support services. Colleges in California have been leaders in developing supports for students coming from foster care.

In addition to the campus work, state and national policies have been implemented to provide students from foster care with increased financial aid, advocacy, and opportunities to access and succeed in postsecondary education. Examples of these policy initiatives include:

» Over 30 states now have policies that provide state-funded scholarships, grants, or tuition waivers to foster youth who are making the transition from foster care to higher education.[12]

» Many states have extended Medicaid coverage to age 21 for youth from foster care. This provides students with important healthcare coverage while they are in college.

» The federally funded and state-administered *Chafee Education and Training Vouchers (ETV)* program provides up to $5,000 annually to college students from foster care in every state.[13]

» The proposed reauthorization of the Higher Education Act now identifies students from foster care as having distinct support needs requiring specialized services.[14] It calls for TRIO and GEAR UP programs to reach out to and serve those from foster care.

» California has enacted the *Higher Education Outreach and Assistance Act for Emancipated Foster Youth.*[15] The act codifies legislative intent for California State University and the state community colleges to provide outreach and assistance to foster youth to encourage their enrollment, assist such youth with housing issues, provide technical assistance to campuses, and track retention rates of youth from care.

» Washington's *Passport to College Promise Program* encourages youth from foster care to prepare for, attend, and successfully complete higher education.[16] It provides students with improved educational planning, postsecondary education and training information, institutional supports, and direct financial resources. Colleges are developing "viable plans" to support students.

» Some states have extended eligibility for foster care services beyond age 18 in order to assist students to gain needed independent living skills and successful enter and complete college.[17]

What Support Programs Look Like

The support programs we reviewed vary in many respects. Some enjoy dedicated funding and are well integrated into the institution's student support services, while others attend to student needs on a more modest scale. Behind each program was one or more individuals—a businessperson, trustee, college president, financial aid officer or other staff—who became aware of this underserved group of students and felt compelled to take action. Whatever the program scope or origin, all of them:

» Maximize the use of existing college and community resources

» Employ effective leadership within student support services

» Enjoy a strong backing from their college administration

The effectiveness of these programs is the result of the work of dedicated staff and advocates who have come to understand how the life experience of students formerly in foster care is fundamentally different from that of other students. These staff members understand that not having a home may mean sleeping in a car or a park; not having childcare may mean dropped classes; no health insurance means the possibility of chronic illness; and no money for food means hunger. These insights help them view the college experience from the students' perspective and gauge the appropriate level of help.

Graduating from college meant that I won. It meant that my father was wrong when he said I was stupid and lazy and a waste of space. Most of all, it meant that I would gain the knowledge to use my experience to help other people. College meant freedom from my past and the ability to choose my future.

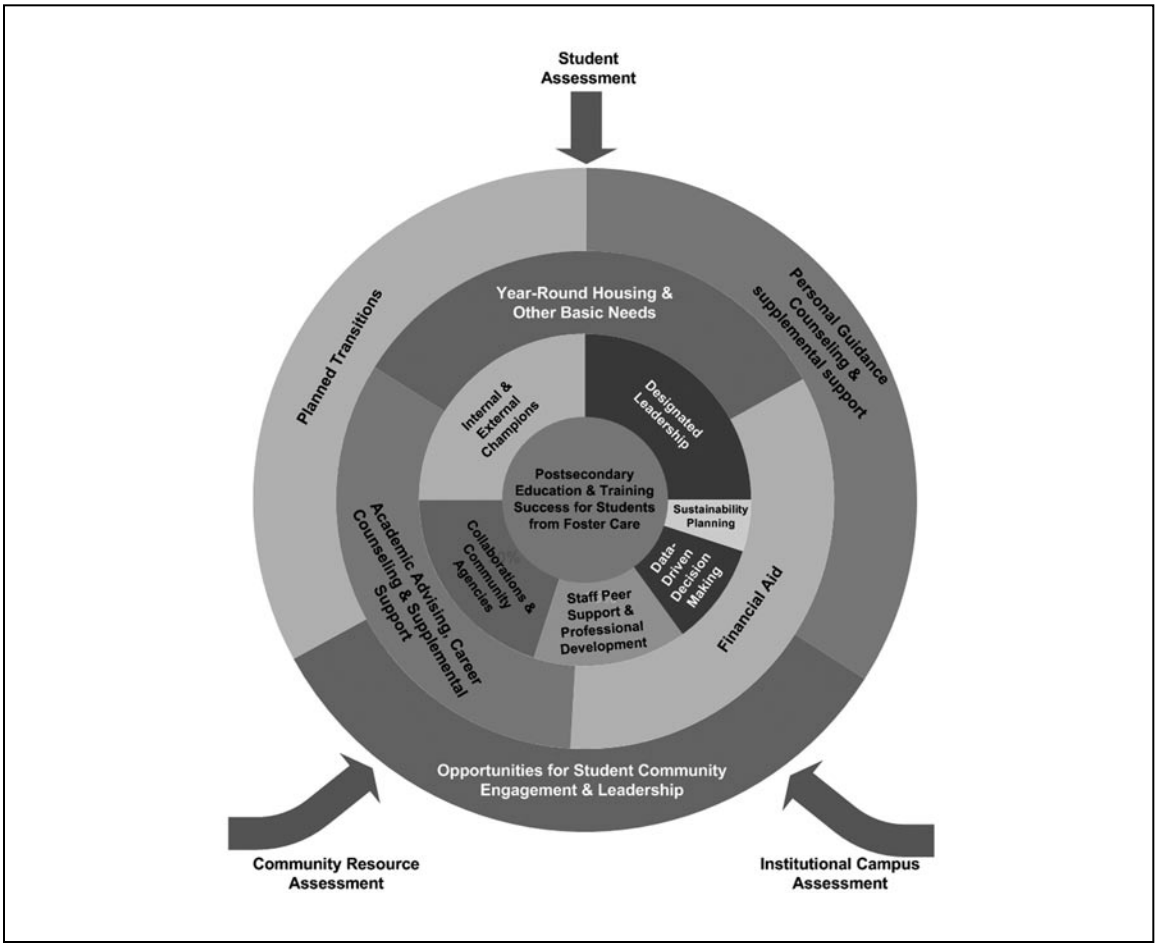
—Maria, college graduate from foster care

Strong programs have a system for assigning responsibility for support and coordinating the efforts of the staff from various student support services. Effective programs typically have a single individual or office that coordinates support for students coming from foster care. In addition, there is usually one individual in offices such as housing, financial aid, and health services who acts as a specialist on the needs of these students and the resources available to them. These programs also make full use of resources in the community such as child and adult welfare agencies, housing authorities, employment programs, charitable organizations, and foundations devoted to transition issues faced by youth in foster care.

About the Framework

This framework is grounded in the *Essential Elements of a Guardian Scholar Program,*[18] developed by the San Francisco–based organization Honoring Emancipated Youth (HEY), with assistance from the California Youth Connection (CYC). The Guardian Scholars Program model was developed and is now advanced by the Orangewood Children's Foundation (OCF). Over thirty colleges have implemented this program approach. The twelve support elements presented in this framework have been widely reviewed by those working to promote improved college success for students from foster care. See Fig. 1 for a conceptual diagram.

FIG. 1 POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING SUCCESS FOR STUDENTS FROM FOSTER CARE



There are twelve core elements. All are listed below in summary form. Chapters 2–4 discuss each with an explanation, rationale, suggestions for getting started and case examples. Chapter 2 outlines the six core elements essential to starting, developing, and sustaining a program. These elements lay the groundwork for developing effective support systems: designated leadership, internal and external champions, collaborations with community agencies, data-driven decision making, peer support and professional development, and sustainability planning.

Chapter 3 expands on these with three elements that we recommend for inclusion in the first phase of program implementation. These address three basic needs: year-round housing, financial aid, and academic advising. While these elements are indeed essential, we cover them after the core elements for program development because of the need to lay the groundwork for a sustainable program.

Chapter 4 introduces three additional elements that should be added once the basic supports are in place: counseling, engagement in the university community, and assistance with transitions.

We recommend this phased approach based on the experiences of those who have pioneered support approaches. All recommended that programs be built on partnerships within the college and community, that the students' basic needs must be the first step, and that starting small and building the program over time is the only feasible approach. We were told repeatedly that this is hard, necessary, doable—and highly rewarding—work.

Core Elements at a Glance

SIX ELEMENTS NECESSARY FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

1. Designated leadership	Youth from foster care need a caring, trusted staff person or designated lead (DL) who has primary responsibility for identifying them and consistently providing guidance in navigating higher education.
2. Internal and external champions	Support champions within and outside of the college community provide direct and indirect program support through their influence and advocacy.
3. Collaborations with community agencies	College support programs should have strong connections with local social services agencies, foundations, and independent living (IL) programs.
4. Data-driven decision making	Decisions on individual support and program development should be based on data collection and analysis.
5. Staff peer support and professional development	New and established support program staff benefit from belonging to a network of peers in other colleges who support youth from foster care.
6. Sustainability planning	Explicit planning should be undertaken to sustain successful support initiatives

THREE ELEMENTS TO PROVIDE DIRECT STUDENT SUPPORT—PHASE 1

7. **Year-round housing and other basic needs**	Youth from foster care need to have priority for available campus housing and access to year-round housing. For campuses without dormitories, they need assistance in finding stable, safe, affordable housing, transportation, and food services.
8. **Financial aid**	Youth from foster care need a financial aid package that maximizes funds to cover the cost of attendance and minimizes or eliminates the need for loans.
9. **Academic advising, career counseling and supplemental support**	Youth from foster care benefit from frequent contact with knowledgeable academic and career counselors with whom they develop a trust relationship.

THREE ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS TO PROVIDE DIRECT STUDENT SUPPORT—PHASE 2

10. **Personal guidance, counseling, and supplemental support**	Personal guidance, mental health counseling, supplemental supports, and health insurance are essential for youth coming from care because of their early independence, history of abuse, neglect, or abandonment.
11. **Opportunities for student community engagement and leadership**	Youth from foster care benefit from inclusion and engagement with campus activities. Some seek out opportunities to be with other youth from foster care while others choose to avoid such association. Colleges should provide opportunities for student to engage in college life including developing a sense of community and developing leadership and advocacy skills.
12. **Planned transitions** **To college** **Between colleges** **From college to employment**	Youth from foster care need assistance in planning for college, making application, and beginning their college careers. Once on track to complete an associate of arts degree, many require help transferring to a four-year college. As they near completion of college, most students need help making a successful transition to a career. Each of these three transitions involves letting go of one academic home and adjusting to a new one. This adjustment has a different meaning for youth without family support.

How to Get Started Using this Framework

As with any program development effort, planning is essential to the eventual implementation of a successful program. This planning starts with strong leadership and bringing together the people with the authority, interest, and energy to undertake the task.

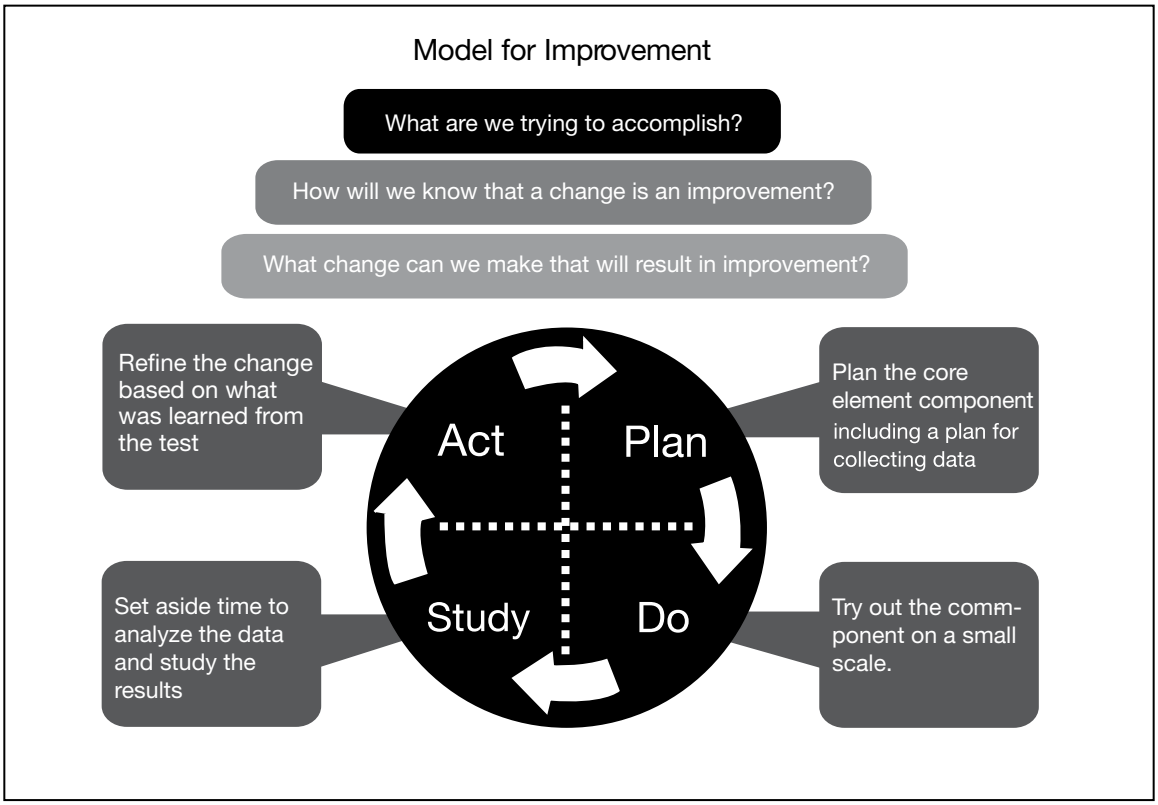
Initial Steps

1. **Administrative Support**—Most colleges receive the commitment and coordinating power of the senior student affairs administrator at the earliest stage. In some of the pioneering colleges, this was the individual who first had an awareness of the need. In others, a champion or staff member sought out the support of this administrator. In either case, it is in his or her division of the college where many of key services reside.
2. **Assign a leader to the planning effort**—We found that the leadership in the pioneering colleges came from many different quarters: financial aid officers, deans, philanthropists, community agencies and foundations, and senior student affairs administrators. In all cases, these were dynamic, dedicated people who either had the power to bring people together or the support of those who did.

3. **Meet, discuss, and assess**—Bring together representatives of college offices such as housing, financial aid, academic advising, and health services to discuss the unique needs of students coming from foster care, assess what is already being done, and determine what might be done to improve their participation and outcomes. This framework can be used as a guide for this discussion. We recommend that participants have an opportunity to preview both the Core Elements and Indicators for Program Developmental (see Appendix A) and the Program Planning and Improvement Guide (see Appendix B) prior to this meeting. These provide targets for each element in the framework and questions to aid consideration of what has already been done or what needs to be done and what are the highest priorities for action. The Getting Started section for each element gives a few concrete action steps. Exemplary programs are cited along with their Web sites when possible.

4. **Use a proven process model to develop the support program**—We recommend the *Plan Do Study Act* (PDSA) model promoted by Dr. W. Edwards Deming[19] as a step-by-step means of program development. The model relies on a cyclical process of making plans based on explicit expectations **(Plan)**, taking experimental action (**Do**), measuring the outcomes of the action (**Study**), and proceeding on with further action based on what was learned from experimental action (**Act**). The PDSA model as applied to supporting students from foster care (see Fig. 2) gives program innovators the opportunity to test their good ideas to see what works.

FIG. 2 PDSA MODEL FOR IMPROVEMENT



Chapter 2—Core Elements Necessary for Program Development

The Core Elements fall into two categories: those that support students directly and those that the early implementor programs found necessary for development and sustainability. We start this chapter with the latter, since they must be in place before the elements that directly support students. Development and sustainability rely on these core elements:

» **Designated leadership**: Appointing a single individual, referred to here as the Designated Lead (DL) who can develop a long-term trusting relationship with students and take a leadership role in coordinating support services

» **Internal and external champions**: Cultivating the support of powerful champions within and outside the college

» **Collaborations with community social service agencies:** Collaborating with 1) community support service agencies whose mission is to support youth from foster care and 2) foundations that can act as a catalyst for support and change

» **Data-driven decision making**: Making student and program decisions based on systematically collected and analyzed demographic, service use, and performance data

» **Peer support and professional development**: Providing direct service providers with a support network consisting of their peers in other colleges and other opportunities for professional development

» **Sustainability planning**: Developing a plan to sustain the new program through funding and support

Each of these elements is explained in the sections below. Appendix B has a table that provides benchmarks for a program developing over time.

Core Element #1: Designated Leadership

A staff member should be identified in an existing or newly established office to have responsibility for coordinating services for students from foster care. This individual provides an initial point of contact for students. He or she works with each student to solve problems that they are encountering in college. The staff member also works with a network of liaisons in other college offices and in the community to ensure that youth from foster care are identified and receive the support they need to be successful. This support includes many of the core

One of the things that helped me the most in my transition to college was finding a person to be on my side, if you will. As I moved to a different state to attend college, I needed to build a support around me. The way that I started on this goal was to personally go to the financial aid office and admission office and talk to whoever was working with my information.

This gave me someone to bounce ideas off and gave me an extra resource at school. Giving them the information about myself also gave me a personal connection. I am now in graduate school, and I have done the same thing at my new school. It has helped tremendously.

—Amanda, college student from foster care

elements in this chapter and chapters 3 and 4. For the purpose of this framework, this individual will be called the Designated Lead (DL). Some DLs operate out of a standalone office; the office is more commonly part of an existing student support service administrative structure, however.

Why Designate a Single Individual?

Designated leads we interviewed liken their role to that of a concierge. They point out that, to be successful, they must have a comprehensive understanding of potentially helpful college and community resources, be able to facilitate transactions that are unfamiliar or uncomfortable for their students, be trusted, and provide excellent customer service. They see themselves as problem solvers and as a portal to available support.

Although the concierge analogy is useful, it fails to explain why a college should establish lead responsibility to coordinate support. Youth from foster care often tell of the importance of having a single individual who they can count on to provide guidance and support, especially when systems seem overwhelming. Many do not have a parent or family members to call. The needs of these independent students involve many overlapping aspects of their lives, including housing, academic support, and counseling. Most colleges provide assistance in each of these areas individually. The combined needs of these youth and the complex requirements of gaining support, both on and off campus, warrant a single individual or office taking lead responsibility, however.

Many students formerly in foster care have had their lives managed by bureaucracies where all major decisions are made by others. In contrast, once they are in college, they must make all their own decisions. Because the help they received in the past was often transitory, inconsistent, and impersonal, many of these youth have difficulty trusting adults who may be in a position to assist them. Establishing stable and trusting relationships with students coming from foster care is important to their college success. Having a qualified and sensitive individual who knows each student's needs and is knowledgeable of the resources available to meet those needs is the best way to provide direct assistance and coordinate the support of others. Thus, the National Association of Financial Aid Administrators recently recommended that "[i]nstitutions should identify a coordinator to be responsible for the successful integration of students from foster care."[20]

Getting Started

The designated leads we interviewed in preparing this framework reported that their support programs got started in a variety of ways. Some institutions, such as Seattle University, were approached by an outside donor with a mission to support youth coming from foster care and funds to hire a program coordinator. In contrast, financial aid administrators and staff voluntarily assumed lead responsibility in the California community colleges when invited to participate in training sponsored by the California Community College Chancellor's Office. All 109 community colleges now have a DL (the term they adopted is Foster Youth Liaison). Meanwhile, Austin Community College in Austin, Texas concluded that an academic advisor at each of their 7 campuses would assume the DL role. In other colleges, such as City College of San Francisco, the impetus came from a single staff member in the financial aid office who wanted to improve the outcomes of youth.

No matter what the impetus, these are the steps we recommend for setting up the DL function:

1. **Designating responsibility**—A mid- to high-level college administrator assigns lead responsibility to a single office and notifies other key student services offices of the need to form a partnership with the lead office. If the college president or chancellor is not yet involved, this is a good time to seek that individual's support.

2. **Identifying youth**—Youth from foster care who are or may become students are identified, primarily through these sources:

   » The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (2008 FAFSA question 53 is: *Are (a) both of your parents deceased, or (b) are your (or were you until 18) a ward/dependent of the court?)*[21]

   » The state office that coordinates the Chafee Education Training Vouchers (ETVs)

   » Offices such as TRIO, disability services, minority affairs, or other support offices for underrepresented youth

   » The student's current or former social worker or Independent Living staff

   Some colleges now include a question about foster care involvement on their applications and student support services program offices. A good strategy is to call the state Chafee ETV coordinator to ask for assistance identifying ETV recipients. Saturating the campus with posters and brochures is reported to be effective, as are word-of-mouth inquiries. Encouraging students to inform others about services now available to students from foster care is recommended.

3. **Developing departmental liaisons**—The DL meets with key college offices, such as financial aid, housing, minority affairs, disability services, TRIO, health services, counseling services, recruiting, academic advising, and career services. Staff discusses potential ways of identifying students, such as adding a question regarding foster care status to office intake forms. In the meetings, a liaison to the DL from each office is designated. Staff also discusses the need for orientation or training and future training options.

4. **Making initial contact with community services**—The DL identifies community-based resources that can provide direct or supplement supports to those available on campus. The DL should learn about state, county, or local child welfare offices, independent living (IL) providers, public housing authorities, community health services, low cost childcare, public transportation agencies, and private foundations or agencies whose missions include supporting youth from foster care. The DL contacts agencies and identifies an individual to work with as the program grows. Developing a community resource guide is helpful and may already be available from child welfare or IL professionals.

5. **Learning of needs directly from students**—In conjunction with these community partners and liaisons, the DL meets with youth from foster care and foster youth alumni groups to better understand their needs and life experience. Focus groups, informal get-togethers, or participation on the advisory committee are also helpful in gaining student input (please see core element #4: data driven decisions, below).

6. **Initial meetings**—The DL meets with students to get to know them, their goals, and areas where they need assistance. The DL focuses on building a long-term relationship based on trust,

consistency, and compassion. Some programs have students develop and sign individual support agreements (see Guardian Scholars at www.orangewoodfoundation.org/docs/Guardian%20Scholars /GS-ProgramDescr%20revised.pdf).

7. **Attention to youth with special needs—**The DL is alert to the needs of students from foster care that may make them feel isolated on campus. For example, youth of color may benefit from being connected to fellow students and faculty from similar backgrounds; students with disabilities will likely benefit from the support and accommodations available through the office of disability services; students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning may want opportunities to join others in the LGBTQ community on campus. The National Center for the First-Year Experience® publishes a number of monographs with specific suggestions for student groups that may benefit from targeted supports.[23]

Core Element #2: Internal and External Champions

Interviews with established program staff and advocates identify the help of champions as critically important for developing and sustaining support programs. The origin of many campus efforts to support students formerly in foster care (such as those at Austin Community College, California State University, Fullerton, and Seattle University) can be traced to the advocacy of an individual outside of the college. These individuals, whom we refer to as champions, have been touched by the challenges of youth from care and are willing to use their influence (and sometimes personal resources) to help a college support these students. Champions are helpful because of their ability to gain access to and influence high level college administrators and private donors who may provide essential seed funding. They are often influential energizers and problem solvers. Their commitment is an inspiration to staff and students. Human services providers and advocacy groups may also be champions.

> *In order … to be successful, students from foster care require services that must be a high priority for senior student affairs officers and, consequently, the university. My presence… (on the President's Administrative Board)… as the senior student affairs officer has ensured a broad base of university support for the Guardian Scholars program.*
>
> —Robert Palmer, vice president for student affairs at California State University, Fullerton[23]

Not all champions come from outside the college system. Identifying an internal champion, one from within the campus system, has effectively advanced program development. The college president, chancellor, dean, or influential faculty member are important in promoting new programs and sustaining established ones. Some programs have been created in collaboration with a committed faculty member in a related academic department such as social work (San Jose State University) or human services (Austin Community College). These internal champions provide needed resources, perspective, advocacy, and influence on campus. Together, the external and internal champions work to advance program

development, advocate for a collaborative approach, and provide influential and often impassioned voices for the support of youth from foster care.

Getting Started

Champions can be identified and advance program goals in the following ways:

1. **Identifying champions**—In colleges that seek an external champion, a high level administrator and the DL work with the advancement or development office to identify donors who may have expressed interest in youth from foster care or underserved students with similar needs. If they identify such a donor, they can arrange a meeting to discuss the role of champion. Alternatively, a community partner, such as a child welfare foundation, can help identify an individual interested in being a champion.

2. **Champions may enlist high level college administrators**—Champions meet with high level college administrators to discuss the needs of students and how they can be supported. Champions can make requests for information as necessary and participate in follow-up action planning discussions.

3. **Involving champions on the Advisory Committee**—Champions are invited to assist in developing the program through participation in the Advisory Committee (see **Data-Driven Decision Making,** below).

4. **Champions engaging with students**—Champions are invited to assist students directly by providing mentorship, arranging for internships or employment, and participating in social or celebration events.

5. **Champions as advocates with policymakers**—Champions may choose to use their influence to advocate for improved college opportunities for youth from foster care with policymakers or potential donors.

The daily challenges and obstacles that young people, raised in the foster care system, must overcome have left a deep impact on my life. Their stories of abandonment, abuse, poverty, and displacement are horrific. To help these young people, I founded the Guardian Scholars Program in 1997 at Cal State Fullerton. The purpose of the program is to "Make Dreams Come True" by giving deserving students a scholarship and personalized life support. It is very rewarding to see students grow from frightened and confused freshman, into professionals, social services leaders, teachers, parents, and contributing members of society. The goal of our program is to create a family of support along with the gift of a scholarship.

—Ron V. Davis, business professional and champion of the Guardian Scholars Program [24]

Two Examples of Collaboration

The **Guardian Scholars Program at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF)** has a powerful relationship with the **Orangewood Children's Foundation (OCF)**. OCF is the Independent Living contract vendor for Orange County, California, where CSUF is located, and was instrumental in the development and support of the Guardian Scholars Program at CSUF. The principal champion of the program is on the board of directors at OCF. A close relationship with OCF has existed from the beginning of the program.

Although this is not a typical example, it does illustrate what can happen when community-based organizations work together with interested colleges. Current and former foster youth in Orange County have the opportunity to take college tours, participate in education workshops, get assistance with FAFSA applications, attend career fairs and have direct contact with the Guardian Scholars point person at CSUF (and other Orange County Colleges). Many Guardian Scholars work as peer counselors for the IL program run by OCF.

.....

Santa Clara County Foster Youth Services, F**YSI Community College Liaisons**, S**an Jose State and Silicon Valley Children's Fund** representatives are great examples of collaboration amongst key stakeholders who support students from foster care as they make their transition to college. Santa Clara Foster Youth Services has offered meeting space for partners to discuss service coordination and joint event planning. Programming such as FAFSA preparation, Personal Statement Workshops, and Foster Care Provider Training Workshops have been held at the various campuses with participation by partners in materials, food, facilities, and marketing support

The FYSI Liaisons from each of the colleges in Santa Clara County were encouraged to utilize the tools provided by the Community College Chancellor's Office FYSI manual. This instrument may be used to develop strategies for outreach and identifying the campus population, developing support on their campus, and assessing their progress toward set objectives.

Core Element #3: Collaborations with Community Agencies

In order to reach out to youth currently in care and create a seamless transition into postsecondary education and training, colleges need to establish working relationships with social service agencies and private organizations. One individual or college office cannot provide all the support needed by students from foster care without drawing upon the resources of other professionals and community-based agencies. In fact, states, counties, and local agencies bear the responsibility for assisting these youth in areas such as transition to adult life (Independent Living programs), housing, transportation, and healthcare (including mental health.) A growing number of states provide access to foster care services for youth until they reach age 21. The DL develops working relationships with area service providers in the state, county, and community. Although the number and names of the service providers and agencies will vary from state to state, the nature of the support is similar. Some of these broad categories are discussed below.

Social Services

State Child Welfare Agencies—Each state has a department that administers child welfare programs, including foster care. As noted above, some states allow an extension of court jurisdiction over youth in foster care beyond age 18. In these states, funding may be available to families or group homes that house these youth. In addition, youth in these states continue to have the support of child welfare caseworkers and IL providers.

Independent Living providers—Each state receives funds under the John L. Chafee Independent Living Program.[25] IL programs work to develop the life skills of youth age 16 to 21 from foster care. IL programs enable participants to receive education and training including vocational training (additional support for Chafee Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) of up to $5,000 annually may be available).[26] IL programs *may* include the following services:

» Training in daily living skills

» Individual and group counseling

» Housing assistance for older youth

» Outreach programs

» Independent living plan development

» Access to Medicaid (in some states[27])

The National Child Welfare Resource Center for Youth Development provides a state-by-state profile of Independent Living programs (http://nrcys.ou.edu/yd/state_pages) and contacts for the state coordinator and IL providers.

Housing—As noted below, Casey Family Programs' *It's My Life: Housing* (available on www.casey.org) provides a comprehensive resource guide to housing resources and agencies. Public Housing Authorities are a key community resource. The Federal Housing and Urban Development Web site (www.hud.gov/index.html) provides state-by-state directory of contacts. State IL coordinators should be able to provide information on local housing resources. This directory may help identify local housing resources.

Health Services—The U.S. Food and Drug Administration maintains a directory of health services by state (www.fda.gov/oca/sthealth.htm). The United States Department of Health and Human Services: National Mental Health Information Center (http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/Publications_browse.asp?ID=185&Topic=State%2FTerritory+Resources) maintains a directory of state and territory resource guides and contacts. Campus health centers may have a list of community health services available to students.

Other Services—The Portsmouth Group, Inc. provides a comprehensive Web site named iSafetyNet (www.isafetynet.org/) with links to human services agencies across the country. Some states have developed Web sites for their youth from foster care to provide information about resources in their communities. For examples, visit the sites for Utah (http://justforyouth.utah.gov), California (http://fosteryouth.net), and Washington (www.independence.wa.gov). The Foster Club's FY13 Web site (www.fyi3.com) has links to resources nationally as well as social contacts and other opportunities for youth from foster care.

Getting Started

The following steps can pave the way to good collaborative relationships:

1. **Identify Independent Living providers**—The DL identifies and contacts IL providers to learn about the nature of the IL program in the area. Potential collaboration is discussed and might include outreach, joint sponsorship of college awareness events, and problem solving.

2. **Learning about other agencies**—The IL provider informs the DL of other relevant agencies, and the DL holds similar discussions with them.

3. **Advisory committee participation**—Agency representatives are invited to participate on the advisory committee (see **Data-Driven Decision Making,** below).

4. **Outreach in IL events**—The DL participates in IL-sponsored or other agency-sponsored events such college awareness and financial aid seminars.

5. **Student Referral**—The DL refers students, based on need, to IL providers and other relevant agencies. IL organizations for each state can be found at the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Youth Development (www.nrcys.ou.edu/yd/state_pages.html).

Data Collection Examples

San Francisco State University conducted research on student outcomes prior to beginning its Guardian Scholars program, which is now integrated into the University's Education Opportunities Program (EOP). The Educational Opportunity Program provides access opportunities and educational support services to historically underserved students (low income, first generation college-bound youth).

Before implementing the Guardian Scholars Program, students from foster care had been served as a part of the EOP student population. No special distinction had been made between them and other students nor had they been receiving additional services (beyond what EOP students typically got).

The Guardian Scholars Program founders wanted to understand how these students were doing. Their study examined key variables retrospectively. Baseline studies tracked first year retention, grade point average, and graduation rate of students from foster care who participated in the EOP program and compared them to other EOP students not from foster care. (Both share a history of low income and historical disadvantage.)

Retention rates of EOP and non–EOP freshmen were similar (4 year range=73-80%). By way of contrast, retention rates of students from EOP who were formerly in foster care were significantly lower (4 year range=33-68%). Similarly, a comparison of GPAs of students from EOP who were from foster care with EOP students not from foster care revealed significantly lower GPAs for the students from care (1.95 vs. 2.66).

Not surprisingly, the graduation rate for EOP students from foster care was substantially lower when compared to EOP students not from foster care (12.5% vs. 19.3%). This baseline study demonstrated a clear need to augment support for students formerly in foster care.[30]

Core Element #4: Data-Driven Decision Making

What's measured, matters.

—Kathleen Christensen, vice president, student services and success systems, Austin Community College

Targeted campus support services for youth from foster care are a relatively new phenomenon. Because these programs are varied and still evolving, no standard for program evaluation has been agreed upon. Many programs collect and report demographic, retention, use of support services, and program completion information. Summative and formative data collection and evaluation are critical to program improvement and monitoring student progress for early intervention. Allen and Kazis identify pioneering efforts by community colleges in collecting and using data to improve student outcomes.[28] Colleges can use student information to identify strengths and weaknesses, pinpoint areas of improvement, and assess the impact on students of new programs and innovations. They recommend that colleges conduct specific analyses of how particular student groups are progressing. This information can help to identifying difficulties for students at points along the way to graduation and the refinement of support approaches. Colleges commonly collect data in the following core areas:

» Housing

» Financial aid and other information collected from the FAFSA

» Participation and access to campus services

» Academic progress (e.g., grades, persistence, retention,[29] and graduation)

Growing and sustaining a program initiative requires reliable data to demonstrate the scope and efficacy of efforts.

Getting Started

The following steps and milestones facilitate data-driven decision making:

Establishing direction— Early in program development, it is important to determine which outcomes the institution values and how they will be measured.

1. **Program mission, goals, outcomes, objectives, and timelines** are established along with a management-by-objectives monitoring and reporting strategy.

2. **Collecting baseline data—**The college develops a strategy to collect baseline data on student enrollment, academic status, and support needs. Some of this information will be available through campus offices (e.g. FAFSA and Chaffee ETV eligibility through Financial Aid). Offices conducting outreach (such as TRIO, minority affairs and disability services) may have or could gather data to identify students with foster care in their background. Student Health and Counseling Services can help by asking identifying questions on their intake forms (e.g., *Are you currently or were you formerly in foster care?*). Once current students are identified, the college gathers and analyzes descriptive data of their academic status (grades, academic probation, retention, graduation).

3. **Advisory Committee—**An advisory committee is formed. Initially, this group should have representatives from campus offices that have direct involvement. It should also have one or more students from foster care. The committee reviews baseline data and provides advice on program priorities, additional goals and objectives, and evaluation questions. As the program expands through community partnerships, representatives from these partner organizations should be included on the advisory committee.

4. **Evaluation plan—**Using a logic model, (e.g. *Guidelines and Framework for Designing Basic Logic Model*[31]) the DL develops and implements a support program including an evaluation plan based on the input of the advisory committee, administrative direction, and identified needs of students. Where possible, the college gathers data from existing sources. When data sources are not available, the DL develops systems to acquire the needed information. Note: FERPA regulations and confidentiality requirements must be observed.[32]

5. **Progress monitoring—**The DL uses data such as early alert/warning of low grades, progress toward program completion, major declaration, and attendance problems to intervene with students as soon as possible.

6. **Assessing student needs—**The DL collects qualitative data from students using focus groups, interviews or surveys to better understand their needs and priorities.

7. **Using the data—**Data are reviewed, evaluated, and discussed with administrators and the advisory committee. Where appropriate, they are published as part of the college data summary. Based on the interpretation of data, colleges proceed with or amend their program action plan. As appropriate, the data are used to advocate for program funding adjustments and policy initiatives.

Support programs and scholarship providers have identified the data elements in Table 2.1 as being helpful for student and program evaluation.[33]

TABLE 2.1: DATA ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER WHEN DEVELOPING A SUPPORT MODEL FOR STUDENTS FROM FOSTER CARE

QUANTITATIVE DATA		QUALITATIVE DATA	
Student-Focused	**Program Access**	**Student Perceptions and Opinions**	**Staff Perceptions and Opinions**
» Current Enrollment Status » Units Attempted—Cumulative » Units Earned » Units Attempted—Current term » Grade Point Average—Current term » Grade Point Average—Cumulative » Satisfactory Academic Progress—Current term » Satisfactory Academic Progress—Cumulative » Employment Status » Employment Hours » Campus Engagement 1—Student activities » Campus Engagement 2—Athletics » Campus Engagement 3—Student government » Campus Engagement 4—Other » Housing Status » Financial Aid Status » Use of Campus Support Services » Use of Non–Campus Support Services	» Referrals to Campus Support Services » Frequency of student use of Campus Support Services » Referral from Campus Support Services to other campus resources (e.g. disability minority affairs, or health services) » Student use of campus resources based on referral » Referral of students to off-campus resources » Student use of off-campus resources » Attendance at campus or community extracurricular events	» Awareness of Campus Support Services » Likely to use services » Quality of services » Perceived value of services » Trust in service providers » Trust in service providers referrals » Perceived benefit of referrals to support services	» Awareness of Campus Support Services » Awareness of Office Liaisons » Likely to refer students » Perceived quality of services » Perceived quality of information provided by Campus Support Services » Perceived quality of training provided through Campus Support Services

Core Element #5: Staff Peer Support and Professional Development

Supporting youth from foster care is challenging work. In addition to the obvious need to learn about individual students, the DL must become aware of agencies and resources that exist to serve and support them as well as the laws and funding that govern what support can be provided. New programs must find their place on campus and build partnerships within their institution. For these reasons, it is helpful for the DL to have a network of support from colleagues in other colleges that are also supporting these students and developing their programs. This network may take shape informally in discussions among designated leads, or it may take a more formal shape through periodic meetings, conferences, electronic mailing lists, and professional development activities. Community partners have proven valuable in bringing professionals together. State agencies have also taken a lead in this area, as have private foundations dedicated to improving the lives of youth from foster care. The Southern California Council of Colleges is a group of personnel on college campuses that support youth from foster care. They meet quarterly to discuss issues, share resources, and support each other's efforts. Orangewood Children's Foundation created the Council of Colleges concept and name, hosted the first Southern California meetings, and continues to facilitate them. Honoring Emancipated Youth replicated this model by bringing together college personnel in Northern California. We have adopted the term *council of colleges* for use in this publication when referring to similar groups.

Getting Started

Three approaches to developing an external postsecondary education institutional support network are described below: DL–initiated, community organization–initiated, and state agency–initiated.

The campus Designated Lead taking the initiative to develop a network

1. **Contacting other colleges—**The designated lead contacts the student affairs office or other specific student services offices (e.g. minority affairs, TRIO, and financial aid, academic advising, and disability services) in neighboring colleges or universities that would likely be providing support to youth from foster care. From these contacts, informal problem-solving networks are formed and the DL learns about any existing networks such as a council of colleges or statewide training.

The Annual Creating a Blueprint Conference and Higher Education Organizations Support

The Silicon Valley Children's Fund and The Orangewood Children's Foundation have hosted an annual national conference which brings together college support providers, agency, foundation staff, and college students to discuss college access and success issues for students from foster care.

Higher education professional organizations are increasingly sponsoring sessions on support of former foster youth at their regional and national conferences. These organizations include:

- National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA)
- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)
- American Association of Community Colleges (AACC)
- The College Board
- National Academic Advisors Association (NACADA)
- Council on Opportunity in Education (COE)
- American Indian Graduate Cener (AIGC)
- Pathways to College Network

2. **Developing professional relationships—**The designated lead begins to develop professional relationships with colleagues in other colleges working to support foster youth.

3. **Meeting to discuss common concerns—**As common needs are identified, designated leads agree to meet and discuss issues of concern. For example, DLs from four colleges in the state of Washington now meet quarterly to share information on what's working and their challenges.

4. **Formalizing meetings**—The designated leads may choose to formalize these meetings by forming a professional online or in-person network.

Community organization or foundation taking the initiative to develop a network

Community organizations or foundations dedicated to serving foster youth are in an excellent position to take the lead in bringing together designated leads in colleges within their community. The Orangewood Children's Foundation, which pioneered this approach in Orange County, California, likened its role to that of a "catalyst."[34]

1. **Calling meeting of colleges the community organization works with—**Once a partner relationship for supporting youth from foster care has been formed in several colleges, periodic meetings are scheduled to discuss challenges, accomplishments, and areas for collaboration (e.g. professional development, research, or training).

2. **Engaging other community partners—**The community partner organization uses its connections to bring other relevant agencies or funders to work with the network.

3. **Electronic mailing list—**The community partner may sponsor and manage an electronic mailing list for the network.

4. **Matching experienced and developing college programs—**The community partner foundation or agency may match an experienced college with a college that wants to develop a program using a technical assistance model. In this approach, key liaison members from within the experienced college are matched with counterparts in the college with an emerging program. Training is followed by action planning, implementation, and follow-up support. Casey Family Programs took this approach in helping Seattle Central Community College develop its program.

5. **Conferences—**The community partner foundation or agency may sponsor state or regional conferences for the purpose of presenting papers, recognizing achievement, and networking.

State Agency taking the initiative to develop a network

A state office or agency such as a higher education coordinating board, may choose to take the lead role in developing a support network within a state. State offices may start by surveying college student support service providers to determine the services currently available and their need for coordination and support. Developing a resource guide that is specific to state laws, practices, and services is likely to be valued, as will be opportunities for initial training. The California Community

Colleges Chancellor's Office took this approach with the FYSI program (see sidebar in chapter 1) and then expanded their support by:

1. **Creating a network of regional representatives—**Train regional representatives in networking strategies using in-person meetings and teleconferences.

2. **Supporting regional convening meetings—**Regional representatives bring together the support staff and relevant community organizations in various state regions to provide mutual support and address common issues.

Core Element #6: Sustainability Planning

Early attention to developing a sustainability plan for a campus support services program is important. The goal of this plan should be to secure beneficial policy decisions and a long-term commitment of funding. Sustaining initial efforts relies on many of the core elements of a successful program. The program must have a clearly defined mission: improving college retention and program completion of youth from foster care. It should also have measureable goals, outcomes, and an evaluation plan that demonstrate the status of the program's progress toward achieving its mission. A powerful partnership of support is a key factor. Essential partners include a high-level college administrator, a champion with contacts and influence both on campus and in the community, and a committed community agency, foundation or organization.

A carefully chosen and diverse advisory group can bring fresh perspectives, influential contacts, and resources to sustainability planning (See **Data-Driven Decision Making,** above). The program should make maximum use of the resources within the college. The departmental liaison approach to service delivery uses existing resources rather than creating overlapping services. The college development/advancement office should be engaged in early planning to raise funds to support youth from foster care. As an example, California State College, Fullerton has assigned responsibility for finding donors for the Guardian Scholars Program to one of its development staff members. Every college will have program sustainability criteria or program requirements that must be considered.

Programs reviewed in preparation of this framework were funded in a variety of ways using both public and private funds. Examples include:

» Within existing funds where staff time was reallocated

» Development/advancement office identifies donors

» A combination of existing funds and external grant funding

» Foundation support

» Allocation of targeted state funding, e.g., Washington State Passport to College Promise Pilot Program (www.hecb.wa.gov/financialaid/other/Passportprogram.asp)

Getting started

The following steps and milestones are necessary to the sustainability of a program.

1. **Develop an advisory committee**—Using the advisory committee (see **Data-driven decision making,** above) the DL engages community partners, students, and departmental liaisons to guide the program development and continuous improvement efforts.
2. **Administrative involvement—**A high level campus administrator establishes a clear mission, communicates sustainability criteria and timelines, seeks and responds to external champions, initiates discussions with the advancement office, reviews data on program status and efficacy, advances policy discussions supportive of the program, recognizes the accomplishments of students and staff, and approves line-item funding for staff and facilities as warranted.
3. **Involvement of community partners—**Community partners participate on the advisory committee, solicit funding from private and institutional donors, may provide testimony to legislative committees considering funding or policy issues, may facilitate communication between colleges to promote the flow of ideas for sustainability, and may directly fund the program.
4. **Student involvement and advocacy—**In addition to participation by some students on the advisory committee, students may choose to advocate for program needs by presenting information to administrators, policymakers, staff in the advancement/development office, and potential donors. Students can become a powerful voice for the program and its sustainability.

Chapter 3—Three Elements to Provide Direct Student Support—Phase 1

This chapter discusses the essential student support services, which address the most basic of student needs. For this reason, they should be focused on first, once the program's infrastructure is in place (see chapter 2). The essential student support services are:

» **Year-round housing and other basic needs—**Providing for 12 months of housing and other basic needs such as meals, transportation, and health insurance

» **Financial aid—**Ensuring full financial aid

» **Academic/career advising**—Providing a well-informed and consistent academic advisor

Each of these elements is explained in the sections below. Appendix A provides benchmarks for a program developing over time.

Core Element #7: Year-Round Housing and Other Basic Needs

"I turned 18 a month before I graduated from high school. The day after graduating, I was kicked out of my foster home where I had been living for two years. I was 18, a high school graduate on my way to college in the fall, and I was homeless."

—Nicole, college student from foster care

Housing often presents the first and highest barrier to college success for youth coming from foster care. Having a safe, stable place to live year-round is essential to success in college. Students who have recently aged out of foster care often have no family home in which to live or return to during school breaks. Most have no family to pay their rent, co-sign a lease, or explain the details of a rental agreement. If anything goes wrong, they have no safety net of support. They are literally one problem away from becoming homeless.

In fact, many of these college students report periods of homelessness. Most studies of homelessness find that between 20 and 36 percent of homeless people have been in foster care.[35] The Pew Center on the States reports that over one-fifth of young adults who leave foster care experience homelessness at sometime after age 18. It is essential for college staff members to recognize the challenge that housing poses to be prepared to help.

Case Examples of Four Approaches to Housing Challenges

Creativity, collaboration, and advocacy are often necessary to find solutions to the housing difficulties of college students who were formerly in foster care. These four brief examples illustrate the results of this approach.

- California State University San Marcos is addressing the housing needs of students from foster care by providing on-campus, apartment style, housing 365 days a year, reserving a fixed number of rooms for them and waiving the application and service fees.
- The San Jose State University CME Society (www.sjsu.edu/cmesociety/Collaborations) not only provides priority access to housing for its students but works with nearby community colleges and the Santa Clara County THP plus program to provide and fund housing for their current and former foster youth.
- The City College of San Francisco works with Larkin Street Youth Services (www.larkinstreetyouth.org/programs/housing.php) to address the housing needs of its students. Even with state housing programs, the demand for housing continues to exceed the supply and waitlists are common. Therefore, staff at CCSF writes grant proposals and looks to the successful efforts pioneered at other colleges such as the CME Society at San Jose State University to address students' housing needs.
- San Francisco State University's Guardian Scholars program collaborates with the campus housing office to provide a fixed number of housing units in several housing facilities owned by SFSU. The approach adopted by SFSU is different from many others as it has created residential learning communities for incoming students by grouping current and former foster youth on a single floor. All Guardian Scholars have the choice to live on campus and also have the option of choosing their roommate (Guardian Scholar or not). Older students have access to a variety of living arrangements, but at year 3, most Guardian Scholars have chosen to remain living with other Guardian Scholars as roommates in the GSP theme community.

Where existing laws that may help support housing for young people are not fully implemented, college staff has an important advocacy role to play. Postsecondary education and training programs should take the opportunity to work collaboratively with community partners to assess the need for changes in public policy and provide this information to local and state policymakers.

Some resources do exist to assist students formerly in foster care with their housing needs. This remains a challenge for many colleges, however. In addition to college dormitories, federal, state, local, tribal, and private housing may be available. Four-year colleges typically have campus housing. For these colleges, youth from foster care should be a top priority when assigning dorm rooms. California State Universities in Fullerton, San Jose, and San Francisco give residence hall priority to their students from foster care. In fact, California is at the forefront on this issue. Both the State University and University of California Systems are directed by legislation to "ensure basic housing during the regular academic school year, including vacations and holidays other than summer break."[36]

Although most two-year colleges do not have on-campus housing, the need of youth from foster care at these schools is no less pressing. Support staff can help create housing solutions. This should start with learning about the available financial assistance that is either housing-specific or that may be used for housing. Housing-specific financial assistance includes Section 8 housing vouchers and the Family Unification Program (FUP), targeted at youth emancipating from foster care. Assistance that may be used for housing includes the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) and Chafee Educational Training Vouchers (ETVs).

Resources for Finding Solutions to Housing Problems

Casey Family Programs publishes a guide about housing to help those working with youth in care who are transitioning to adult life. *It's My Life: Housing* is available free (in online or print formats) from www.casey.org. *It's My Life: Housing* gives detailed information about housing agencies and financial resources available to pay for housing.

The Federal Housing and Urban Development's Web site (www.hud.gov/apps/section8/) provides a means of searching for subsidized housing anywhere in the country.

Some states have passed legislation that provides for housing students who are in transition from foster care. For example, youth in California should have access to housing through the Transitional Housing Placement Program for Emancipated Foster/Probation Youth, which is commonly referred to as THP+ (www.johnburtonfoundation.org). Colleges can also assist by making small modifications to their existing housing policies. For example, the Guardian Scholars programs at Chapman and Concordia Universities allow students to remain in the dorms for two months following graduation, which allows them time to find jobs and apartments.

The purpose of housing programs and the regulations that govern them vary by state and local jurisdiction. College support staff can be of great help to students who are trying to find housing assistance and apply for it in a timely way. The designated lead (DL) and the housing office liaison may find it helpful to work with local Independent Living (IL)

program providers. The National Child Welfare Resource Center for Youth Development maintains a Web site with contact information for IL Coordinators in all states: www.nrcys.ou.edu/yd/resources/ilcoords.php.

Getting Started for Colleges with Student Housing

1. **Determining the need for housing—**The DL assesses the year-round housing needs of individual students and refers them to the housing office liaison.
2. **Becoming familiar with local housing resources—**The DL and the housing liaison identify school-related and community housing agencies, their resources, and key staff.
3. **Priority access to existing housing—**The housing office provides priority access to youth from foster care for existing dormitory rooms or other options.
4. **Housing during academic breaks and summer—**The housing office provides dormitory housing and food service during academic breaks (including summer).
5. **Using community housing resources—**The DL and the housing liaison use their knowledge of housing agencies and community resources to find solutions to housing problems faced by students.
6. **Long-term planning—**The housing office conducts an assessment of housing needs for all their students from foster care and uses that information to develop a plan to meet their housing needs in the future.

Getting Started for Colleges Without Student Housing

1. **Becoming familiar with local housing resources—**The DL and housing liaison become familiar with community housing resources as well as housing resources and key staff in neighboring colleges.
2. **Independent Living providers—**The DL meets with the local IL program provider to learn about the housing resources that are available locally and discuss the ways that the college and the IL program can collaborate to provide housing.
3. **Contracting for housing—**A high-level college administrator meets with counterparts in nearby colleges to discuss the possibility of contracting for housing.
4. **Determining the need for housing—**The DL meets with individual students to assess their housing needs and facilitates a referral(s) to community housing resources and local IL program.
5. **Housing during academic breaks and summer—**The DL works with students to identify housing during academic breaks and summers as necessary.
6. **Long-term planning—**The housing office conducts an assessment of housing needs for all students from foster care and uses that information to develop a plan to meet their housing needs in the future.

Other Basic Needs

Meals, transportation, and healthcare are additional needs that often pose problems for youth from care. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and Chafee ETV funds may be used to help with unmet needs.

If available, food service in dormitories satisfies the need for meals during the academic year but may be unavailable during breaks. For students attending commuter colleges, gaining access to meals can be a difficulty hidden from the view of support service staff. After becoming aware of the need, Seattle Central Community College now provides meal cards for their students from foster care in need of this support. It will be helpful to know how to obtain food stamps and where to find nutrition resources such as local food banks. Colleges that offer summer bridge or other first year experience classes may want to cover the topics of nutrition as well as budgeting, planning, shopping, and preparing meals in these courses.

Transportation may or may not be a problem for youth from foster care. Having access to public transportation information will be useful. Helping students access public transportation passes can be an important resource.

Healthcare may be available through campus programs, Medicare, and private insurance providers funded with Chafee ETV or other flexible scholarships may need to be utilized. Students' needs in each of these areas should be discussed early and revisited from time to time in order to prevent small problems from becoming real barriers to success in college.

Many students will have other basic needs that require support such as accommodations for disability and childcare. These are discussed under supplemental supports in core element #10, below.

Core Element #8: Financial Aid

Financing [the college experience] was the most stressful part…Finances make school difficult. …There is very little time when you are working.

—Ball State University student from foster care

Students who have recently aged out of foster care are almost always independent and living at or below the poverty level.[37] They need a financial aid package that covers all costs of attendance. Youth from care must live on grants, scholarships, loans, work study, and employment. There are usually no family resources to fall back on during a financial crisis. Students may be connected to some members of their biological family, but those families too often do not have resources and or any experience with postsecondary education or training. Colleges need to help these students acquire a full financial aid package using all available public and private funding resources, thereby limiting or eliminating the need for student loans. Fortunately, financial aid options for youth from care have increased in the past few years. In some states, they can receive financial aid packages that cover 100% of the costs of attendance without loans.

Many youth and financial aid counselors may be unaware of all sources of financial aid and support. Federal and state policies have increased the financial resources available to college students currently or formerly in foster care. The Chafee Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) (www.nrcys.ou.edu /yd/programs/etv.html) are available in all states and can provide up to $5,000 annually to eligible college students. Some form of tuition waivers are found in about a third of the states. Some states (e.g., Delaware, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Washington) have created need-based scholarship and grant programs and have given foster youth priority eligibility. Financial aid may be available for specific purposes, such as housing. Each program has its own eligibility requirements, and the requirements for federal programs often vary from state to state.

Accessing these funds can be difficult. Youth need the help of sensitive professionals knowledgeable of the issues they face and the resources available to them. Casey Family Programs' *It's My Life: Financial Aid* and their *Financial Aid Supplement* offer comprehensive information on public and private financial aid options. This guide can be downloaded or ordered free from the Casey Family Programs Web site (www.casey.org).

Special issues related to ensuring a maximized financial aid package for youth from foster care

Early identification and outreach—Due to the time-sensitivity of applying for financial aid, early identification of these youth is critically important. The DL and financial aid liaison work together to reach out to youth from foster care through their high schools, social workers, caregivers, and IL programs. In addition to asking high school counselors to identify and provide information to youth from foster care, DLs or college recruiters who give presentations to students in general should include information and handouts on sources of assistance specific to foster youth.

On the 2008 FAFSA, question 53 asks "Are (a) both of your parents deceased, or (b) are your (or were you until 18) a ward/dependent of the court?" A "yes" answer is a helpful means of identification. Reliance only on the FAFSA is, however, inadequate. Students frequently misidentified themselves on this form due to a reluctance to disclose this information or a failure to understand the terminology used. Student support departments such as minority affairs, TRIO, health services, the assessment center, and disability services can help identify students by adding the question: "Have you ever been in foster care?" and "Have you been in foster care since your 16th birthday?" to the admissions or intake forms for their programs. Having a communication system in place so departments know who to call once a youth has been identified helps ensure that the youth will get the financial aid help needed.

Establishing eligibility for support with a college financial aid liaison—Eligibility for some types of financial aid for youth from foster care depends on a student's independent student status. To answer "yes" to question 53 on the FAFSA, students must have been in foster care **until their 18th birthday**. To be eligible for Chafee ETV funds, youth only need to have been in foster care **for one day between their 16th and 19th birthdays or been adopted from foster care after their 16th birthday**. To know the status a student had in the child welfare or juvenile detention system requires knowledge of how and when the youth entered and left those systems. With this knowledge and an understanding of the eligibility requirements of programs such as Chafee Education and Training Vouchers, the Family Unification Program, housing vouchers, and state grant programs, a financial aid office's trained designated financial aid liaison is in a position to help. Working closely with the student's IL program provider is often helpful. *The Foster Youth Success Initiative Training Manual: a Guide for Financial Aid Administrators* [38] provides a detailed description of how youth enter and

age out of the child welfare and juvenile detention systems in California as well as a clear explanation of the eligibility requirements for the FAFSA and Chafee ETV. This guide contains an excellent model for other states interested in developing a similar training resource that accurately reflects their state's laws and regulations. It is available at www.cccco.edu/SystemOffice/Divisions/StudentServices/StudentFinancialAssistancePrograms/FosterYouthSuccessInitiativeFYSI/tabid/997/Default.aspx. Another useful resource is the National Association of Financial Aid Administrator fact sheet Tips for Completing the FAFSA,[39] which is available at www.nasfaa.org/publications/2005/rfosteryouth072505.html.

Providing ongoing support—Many students will need ongoing support because most financial aid programs designed to assist them have complex requirements and often don't make payments on a timetable that corresponds with college fee payment deadlines. For example, the management of Chafee ETV funds vary from state to state, and the date that funds are dispersed can vary from year to year. If the rent or tuition is due, it matters when the funds are released. Coordinating the various financial aid funding options can be a challenge but often results in a full financial aid package for youth from foster care. The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NAFAA) offers several excellent resources for financial aid counselors pertaining to students from foster care. Visit www.NASFAA.org and enter *foster care* in the **Search** box.

Getting Started

1. **Financial Aid Liaison—**The Financial Aid Office designates a financial aid officer who will assume the role of financial aid liaison to the DL, will develop specialized knowledge of foster care and the resources available to these students coming from care, and will work directly with these youth.
2. **Training—**The financial aid liaison and the DL learn about foster care dependency status and the documentation that is required to prove this status to receive Chafee ETV funds and the separate requirements for the FAFSA. For additional information visit the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators Web site at www.nasfaa.org/publications/2008/cachafee011708.html.
3. **Outreach brochures and posters—**The financial aid liaison works with the DL to develop brochures and fact sheets targeting students, caregivers, and IL providers. These are widely distributed through schools, foster youth advocacy groups, and IL providers. The information is also published on the college's Web site.
4. **Identifying students on intake forms—**The financial aid liaison and DL work with other offices on campus to add a question to their intake forms regarding foster care status.
5. **Working with youth—**The financial aid liaison works directly with students (or through the DL) to help them understand and apply for all financial aid available to them. The liaison pays special attention to timelines and documentation to verify foster care dependency status.
6. **Troubleshooting—**The financial aid liaison works directly with students (or through the DL) to find solutions to financial aid issues as students' needs change.
7. **Asking Sensitive Questions—**When working with students, the financial aid liaison and DL should be trained to be sensitive when they ask delving questions about student financial needs. The *Foster Youth Success Initiative Manual*[40] provides detailed suggestions of how to make sensitive inquiries that are necessary to establish independent student status (FAFSA) and Chafee ETV eligibility.

Core Element #9: Academic Advising and Career Counseling and Supplemental Support

I had a lot of anger and pain to deal with when I started college; all this prevented me from building normal relationships. I didn't trust anybody. I felt ashamed because I came from foster care and moved so much.

—Gloria, student formerly in foster care

Getting off to a good start academically and staying on track to graduation requires proactive academic advising and ongoing support. Tinto[40] emphasizes the importance of providing early academic, social, and personal advising and supports to enhance student persistence and retention. This is critical for students coming from foster care. Because these students are prone to distrust and may be reluctant to seek help, it is especially important for them to establish a trusting relationship with their academic advisor and the campus designated lead. As we've noted, the change from the structures and restrictions of foster care to the independence of college often causes adjustment problems. Staying connected to students through frequently scheduled meetings, periodic e-mails, perceptive questioning, and attentive listening helps to build a strong relationship. Many colleges use an intrusive advising approach, where the advisor makes regular contact and uses early academic alert systems to identify students who are having academic difficulty. If the academic advisor is someone other than the DL, the advisor should make regular contact with the DL to understand factors such as housing or childcare that may be affecting student performance. This working relationship with the DL is also helpful when considering tutoring or mentorship. Where possible, a single individual in the academic advising office can be designated as the liaison to the DL. The student's written consent must be obtained for interdepartmental communication. Designated leads recommend that this consent be obtained at an intake interview between the DL or advisor and the student.

Programs report that some youth from foster care who are approaching graduation may do poorly (either intentionally or subconsciously) in their last classes as a means of continuing in college where they are well-supported. These students, who have experienced repeated loss through separation from family and foster homes, may feel fear or even depression by the loss of connection with their supportive college community once they graduate. The same fears they faced when they aged out of foster care may re-emerge. Engaging students in a well-planned and supported transition from college is important.

Getting Started

1. **Designating Responsibilities for Advising—**With the support of mid- to high-level college administrators, the DL meets with the academic advising office to discuss and determine who will take lead responsibility for advising students. Roles and the liaison relationship are established.

2. **Training—**The DL provides or makes arrangements for training the academic advisor liaison and providing ongoing support to advisors.

3. **Monitoring Student Academic Performance—**Early academic alert/warning systems are monitored or developed as necessary.

4. **Intrusive or Proactive Advising—**Students are provided initial advising and frequent follow-up sessions to build a relationship and monitor academic progress and the need for support. The DL and academic advisor pay careful attention to the student's skill level and the requirements of the coursework being taken.

5. **Tutoring—**Tutoring resources are identified and students are referred to tutors as appropriate. Those referred for tutoring will be monitored to ensure their academic needs are met and they are taking advantage of the support. Additional tutoring resources may need to be developed. The designated lead or academic advisor arranges for tutoring at the earliest indication of difficulty.

Chapter 4—Three Additional Elements to Provide Direct Student Support—Phase 2

This chapter describes the student support service core elements that most programs focus on as areas for growth after students' most basic needs are met. These elements are:

» **Personal guidance, counseling, and supplemental support**—Providing ongoing guidance, professional counseling, and supplemental supports necessary to student success in college

» **Opportunities for student community engagement and leadership—**Providing opportunities for student to engage in college life including developing a sense of community and leadership and advocacy skills

» **Planned Transitions—**Helping youth plan their transition to college, between colleges, and to employment

Core Element #10: Personal Guidance, Counseling, and Supplemental Support

The counseling services saved me when I had my major breakdown my first year at college. I've never had health insurance.

—San Jose State University alumnus of foster care

We have described some of the patterns that life in foster care takes: Most of these youth experienced some degree of abuse or neglect (including abandonment) in their childhood. Following this, they were taken from their birth parents or families and often moved from one foster placement to another. Most youth who "age out" of foster care have no one to provide personal guidance or support as they try to live independently. Professionals assisting these youth in college report that many have ongoing mental health issues as a result of abuse and neglect. Therefore, it is not surprising that, as a group, they are more likely than other young people to need and benefit from personal guidance, counseling, and mental health counseling or therapy.

The increase in mental health issues being faced by college students in general has been recognized as a growing trend,[41] and most colleges have had to increase their mental health supports for all students. After identifying students from foster care, postsecondary education and training programs should prioritize and provide the support they need, recognizing their special risk factors. An individual should be available to connect students to mental health resources already available on campus, as necessary. This individual should also be able to seek out additional community resources, such as mentorship programs. In the absence of support from a trusted source, many youth from care are at high risk of not completing their progrms.

Students coming from foster care may also require support for other exceptional needs. Young people formerly in care are more likely to be single parents than others of the same age in the general population.[42] These students will need help with childcare. Various studies have found that youth in foster care received special education at a disproportionately high rate when compared to the general population of school age children.[43] Once in college, these students will likely need the

The vMentor program of the Orphan Foundation of America (OFA)

OFA's innovative vMentor Program is the only national online mentoring program for college students from foster care. It provides a convenient and highly effective online platform for private communication between young adults and trained volunteer mentors.

The system uses web portal technology to enable exchanges around the clock, as well as access to a host of resources helpful for young adults aging out of the foster care system.

For more information visit the Orphan Foundation of America Web site at www.orphan.org.

help of campus disability services. A recent large-scale study in the Midwest found that 23 percent of the young men from foster care had a substance abuse diagnosis involving drugs or alcohol.[44] Students with substance abuse problems will need to be encouraged to use available counseling support programs.

Getting Started

1. **Identifying available counseling services—**The DL identifies counseling resources that may be available on campus or in the community and maintains a file on the services offered, the qualifications of the clinicians, where they are located, length of commitment, and cost of services. The DL identifies resources such as Chafee ETV funds and Medicare to cover the cost of counseling that exceeds the maximum coverage provided at the college health center.

2. **Identifying human services—**The DL identifies available human service resources on and off campus such as childcare, disability support services, and drug and alcohol counseling.

3. **Identifying mentorship services—**The DL identifies mentorship or college coaching resources that may be available and maintains a file on what they specialize in, length of commitment, and extent of training that mentors have received. The DL discusses mentorship with students and facilitates a referral to such programs when the student is interested and it seems potentially beneficial. These referrals should be done as early as possible in the student's college career. In addition to on campus mentorship programs, virtual mentoring is another option to consider. The Orphan Foundation of America has established a nationwide vMentor program. See the callout box in this section for details.

4. **Guidance and referral for professional services—**The DL builds a relationship with each student and becomes aware of personal problems that require guidance or counseling. The DL provides guidance commensurate with his or her training. The DL facilitates the referral of students to professionals and community resources by discussing the nature of these services and personally introducing them to the service providers. The DL works with students and campus health services to identify sources of funding to meet needs beyond those normally provided.

Core Element #11: Opportunities for Student Community Engagement and Leadership

I created great relationships (through campus-based programs), but I had entered college knowing no one… It might have been better if I had made friends first, so that in my first days at the huge university, I would not have felt so alone or scared.

—Tanisha, college student from foster care

The many temporary home placements youth from foster care often grow up in may prevent them from ever feeling a sense of community. Colleges have the opportunity to make their campus a place where students feel connected to their studies, the faculty and staff, as well as their fellow students. For some, this connection will come through a welcoming staff. Others may find it through their academic major, athletics, campus groups, or a circle of friends at college. To help students feel at home at the college, the DL makes students aware of and creates opportunities for engagement and leadership.

Some colleges have informal clubs for youth from foster care who want to spend time with others with foster care experience. Social connections may grow out of "first year experience" classes or an electronic bulletin board. It should not be assumed, however, that students will necessarily gravitate to clubs or social activities that are created especially for them. Some youth from foster care report that they have little interest in being identified as having been in foster care. Others simply have other pressing time constraints such as childcare, work, and commuting (not to mention studying). This is one of the many areas where seeking student preference is critically important. Outreach to high school students in (or from) foster care is one meaningful way to engage students on campus who have experienced foster care. So are tutoring and mentoring younger students. Some college DLs help students advocate for their unmet needs through regional foster youth advocacy groups. A new organization, Foster Care Alumni of America (FCAA) (www.fostercarealumni.org) may be of interest to students. There are also a number of state organizations created by youth formerly in care that can provide a network of support. Independent Living (IL) providers will know about these organizations.

Getting Started

1. **Identifying opportunities for student engagement—**The DL identifies opportunities for student connection on campus (clubs, athletics, calendar of events, student organization, student government, etc.) and in the community (churches, IL, recreational groups, volunteering, peer mentoring, etc.).

Case Examples of Engaging Students in the Campus Community

Student engagement may look different, depending on the nature of the college, students' life situations, and community resources. These examples illustrate some of the differences.

At **California State University, Fullerton, Guardian Scholars** gather between classes in a comfortable suite of rooms adjacent to the bookstore. The room contains computers, a fax machine, telephone, posters advertising campus events, desks, and comfortable furniture. This is a relaxed place in the center of campus activities where conversation is easy and friendships are obvious. Students and staff joke, ask about dates, and express concern for one another's welfare. Everyone feels clearly connected and at home there.

The **Austin Community College System** has seven campuses spread out over the city. Each campus has an academic advisor champion (ACC's title for DL) for students from foster care. Although students don't have a dedicated gathering place, staff has found ways to get them connected to the campuses through peer-to-peer support. For example, some students speak to groups to explain the needs of emancipated youth and advocate for solutions.

At the **City College of San Francisco,** students may be encouraged to become involved in advocacy groups in the community. Students have provided testimony to the California State Legislature and update other foster youth on legislation through the Alameda County Foster Youth Alliance and the California Youth Connection.

2. **Connecting students to campus activities—**As the DL gets to know individual students, he or she suggests activities that match student interests or personality. If students are forming a strong relationship with one of the liaisons, the DL works with that liaison to suggest activities.

3. **Identifying leadership opportunities—**The DL becomes familiar with IL providers and other potential community partners and discusses opportunities for leadership and advocacy through those organizations or their affiliates. Students are encouraged to become involved and take leadership roles as appropriate such as participating on the advisory committee.

4. **Social events—**With the interest and leadership of students, the DL may organize social and recognition events that are appropriate, appealing, and comfortable. The events at a college where most students live on the campus might be quite different from those at a commuter college. Students with children will need childcare to participate.

5. **Dedicated space—**The DL begins discussions with college administrators about the need for and desirability of a dedicated space where students can study, socialize, use computers, and have a private conversation with peers and staff. Several colleges report that having a dedicated meeting space has greatly influenced student engagement and trust building.

Core Element #12: Planned Transition to College, Between Colleges, and to Employment

I never knew that college was an option for me because I am in foster care.

—High school youth from foster care discussing college

Youth from foster care have had to make many planned and unplanned transitions in their lives, as we have noted. It is the fortunate but rare youth who stays with one foster family over many years. Researchers, investigating the transient nature of the lives of foster youth, describe these short-term living situations as "unstable placements."[45] Youth with four or more placements during their high school years are considered to have a history of unstable placements. Pecora and colleagues report that young adults who had been in foster care experienced an average of 6.5 placements while in care.[46]

This instability frequently means that these youth:

» Have not lived with a consistent expectation that they will, could, or even should attend college

» Have changed high schools several times, often resulting in being behind in credits, not taking college preparation coursework, and not having a consistent guidance counselor or education advocate

» May miss key deadlines for pre-college testing, entrance applications, and financial aid applications

Without a stable family or education advocate, youth need other sources of encouragement in order to consider college as an option and expectation. Like all children, they benefit at an early age from conversations with trusted adults who encourage and expect them to consider college as part of their

life plan. In high school they require support in the process of taking college entrance tests, deciding where to apply, and making applications for entrance and financial aid. Once accepted, they benefit from college bridge programs, college success classes, orientation experiences, and a proactive approach to advising. Students transferring from a community college to a four-year institution need support making decisions as to where to transfer and how to get assistance once enrolled. Finally, these youth will require guidance making the transition to employment once they graduate. This last core element reviews a number of important ways that colleges can support students from foster care through these transitions. As elsewhere, the reader will notice that some of the concepts and strategies have been introduced previously. They are repeated here because this core element covers a lengthy timeframe and because not all users of this framework will have read the entire document.

Child welfare caseworkers, IL program caseworkers, caregivers, educators, mentors, counselors, the courts, and court appointed special advocates (CASAs) are typically the ones responsible for helping students consider and make the transition to college. By reaching out to these individuals, colleges help them help youth become aware that college is an important option that should be considered. These efforts may be basic, such as publishing and distributing targeted brochures and posters or creating Web pages describing campus services. More intensive outreach might include putting on college seminars sponsored by IL program providers, sponsoring an all-day college orientation for high school juniors and seniors in foster care, or creating a summer bridge program or first year experience classes specifically designed for these students.

Youth from care do not have the luxury of going through college without a plan for transitioning from college to a career and independent community living. They must be career-oriented and need solid career counseling to help them stay goal-oriented. To this end, the resources of the career center (such as interest testing, job shadowing, internship and mentorship) should be used early and often. If career counselors are available, it is ideal to establish a liaison that will be prepared to take the time necessary to build a trusting relationship with these youth. As with other liaisons on campus, the career counselor assuming this role should develop knowledge of the unique circumstances of youth coming from care and how these affect current and future employment.

Getting Started: Pre-college and a planned transition through the first year of college

1. **Utilizing existing outreach opportunities and resources—**The DL surveys the current outreach efforts sponsored by recruiters as well as other student support offices and arranges to include information about services available to foster youth in their materials, as well as how to contact the DL.
2. **Brochures and posters—**The DL develops brochures and posters that describe services and that target potential students, service providers, caregivers, and social workers.
3. **Collaboration with IL providers—**The DL contacts the state or county child welfare office to identify IL providers or other organizations that are currently, or would likely be, providing transition services to foster youth or their caregivers. Once identified, the DL makes contacts to discuss opportunities for outreach collaboration.

Make it Happen! The College Experience—A summer program for Washington state foster youth (www.collegesuccessfoundation.org/makeithappen/index.htm)

The College Success Foundation is addressing the need to provide students with an orientation to college with the innovative Make it Happen! The College Experience summer program. The program is the first of its kind, designed to help foster youth develop their own postsecondary education or training plans.

High school students in foster care learn how to apply to college, how to obtain financial aid and how to look for scholarships. They learn the differences between community colleges, technical colleges, four-year baccalaureate institutions and research universities. They talk about majors and minors, internships and work study opportunities. They learn about campus resources and how to manage their time and money. For many, Make it Happen! provides their first experience meeting with successful college students who also were in foster care.

Make it Happen! students leave the four day program with new ideas and hopes for the future, a purpose in high school, plans for higher education and new friends and advocates to support their dreams.

4. **Outreach to foster youth in high school—**The DL, in collaboration with campus recruiters, arranges to make presentations to high school students currently in foster care. The purpose of these presentations is to encourage them to consider postsecondary education and training and to educate them on the process of applying for financial aid, housing, and other critical resources. As the program grows, these outreach efforts should be extended to include middle school students.

5. **Summer housing—**The DL works with the campus housing office to arrange summer housing for students recently emancipated from care who will be enrolling in classes in the fall. In addition to having a place to live during the summer, students need someone on campus to help them make the transition to campus life. A summer bridge program helps solve this problem. Having the DL check on new students can help them adjust and overcome loneliness.

6. **Hosting IL programs on campus—**The DL considers working with IL program providers to provide IL classes on campus.

Transition between colleges

1. **Collaboration with local colleges—**The DL at a community college convenes a meeting or teleconference with counterparts in four-year colleges where students commonly transfer. At this meeting, they discuss support services offered, requirements to access these supports, peer mentors (ideally other youth from care), and other ways that the designated leads can work to assist students transferring between institutions. Although not all colleges have developed a program or assigned an individual with lead responsibility for youth from foster care, fruitful discussions can be initiated with programs designed to assist first generation college students (e.g. TRIO), financial aid offices, minority affairs, and student affairs administrators.

2. **Direct assistance to transferring students—**The community college's DL shares information about support programs in colleges where the student plans to (or may) attend and helps the student make contact with key individuals and offices.

Transition from college to employment

1. **Encouraging career planning—**The DL introduces students to the career center as freshmen and assists them in establishing a relationship with the liaison career counselor. The DL guides students to take full advantage of the complete array of services offered through the career center.

2. **Employment assistance—**The liaison career counselor works with students throughout their college career to help them find employment to supplement their income and give them experiences relevant to their interests and career goals. The liaison works with other campus offices to establish a priority status for students from foster care to gain access to on-campus jobs, work study and internships. Both the DL and the liaison career counselor assist students in finding employment during academic breaks and during the summer.

3. **Career mentorships—**The DL and liaison career counselor work with the campus and business communities to identify career mentorship opportunities. Program champions may be helpful in finding mentors or acting as a mentor.

4. **Career and transition planning—**The DL monitors and supports students during their final year as they plan their transition from school to employment.

Chapter 5—Program Examples

More and more postsecondary education and training programs are initiating support services for students in foster care or coming from foster care. Five of these college programs are profiled here. Information for an additional 13 programs can be found in *An Overview of Post-Secondary Support Programs for Former Foster Youth.*[47] This publication also provides a comprehensive description of the program model used at Ball State University and some Ivy Tech Community Colleges.

Community Colleges

City College of San Francisco

A multi-campus institution, City College of San Francisco (CCSF) provides support to students who are or have been in foster care through its Guardian Scholars Program. Through the dedicated efforts of frontline staff, the willingness of many local agencies to collaboratively solve problems, and the generous funding of private foundations, CCSF has developed an impressive program of outreach, advocacy, and support services that addresses the basic and academic needs of its students currently or formerly in foster care.

Program Description: The Guardian Scholars Program at City College of San Francisco provides support for 150 students, who attend any of the college's 12 campuses. Unlike some Guardian Scholars programs, the City College of San Francisco does not select from applicants who apply to become a Guardian Scholar (GS)—all students coming from foster care may be part of the program. Students are identified as they enter the college system and make application for financial aid or assistance from Extended Opportunity Program and Services (EOP&S). In cooperation with the San Francisco Unified School District, the college sponsors the Guardian Scholars Summer Academy. This six-week program is designed to prepare high school juniors and seniors for a smooth transition from high school to college. As a result of these efforts, the CCSF now has the highest number of Chafee ETV recipients in California. Key components of the Guardian Scholars program at CCSF include:

1. A coordinated program that integrates services from all areas of the college to increase student success
    - » A planning committee with representatives from a broad spectrum of campus-based student services guided the initial development of priorities and activities.
    - » An advisory board with key stakeholders, including students, student services representatives, community agencies, private foundations, and college administration, provides direction and advice on the GSP activities.
    - » The Financial Aid (FA) and EOP&S programs take the lead in identification and coordination of services. CCSF administration has demonstrated its support by funding staff to lead the Guardian Scholars effort.
    - » Students' progress is followed, and they are provided follow-up support services as these are required.
    - » CCSF offers a one-unit course to help them make a smooth transition to college.
    - » A Guardian Scholars club provides students with opportunities to find mutual support and develop leadership skills.

» The six-week Guardian Scholars Summer Academy instituted in collaboration with the San Francisco Unified School District provides prospective and known incoming students with information and learning skills essential to making a smooth transition to college.

2. A formal relationships with local transitional housing providers

   - The Guardian Scholars Program developed a referral relationship with Larkin Street Youth Services. This partnership improved the follow-up from Larkin of referred CCSF youth from care and secured 20 living units at a local housing complex.
   - The Guardian Scholars Program signed a memorandum of understanding with First Place Fund for Youth to provide 30 units of housing for youth from care from the college.

3. A seamless transition into supportive programs for students transferring to four-year educational institutions

   - CCSF works with six four-year colleges in the Bay Area through articulation agreements or memoranda of understanding that include a housing component for youth from care.

Inception and Growth of Program: The GSP at City College of San Francisco began when a financial aid officer took notice of a new form of financial aid designed to benefit youth from care, the Chafee Education and Training Vouchers (ETV). The first years of the voucher program left many questions unanswered. As the financial aid officer learned more about the Chafee ETV funds and began meeting youth from care, he became aware of their needs. His efforts to support these students soon led him to others providing student services on campus as well as those providing support to youth in foster enrolled in the local school district, Independent Living (IL) service providers, and transitional housing authorities. Discussions on how to collaboratively support the students followed.

The early efforts resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of students identified and served. The college identified 56 youth in the 2004–05 academic year. This number grew to 128 by the 2006–07 academic year, and projections predict a continuation of this trend. Although this Guardian Scholars Program started with no additional funding, over time the college recognized that the needs of these students would require a financial commitment in the form of a part-time staff member. The Guardian Scholars program developed at California State University, Fullerton and described later, was the model selected for many of the components necessary to support foster youth. The EOP&S program seemed the natural on-campus student service program to enlist as a leading partner for both identifying students and coordinating services. The Walter S. Johnson Foundation provided additional funding to start a full service program. In the summer of 2007, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation made a second grant to allow this Guardian Scholars Program to expand on its startup efforts.

Austin Community College

Austin Community College (ACC) supports youth from care through its Student Services office. The impetus for developing these services came from the highest level of college policymakers and administration.

Program Description: Austin Community College in Austin, Texas provides support to students on its seven campuses through an academic advisor or counselor on each campus. These individuals,

known as Campus Champions, are drawn from the existing staff. The program, called the Foster Care Alumni program (www.austincc.edu/fca/index.html), is managed through the college's Office of Student Support and Success Systems. This management structure is well-suited to meet the needs of ACC students because it also administers other offices essential to the success of youth from care, such as financial aid, counseling, and academic support. The vice president for student support and success systems, working with the director of community outreach, spearheaded program development, outreach to community-based organizations, communication, and evaluation. A team with representatives from the college, child welfare, and a key community agency developed the Foster Care Alumni Program. The key components of the program are:

» Pre-college outreach through transitional assistance programs in the community

» Early identification of students using Independent Living contacts, word of mouth, posters, a Web site, and targeted brochures

» Outreach to students by the Campus Champions with periodic follow-up contact

» Student services staff collaboration and coordination of services

» Direct referral of students to resources within and outside of the college

» Concerted problem solving on common issues of concern such as housing, transportation, a comprehensive stream of financial support, childcare, and counseling

» Ongoing opportunities for student leadership and advocacy

» Staff training

» Ongoing data collection of student demographics and academic performance

» Local and state advocacy and awareness of foster care alumni (young people who have been in foster care)

» Student club for foster care alumni and friends

Inception and Growth of the Foster Alumni Program: The ACC Foster Care Alumni Program traces its origins to the concern of a prominent citizen who made an inquiry of an ACC trustee as to how the college supported youth from care. Not having a ready answer, the trustee made a similar inquiry of the college president, who turned to the chair of the Academic Human Services Department. The chair determined that, although the college offered many appropriate support services, there was no system in place to ensure that students would gain access to these services. Moreover, the academic outcomes of the students who had come from foster care turned out to be lower than those of the general ACC student population. There was a need to coordinate these services, systematically identifying students coming from foster care, reaching out to them, and collaborating with local foundations and community-based organizations. The vice president for student support and success systems took the lead to bring together key departmental staff and community organizations. The group analyzed baseline data on student performance and invited students to share their experiences in focus groups. A steering committee of key on- and off-campus leaders helped design the service delivery model that was implemented in a relatively short period of time—only six months.

The Foster Care Alumni Program aims to identify and support all students who are currently or were formerly in foster care. During 2006, its first year, ACC identified 72 students who met this criteria. Seventy-six were identified in 2007. In the spring of 2008, 89 students are enrolled. The Foster Care Alumni Program has grown in the number of organizations working in partnership to support these students. In the first year and a half, ACC developed working relationships with the various programs within the state child welfare agency, local housing agencies, the Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Casey Family Programs, and independent contractors who provide Independent Living services.

The program has also grown in terms of staff knowledge and their ability to respond to student needs. Campus Champions meet regularly to learn from each other and from the program's many community partners. In addition, selected Champions attend national conferences to share the FCA program and learn from others. A team from ACC worked as mentors to staff from Seattle Central Community College as they were taking their first steps to develop a support program.

Four-Year Colleges

California State University, Fullerton

In 1998, California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) was approached by a CSUF alumnus and the Orangewood Children's Foundation to explore ways to support three students who were formerly in foster care. The Guardian Scholars program emerged from these early efforts. Selective by nature, the program has been highly successful with CSUF students and is widely viewed as the premier model for colleges wishing to implement a comprehensive support program.

Program Description: California State University, Fullerton supports 40 to 50 youth from care at any time through its Guardian Scholars program. Unlike support programs open to all youth from foster care, such as those at Austin Community College and City College of San Francisco, the CSUF program uses criteria to select some youth from foster care who are likely to need and profit from the support and special status of being a Guardian Scholar. The benefits include priority registration for classes and guaranteed housing.

Not all students from foster care who qualify are selected. For example, some may demonstrate during the selection process that they can succeed without the extra support. Consequently, these students are highly motivated, prequalified for admission, verified as independent students for purposes of financial aid, and have at least a 2.5 GPA. Seventy-three percent of these scholars graduate,[48] a retention rate higher than the general student population at CSUF. The program enjoys the support of influential individuals within the college and community. The college president has consistently been a champion of the program through both his leadership and personal efforts—he even hosts an annual recognition banquet at his home. A successful businessman with ties to both the Orangewood Children's Foundation and the university provides critically important inspiration, advocacy, and financial support. The Orangewood Children's Foundation acted as a catalyst in the creation of the Guardian Scholars program through its advocacy, scholarships for Orange County youth, ongoing student support, and support for the program's professional staff.

The program's motto is "Making Dreams Come True." It pursues this vision by creating a community of learners who individually have access to the attention and resources that allow them to feel at home

on campus and to be successful in their academic endeavors. Two full-time staff members devote their attention to these scholars in a dedicated space located adjacent to the campus bookstore in the heart of campus activities. In addition, liaisons have been identified in each of the critically important student services departments, such as housing, financial aid, and health services.

Guardian Scholars must make a commitment to their own education and to the program. Of the 40 to 50 applicants each year, only 10 to 15 are selected. Once selected, new scholars must commit to a contract with both standard and individualized terms. They must, for example, maintain at least a 2.5 GPA, commit to meet on a prescribed schedule (weekly for new students), and participate in group events.

Orangewood Children's Foundation describes the Guardian Scholars Program as follows:

> The model is designed to provide each student individual attention and access to supportive resources to assist in achieving academic success. No one sector is able to provide the unique ingredients of this program. So, the success of the endeavor is predicated upon a team effort that joins the educational institution, the donors, and mentors. Scholars receive a great deal of individual attention, have access to a variety of educational supports, receive assistance with housing, are linked with a mentor and are encouraged to become part of a community of learning. Combining education with life-skill development and loving support differentiates this program from other scholarships.[49]

Orangewood Children's Foundation has identified those key features it believes to be essential for a full service support program. As noted in Chapter 1, these features form the basis of this framework. The model is also built on the idea that three sectors are essential to the program's success: the educational institution, influential champions outside of the college, and a "catalyst organization." Orangewood's literature describes the role of these sectors. [50]

The educational institution provides:

» A financial aid specialist who helps the student get and maintain a full financial aid package

» Program support in the form of an individual who provides support for each scholar and coordinates extracurricular events

» A guarantee of safe, affordable year-round housing

» Mentors who make a commitment of unconditional support as students navigate the challenges of independence and college life

The champion(s) may provide:

» Engagement with high level college administration

» Assistance with the program's direction and selection of students

» Financial support

» Advocacy

» Mentorship of one or more scholars

» Interaction and inspiration of staff

» Follow-up support of students once they graduate

The catalyst organization provides:

» Support to staff on issues related to foster youth and best practices

» Identification and cultivation of champions

» Expertise in managing difficult situations that may arise

» Networking links with other colleges supporting youth from care

» Assistance with financial resources

» Assistance in recruiting and selecting students

San Jose State University

San Jose State University (SJSU) serves those of its students who come from foster care through the Connect, Motivate, Educate (CME) Society. Started in 2005, the society boasts a membership of 60 youth from care, has recruited 26 mentors, and has assisted over 50 youth in making the transition to college. The CME Society came about as the result of solid social science research, community advocacy, and a commitment at the highest level of the university. A collaborative effort of the many offices in student affairs, the Society has also has had the support of Silicon Valley Children's Fund, a leading Bay Area youth advocacy foundation, and other generous donors.

Program Description: The CME Society is best described by the words chosen for its name: Connect, Motivate, and Educate. CME provides *connections* to essential services for students who were formerly in foster care, with specific attention to obtaining needed financial aid, safe housing, and counseling. To accomplish this, the director of CME has enlisted the enthusiastic support of the department heads in each of the areas of student affairs. For example, the financial aid liaison works closely with students to ensure that they are aware of resources available to them through local, state, and federal resources. The liaison also provides assistance with applications and establishing that students meet eligibility requirements.

Housing is expensive in the Bay Area. The CME society has established priority access to campus housing for its members and coordinates the efforts of the campus housing office with the resources available through the county.

Counseling is available to students on several levels. The director meets frequently with students, provides direct guidance, and (with consent) consults with others on campus such as academic advisors who are also assisting students. Professional counseling services both on- and off-campus are made available to youth as requested and needed.

The Society *motivates* students through its outreach and mentoring programs. CME members reach out to high school students who have interest in and demonstrated ability for a four-year college. The society also recruits professionals in the fields of interest of CME members to provide information and internship opportunities, thus motivating them to pursue their career goals.

The Society *educates* its members in how to secure resources and services necessary for them to be successful in their academic careers. In collaboration with the Silicon Valley Children's Fund, the Society provides educational workshops and materials to youth in high schools on how to prepare for and enter college. More information on the CME Society is available through its Web site, www.sjsu.edu/cmesociety/about/.

Inception and Growth of the CME Society: Influential, committed champions played a huge role in the development of the Connect, Motivate, Educate Society. California's *Higher Education Outreach and Assistance Act for Emancipated Foster Youth*[51] was the precursor to many of these efforts. This law, was passed in 1996, requires state colleges and universities to provide services to support students formerly in foster care.

In 1998, an undergraduate who was formerly in foster care became concerned about a hungry and homeless classmate who had also aged out of foster care. Through his advocacy for his fellow student, faculty and administration became aware that the college was not in full compliance with the law passed two years before. As a result, the Housing Office and Educational Opportunities Program (EOP) offered some support to students from foster care.

Although helpful, the support needed to be more systematic and better coordinated. Two faculty members, both social science researchers, undertook a study of the factors that contribute to the college success of students from foster. The findings of their multiyear study became a powerful motivation for a renewed look at how SJSU provided and coordinated support. [52] A Bay Area philanthropist and two SJSU professors undertook the task of learning how other colleges were providing support. In 2005, their investigation took them to a meeting of the Northern California Council of Colleges, where they learned about the work being done through the Renaissance Scholars and Guardian Scholars programs.

They returned with the resolve to improve support to students attending SJSU. To that end, they coordinated a meeting of stakeholders, including representatives from the Silicon Valley Children's Fund, the California State Department of Family and Children Services, IL providers, SJSU faculty, Honoring Emancipated Youth (a foster care advocacy group), a judge in Santa Clara County's juvenile court, and the SJSU vice president for student affairs. These individuals left this meeting as committed supporters for a new initiative to systematically assist these youth.

The SJSU vice president authorized funding for a part time position for the program that came to be known as the Connect, Motivate, Educate Society. The dynamic coordinator selected to lead this effort immediately worked to expand this cadre of champions to include campus directors of housing, financial aid, student success services, development, and student academic advising. These individuals actively participate on the CME steering committee along with the associate vice president of student services and the champions mentioned earlier. They work together now in an active, committed partnership that is helping to strengthen the support that youth from care receive at the university.

California Polytechnic University, Pomona

The Renaissance Scholars program at the California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (Cal Poly Pomona) takes a comprehensive approach to supporting youth from foster care. Its mission is:

> To empower former foster youth through higher education by providing a broad range of services and experiences that support their university transition and success enabling them to be educated and engaged citizens who go on to lead productive and meaningful lives.[53]

In collaboration with the university's Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), various student support offices on campus, and community services off campus, the program has been successful in supporting a select number of youth from foster care through direct training, ongoing monitoring and intervention, building a social community, engaging students in decision making, and charting a direction for the program.

Program Description: The Renaissance Scholars' stated values (striving for excellence, emphasizing learning, demonstrating resiliency, encouraging and modeling wellness, acting with integrity, exemplifying personal and social responsibility, and cherishing relationships) are reflected in how the program recruits and selects students, engages them in decision making, designs support systems, monitors their progress, and celebrates accomplishments.

Renaissance Scholars collaborates with multiple constituents, including the Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services, to conduct outreach presentations through programs such as Independent Living. The program uses trained scholars to reach out to current middle and high school students in foster care to help them consider college as an important option in their future. Current Renaissance Scholars are an integral part of the important decision making from selecting future scholars to making decisions about celebratory and social events. The program has a rigorous selection process that includes meeting minimum academic requirements, a written application, attending an in-person orientation, a writing sample, and a one-on-one interview with program staff.

As a condition to being a scholar, entering freshman students agree to participate in EOP's Summer Bridge program and the Renaissance Scholars summer seminar, and to enroll in a 2-unit fall seminar. These seminars are designed to help new students make the transition to college and give them an opportunity to become part of the Renaissance Scholars and Cal Poly Pomona communities. In addition, the students are taught self-management and study skills essential for college success.

Renaissance Scholars receive assistance when early signs of difficulty are detected by program staff. Students agree in writing to take full advantage of academic advising and tutoring when they enter the program. Renaissance Scholars participate in several events during the academic year that help build community and support students' needs. The Fall Kick Off and Jump Start Workshops are examples of events that combine social networking with an opportunity to renew a sense of academic purpose. The program also sponsors quarterly social events and the annual Celebration of Excellence ceremony, which recognizes students for exemplary academic and personal accomplishments. Finally, scholars participate in an annual student and staff retreat at an off campus location with workshops on empowerment, team building and trust exercises, and alumni panels on goal attainment. Input from students at this retreat helps shape the direction of the program.

Inception and Growth of Program: The Renaissance Scholars program was started in 2002 with funding from a private foundation that wanted to replicate and document the successful work of the Guardian Scholars program being done at California State University, Fullerton, The program started with 11 students in 2002 and has grown to now serve 40 students. The program staff includes a full-time director and an educational counselor. Two academic advisors from Student Support and Equity Programs, a department under the Division of Student Affairs, also provide additional support. Each has core responsibilities with Renaissance Scholars, EOP, and University Undeclared students.
In 2007 Cal Poly Pomona Renaissance Scholars received the 2007 Blueprint Champion Award at the Creating a Blueprint conference in San Jose, California. Each year the conference awards committee selects a campus program that serves as a "champion" for moving initiatives forward to benefit youth from foster care on its campus, in the community, or for an educational system. Renaissance Scholars was cited for demonstrating outstanding leadership in coordinating the Southern California Higher Education Foster Youth Consortium for foster youth support programs.

π≈3.141592
MINDS ARE LIKE PARACHUTES
THEY ONLY FUNCTION WHEN OPEN
When
are we

Appendices

Appendix A—Program Development Indicators

Core Elements and Indicators for Program Development

The student support services staff interviewed in the preparation of this framework agreed on the importance of the twelve core elements. The paths they took in developing their programs varied considerably, however. Their institutions' missions, funding, state policies, local economic conditions, and other factors accounted for this variation. We have structured this framework around the core elements, breaking them into three groups: those elements that provide a foundation for program development, those that address the most fundamental needs of college students coming from foster care (Phase 1), and those that are important but might be seen as second steps (Phase 2).

We asked the early program implementers to describe how their programs evolved. From their responses, we created the following table of indicators of development. There is no absolute order to these indicators and no timeline suggested for completion. They are offered as starting points for developing a plan of action and monitoring program development progress.

CORE ELEMENTS AND INDICATORS FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Core Element	Indicators of Early Stage Program Development	Indicators of Mid-Stage Program Development	Indicators of Advanced Program Development
1. Designated leadership	» Designated lead (DL) assigned » DL familiarizes self with issues and resources related to youth from care » DL develops systems to identify all youth from care » DL meets, develops trusting relationship with, and tracks students who are youth from care » College offices each establish an individual who acts as liaison to DL » Referral system to liaisons is established » DL conducts outreach to youth in care through printed information » DL seeks support from within and outside college for advocacy and program development (see Champions and Collaborations, below)	» DL and office liaisons actively participate in professional development opportunities and peer networking (see peer support and professional development, below) » DL expands knowledge of campus and community resources (ongoing)	» As time and resources allow, DL meets regularly with students, provides guidance, and makes highly informed referrals based on extensive knowledge of each student's needs

CORE ELEMENTS AND INDICATORS FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Core Element	Indicators of Early Stage Program Development	Indicators of Mid-Stage Program Development	Indicators of Advanced Program Development
2. Internal and external Champions	» Champions make high level college administrators aware of student challenges (in situations where champion awareness precedes administrative awareness) » Internal champions solicit support from within campus community and seek the support of those who might become champions outside the campus community » Internal and external champions use their off-campus contacts to gain support and resources for students » Champions may provide direct support to students	» Internal champions develop new resources. » External champions solicit donors » Champions recognize and celebrate student accomplishments » Champions may use contacts to arrange employment or internships » Champions participate on the advisory committee	» Champions use data to advocate for stable funding. » External champions may host awareness raising events with policymakers, with the target outcome being state policies and legislation that address the needs of college students coming from foster care
3. Collaborations with Community Agencies	» The DL and liaisons identify resources and contacts available within the state and community that support youth from foster care » The DL participates in events sponsored by IL and other service organizations to reach out to potential students and their caseworkers » Community foundations and social service agencies collaborate to share resources and find solutions that will benefit youth from foster care enrolled in college	» Community foundations and social service agencies on advisory committee (see Data-Driven Decisions, below) » DL collaborates with agencies to identify and recruit students Community, foundations, social service agencies, and school districts share student data to improve transition to college » Community agencies assist with recruiting other partners	» College, community foundations, and social service agencies may enter into memoranda of agreement that formalize their relationship and the services to be provided » College advocates for policies that increase community-based support services for students

CORE ELEMENTS AND INDICATORS FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Core Element	Indicators of Early Stage Program Development	Indicators of Mid-Stage Program Development	Indicators of Advanced Program Development
4. Data-Driven Decision Making	» College examines existing data sources for identifying students and their outcomes » Based on desired student and program outcomes, college determines need for additional data » DL establishes a system for tracking data on student outcomes and use of college resources » DL establishes an advisory committee » AC reviews early data and makes recommendations for program development and evaluation » DL uses early alert data to monitor student progress and intervenes based on need	» College administration and advisory committee review student outcome and student resource use data periodically and make recommendations based on that review » College administration uses data to determine need for program adjustments and resource allocation » Program evaluation provided to campus community	» DL shares participation and outcome data with peer institutions » Champions share data as appropriate with potential donors, existing donors, and policymakers
5. Staff Peer Support and Professional Development	» DL identifies support providers in neighboring colleges » DL and liaisons hold informal discussions with counterparts in neighboring colleges » DL and liaisons participate in existing networks, mailing lists, or council of colleges if they exist	» DL attends professional conferences relevant to youth from care	» DL and liaisons develops or participates in existing professional mentorship opportunities » If no mailing lists or Council of Colleges exists, DL works with peers at other colleges, state agencies, or community partners to start one or both

CORE ELEMENTS AND INDICATORS FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Core Element	Indicators of Early Stage Program Development	Indicators of Mid-Stage Program Development	Indicators of Advanced Program Development
6. Sustainability Planning	» The advisory committee reviews, discusses, and approves a sustainability goal and plan (see **Data-Driven Decision Making,** above) » DL initiates long-term relationships with community partners (see **Collaborating with Community Agencies,** above) » DL works to eliminate service delivery redundancies » Data regarding program usage and student outcome are tracked, reported, discussed with the advisory committee and the college administration	» Student participation data should be increasing; data are collected to determine effective recruitment strategies » Student service providers should demonstrate an increased awareness of students' needs; data are collected to understand extent of awareness » Outcome data are provided to funding sources to demonstrate need for appropriate funding » Outcome data are used to establish a continuous improvement plan » An individual in the advancement/development office is assigned responsibility for soliciting financial support to meet unfunded needs of youth from foster care	» Achievements of students and staff are documented and celebrated » Stable funding from both private and institutional sources is secured

Core Elements of Student Support: Phase 1

PHASE 1: CORE ELEMENTS OF STUDENT SUPPORT AND PHASES OF PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Core Element	Indicators of Early Stage Program Development	Indicators of Mid-Stage Program Development	Indicators of Advanced Program Development
7. Year-Round Housing and Other Basic Needs	» DL develops detailed knowledge of college and community housing resources » At colleges with housing, the DL refers youth to the housing office, monitors student housing status, and intervenes to find solutions to problems as needed » At colleges without housing, the DL refers youth to community housing resources, monitors housing status, and intervenes to find solutions to problems as needed » DL and housing office plan to meet unmet housing needs	» DL and housing liaison share knowledge regarding housing resources » Colleges with housing provide priority access to 12-month housing, with meal plan, to youth from care » DL and housing liaison form partnerships with local, state, and federal agencies providing housing resources » DL and housing liaison develop plan to meet emergency housing needs » DL and housing liaison work with students to develop a long-term housing plan » DL and housing office provide advisory committee and administration with housing data. Advisory committee makes recommendations to solve unresolved problems	» Colleges without housing contract with nearby colleges with housing to meet unmet housing needs » College advocates for stable housing options for youth
8. Financial Aid	» College identifies students by adding a question about foster care to application » Liaison in financial aid (FA) is identified » DL and FA liaison assist students with FA forms, conduct follow-up and troubleshoot problems » DL works with students to resolve system-based problems such as ETV checks issued after payment deadlines » DL and FA liaison train IL caseworks and high school counselors on how to access FA for students » DL and FA liaison create and disseminate brochures and posters on FA	» DL seeks resources and advocates for an emergency fund » DL, FA, and development office identify donors willing to assist students whose financial needs are not met by conventional FA » DL or other student services staff provides training for students in basic personal finance including budgeting, money management, and credit	» The college has secured private donors willing to ensure that students do not have to take out loans » FA liaison conducts an annual personalized review of the FA status of each student and confers with each student to resolve any shortfalls or anticipated problems

PHASE 1: CORE ELEMENTS OF STUDENT SUPPORT AND PHASES OF PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT			
9. Academic Advising and Career Counseling, and Supplemental Support	» The DL identifies an academic advisor (AA) who will work with each student during the time the student is in college » The AA meets frequently with the student and develops trust » The DL and AA monitor early academic alerts and intervene quickly » The AA refers students to tutoring and follow-up as necessary	» AA assesses the adequacy of early alert systems and augments with additional systems as required » AA or DL use formal individual education plan that leads directly to a career goal. Students are responsible for monitoring and adjusting their college completion plan	» Colleges establish priority registration for students coming from foster care » Support services used by students are routinely tracked with additional services added or created as necessary

Core Elements for Student Support: Phase 2

PHASE 2: ADDITIONAL CORE ELEMENTS OF STUDENT SUPPORT AND PHASES OF PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

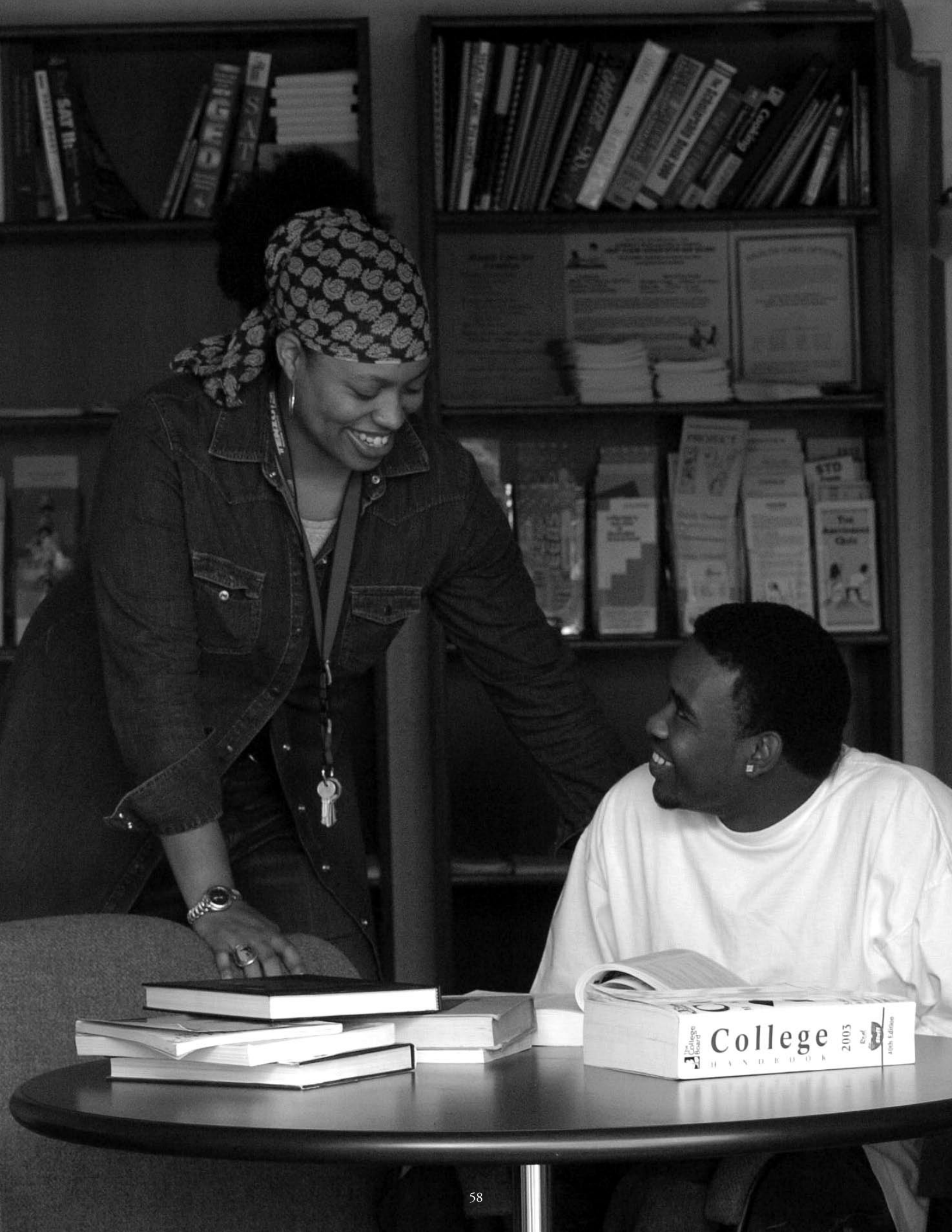
Core Element	Indicators of Early Stage Program Development	Indicators of Mid-Stage Program Development	Indicators of Advanced Program Development
10. Personal Guidance, Counseling, and Supplemental Support	» DL gets to know each student and the stressors that affect him or her; the DL provides personal guidance consistent with skill and training » The DL identifies existing support programs that provide mentorship; DL helps students find a mentor using existing campus or community support programs » The DL refers students to campus and off-campus resources for childcare, transportation vouchers, food banks, and other human services » DL identifies a liaison in the campus disability services office and refers students with identified disabilities » DL identifies one or more liaisons in the campus counseling center, student health center, or other departments training counselors and therapists; as appropriate, the DL refers students to campus counseling and therapy resources » The DL becomes familiar with community mental health agencies, their costs and referral procedures » When necessary and working in collaboration with the campus counseling center, the DL may assist students to get counseling in a community clinic	» The college develops a collaborative relationship with community-based mental health agencies to fill gaps in resources not available on campus » With student consent, the DL consults with the student's social worker or IL staff to understand the issues and resources available to the student through those agencies or organizations	» DL develops a specialized peer mentorship program using more senior youth as mentors » The college recognizes the time-intensive nature of supporting students from care and budgets an appropriate amount for staff time and appropriate » Students have access to affordable health insurance that includes adequate counseling and medication

PHASE 2: ADDITIONAL CORE ELEMENTS OF STUDENT SUPPORT AND PHASES OF PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Core Element	Indicators of Early Stage Program Development	Indicators of Mid-Stage Program Development	Indicators of Advanced Program Development
11. Opportunities for student community engagement and leadership	» With a high level of student involvement, the DL may initiate peer support, social, and celebratory events that are valued by students. Examples might include: end of the quarter pizza parties, group attendance at athletic events, or graduation celebrations » DL helps students take on leadership roles in planning and executing events	» DL encourages students to engage in campus activities and assume leadership roles based on their interests » DL encourages and assists students in advocating for unmet needs by presenting testimony to college and state policymakers » DL encourages and assists students to participate in public speaking and training opportunities based on the student's readiness, availability and interest	» College provides students with a dedicated space to gather, study, and socialize » As the students' role in program development and growth grow, they take on advisory roles and responsibilities
12. Planned Transitions To college	» The DL works with various campus offices (e.g. recruiting, minority affairs, TRIO, and Gear-up) to coordinate outreach efforts to attract potential students » The DL develops and disseminates brochures that target youth, caregivers, and IL program caseworkers » The DL provides local schools, child welfare offices and IL staff with information about postsecondary education and training opportunities and support services	» The DL presents information about academics, college life, financial aid, housing, summer bridge programs, etc. to targeted group meetings sponsored by community partners, school districts, IL programs » The DL provides a first year experience class (or collaborates with other offices that offer such classes) to help students develop personal management and study skills necessary to be successful in college	» In collaboration with local IL programs and community organizations, the DL conducts a day or multi-day college awareness program for prospective high school juniors and seniors in foster care » The DL participates in college tours for youth from foster care and supports local college orientation experiences

PHASE 2: ADDITIONAL CORE ELEMENTS OF STUDENT SUPPORT AND PHASES OF PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Core Element	Indicators of Early Stage Program Development	Indicators of Mid-Stage Program Development	Indicators of Advanced Program Development
Between colleges	» DLs in community and four-year colleges share information about their support programs and discuss issues of common interest » DLs in community colleges share information with students about supports in four-year colleges » DLs in community colleges arrange a meeting of students with the four-year college DLs	» Four-year colleges provide opportunities for housing to students attending nearby community colleges during the summer and breaks between academic quarters	» The DL follows up with students who transfer and inquires about advisement issues
From college to employment	» DL meets with the campus career center, identifies, and trains a liaison » DL introduces youth from care to the career center liaison early in college career » The career center liaison works with students from foster care to assist them with on and off campus employment during the academic year, holiday breaks, and summer	» The career liaison helps students develop a post college career plan during their first and second year of college » The DL arranges for career center-sponsored information, résumé development, and practice interview sessions » The career center liaison and champions use their contacts to assist students explore careers through internships	» The DL helps students to transition to a career by working with them to take full advantage of all school and community career services » The DL follows up with exiting students and graduates to assess employment and independent living status » DL refers former students to community or college services as needed


College
2003
40th Edition

Appendix B—Program Planning and Improvement Guide

Directions: This institutional self-assessment and planning guide is offered as way of structuring a discussion on the topic of what is currently being done and what might be done to assist college students that are currently in or were formerly in foster care. The questions were suggested and reviewed by student support services staff in colleges that have gone through (or are going through) the process of developing support services in their colleges. Some questions are "yes," "needs work," and "no" in nature. Others ask for reflection on how services are or might be provided. Space is provided for prioritizing the need for work, a quick note for the action to be undertaken, dates, and assignment of responsibility. As in any good discussion, more questions should arise that will help focus the planning effort.

CORE ELEMENTS NECESSARY FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

I----------Status and Need for Program Development----------I											
Core Elements and Key Activities	**Status**			**Priority**			**Note/ Action**	**Target Date**	**Start Date**	**Completion Date**	**Responsibility**
	Yes	**Need Work**	**No**	**Low I Medium I High**							
1. **Designated leadership**	**Youth from care need a caring trusted staff person who has primary responsibility to identify them and consistently provide guidance in navigating higher education.** **Notes:**										
1.1 Do we know which (and how many) students are from care?											
1.2 Do we have a program (or programs) with a designated mission specific to coordinating the support needs of these students?											
1.3 If "yes" to number 1.2, is the individual working with these students also working in formal or informal partnership with other offices on campus and in the community?											
1.4 If "yes" to number 1.2, are we conducting outreach to potential students who are have been in foster care?											

CORE ELEMENTS NECESSARY FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

I----------Status and Need for Program Development----------I											
Core Elements and Key Activities	**Status**			**Priority**			**Note/ Action**	**Target Date**	**Start Date**	**Completion Date**	**Responsibility**
	Yes	**Need Work**	**No**	**Low I Medium I High**							
1.5 If "yes" to number 1.2, how are we supporting our current students from foster care?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:										
1.6 If "no" to number 1.2, which offices should be directly involved and which is best suited to take the lead in identifying and supporting youth from care?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:										
2. **Internal and external champions**	**Champions provide direct and indirect program support through influence, contacts, advocacy, and sometimes funding.** **Notes:**										
2.1 How could influential individuals assist the college in supporting students currently or formerly in foster care?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:										
2.2 Have donors approached the college with a special interest in assisting these students or disadvantaged youth in general?											
2.3 If yes to 2.2, would any of these be potential champions?											

CORE ELEMENTS NECESSARY FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

I----------Status and Need for Program Development----------I											
Core Elements and Key Activities	**Status**			**Priority**			**Note/ Action**	**Target Date**	**Start Date**	**Completion Date**	**Responsibility**
	Yes	**Need Work**	**No**	**Low I Medium I High**							
2.4 Are there influential faculty members who because of their personal or professional experience have an interest in the unique needs of these students?											
3. Collaborations with community agencies	**Support programs should have strong collaborative connections with local social services agencies, foundations, and independent living programs. Notes:**										
3.1 Who on our campus is already connected with social service agencies and would be in a position to assist making connections with relevant foster care agencies?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:										
3.2 Which local, county, and state social service agencies, foundations, and Independent Living providers are we aware of that provide service to youth from care?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:										

CORE ELEMENTS NECESSARY FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

I----------Status and Need for Program Development----------I											
Core Elements and Key Activities	**Status**			**Priority**			**Note/ Action**	**Target Date**	**Start Date**	**Completion Date**	**Responsibility**
	Yes	**Need Work**	**No**	**Low I Medium I High**							
3.3 Does our institution already have a contract to provide Independent Living training for caregivers?											
4. Data-driven decision making	**Decisions on individual support and program development should be based on data. 1. Notes:**										
4.1 Have we identified all students on campus are currently or were formerly in foster care?											
4. 2 If yes to 4.1, do we know the outcomes of these students in terms of grades, retention, graduation, engagement in school activities?											
4.3 If yes to 4.1, do we know what they think they need from the college to be successful?											

CORE ELEMENTS NECESSARY FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

|----------Status and Need for Program Development---------|											
Core Elements and Key Activities	**Status**			**Priority**			**Note/ Action**	**Target Date**	**Start Date**	**Completion Date**	**Responsibility**
	Yes	**Need Work**	**No**	**Low | Medium | High**							
4.4 Does our student affairs staff know what they need to know to help these students succeed? (E.g. Who they are? What a typical student's experience might have been? How much trust they might expect? Etc.)											
5. Staff peer support and professional development	**New and established support program staff benefit from belonging to a network of peers in other colleges who support youth from care. Notes:**										
5.1 What other colleges in our region or higher education system provide support to students currently or formerly in foster care? Who takes the lead?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:										
5.2 How could we benefit from communication with the designated leaders in those colleges?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:										

CORE ELEMENTS NECESSARY FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

|----------Status and Need for Program Development----------|											
Core Elements and Key Activities	**Status**			**Priority**			**Note/ Action**	**Target Date**	**Start Date**	**Completion Date**	**Responsibility**
	Yes	**Need Work**	**No**	**Low | Medium | High**							
5.3 What agencies and foundations in our area might be interested and knowledgeable in helping us develop professional development and communication networks?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:										
6. Sustainability planning	**Planning should be undertaken to sustain successful support initiatives. Notes:**										
6.1 Do we have administrative support to take the initial steps to develop a support program?											
6.2 What outcome data do we need to demonstrate the effect of support efforts?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:										
6.3 Who in the community would consider funding our support efforts?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:										

CORE ELEMENTS NECESSARY FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Core Elements and Key Activities	Status			Priority Low I Medium I High	Note/ Action	Target Date	Start Date	Completion Date	Responsibility
	Yes	Need Work	No						
6.4 What can we do to design a support program that is cost effective?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:								

PHASE 1: CORE ELEMENTS TO SUPPORT STUDENT BASIC NEEDS RECOMMENDED AS HIGH PRIORITY FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Core Elements and Key Activities	Status			Priority Low I Medium I High	Note /Action	Target Date	Start Date	Completion Date	Responsibility
	Yes	Need Work	No						
7. Year-round housing and other basic needs	**Youth from foster care need to have priority for available campus housing and access to year-round housing. For campuses without dormitories, they need assistance in finding stable, safe, affordable housing, transportation, and food services. Notes:**								
7.1 Does our campus currently provide access to housing and food services to youth from foster care in the summer and during academic breaks?									

PHASE 1: CORE ELEMENTS TO SUPPORT STUDENT BASIC NEEDS RECOMMENDED AS HIGH PRIORITY FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION

|----------Status and Need for Program Development----------|

Core Elements and Key Activities	Status			Priority Low I Medium I High			Note /Action	Target Date	Start Date	Completion Date	Responsibility
	Yes	Need Work	No								
7.2 If no to 7.1, what process needs to be followed to gain such access?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:										
7.3 Does our campus currently provide priority access to housing for youth from foster care?											
7.4 If no to 7.3, what can be done to gain priority access?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:										
7.5 For colleges that do not have housing, are there other segments of the student body (such as foreign students) for whom we provide or facilitate housing?											
7.6 If yes to 7.5, how can we expand to include youth from foster care?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:										
7.7 Who are the IL providers in our area and what resources do they have available for existing or prospective students?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:										

PHASE 1: CORE ELEMENTS TO SUPPORT STUDENT BASIC NEEDS RECOMMENDED AS HIGH PRIORITY FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION

|----------Status and Need for Program Development----------|

Core Elements and Key Activities	Status			Priority Low I Medium I High	Note /Action	Target Date	Start Date	Completion Date	Responsibility
	Yes	Need Work	No						
7.8 What governmental or private agencies address the low or no income housing issues in our area? How can we collaborate with these agencies?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:								
8. Financial aid—maximize financial aid resources	**Youth from foster care need a financial aid package that maximizes funds to cover tuition and living expenses and minimizes the need for loans. Notes:**								
8. 1 Does one individual in the Financial Aid or other office specialize Chafee ETV funding.									
8.2 Have any local philanthropists identified youth from foster care as a target population for support?									
8.3 Does the college have an emergency fund to assist independent students in a financial crisis? If so, how do students access it?									
8.4 How do financial aid officers use data from the independent student question on the FAFSA form?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:								

PHASE 1: CORE ELEMENTS TO SUPPORT STUDENT BASIC NEEDS RECOMMENDED AS HIGH PRIORITY FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION

|----------Status and Need for Program Development----------|

Core Elements and Key Activities	Status			Priority Low I Medium I High			Note /Action	Target Date	Start Date	Completion Date	Responsibility
	Yes	Need Work	No								
8.5 Are our financial aid officers familiar with the difference between establishing youth from foster status for the FAFSA form and eligibility for Chafee ETV funds?											
9. Academic advising, career counseling, and supplemental support	**Former foster youth benefit from frequent contact with knowledgeable and consistent academic and career counselors. Notes:**										
9.1 Do our academic advisors know which students are from foster care?											
9.2 If "no" to question 9.1, how might they get that information?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:										
9.3 If "yes" to question 9.1, how are they using that information?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:										

PHASE 2: ADDITIONAL CORE ELEMENTS OF SECONDARY PRIORITY TO SUPPORT STUDENT NEED RECOMMENDED FOR SECOND PRIORITY AND ACTION

|----------Status and Need for Program Development---------- |									
Core Elements and Key Activities	Status			Priority Low | Medium | High	Note/ Action	Target Date	Start Date	Comp. Date	Responsibility
	Yes	Need Work	No						
10 **Personal guidance, counseling, and supplemental support**	**Personal guidance, mental health counseling, and health insurance are essential for youth coming from care because of their history of abuse, neglect, and abandonment.** **Notes:**								
10.1 What proactive measures are in place to identify students with mental health issues? Could these measures be extended to target youth from foster care?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:								
10.2 What are the sources of mentorship on campus? Are the mentors trained? Could these resources be extended or training added to make them a valuable resources to youth from foster care?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:								
10.3 What mental health services are available at no cost? Can the number of counseling sessions be increased to meet the needs of youth from foster care?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:								
10.4 What financial aid resources are available to youth from foster care to cover the costs of health care in general and mental health care specifically?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:								

PHASE 2: ADDITIONAL CORE ELEMENTS OF SECONDARY PRIORITY TO SUPPORT STUDENT NEED RECOMMENDED FOR SECOND PRIORITY AND ACTION

|----------Status and Need for Program Development----------|

Core Elements and Key Activities	Status			Priority Low I Medium I High	Note/ Action	Target Date	Start Date	Comp. Date	Responsibility
	Yes	Need Work	No						
11. Opportunities for student community engagement and leadership	**Youth from foster care benefit from inclusion and engagement with campus activities. Some seek out opportunities to be with others from foster care while others choose to avoid such association. Notes:**								
11.1 What are the typical ways that students engage with campus activities and how is that engagement encouraged?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:								
11.2 What barriers might exist to make the engagement of youth from foster care difficult?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:								
11.3 How might these barriers be broken down?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility								
12. Planned transitions to college, between colleges, and to employment	Youth from foster care need assistance in planning for college, applying, and beginning their college career. Once on track to complete an associate of arts degree, many require help transferring to a four-year college. Most youth need help making a successful transition to a career. Each of these transitions involves letting go of one academic home and adjusting to a new one. This adjustment has a different meaning for youth without family support. Notes:								
12.1 Do our college recruiters currently conduct outreach to youth from foster care?									
12.2 If no to 12.1, what opportunities exist to reach out to youth from foster care?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:								

PHASE 2: ADDITIONAL CORE ELEMENTS OF SECONDARY PRIORITY TO SUPPORT STUDENT NEED RECOMMENDED FOR SECOND PRIORITY AND ACTION

|----------Status and Need for Program Development----------|

Core Elements and Key Activities	Status			Priority Low I Medium I High			Note/ Action	Target Date	Start Date	Comp. Date	Responsibility
	Yes	Need Work	No								
12.3 How does our financial aid office use the data from the FAFSA question (question 53 in 2008) to help guide students to support services?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:										
12.4 Is our college transfer office aware of which students are from foster care?											
12.5 If yes to 12.4, how is that information obtained and how is it used?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:										
12.6 Does our college career and/or student employment center have a system for giving priority status to some student job seekers?											
12.7 If yes to 12.6, do students from foster care get priority access to jobs? If not, what process is used to gain priority status?	Notes, priority, target dates, and responsibility:										
12.8 Does our career mentorship programs? How are they accessed?											

Appendix C—Bibliograpy

Recommended Reading

A step ahead for youth from foster care (2007). *Student Aid Transcript*, National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. 18 (3), 24. www.nasfaa.org/publications/2007/antranscript121907.html

Andom, M. (2007). California colleges help foster dreams. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, (52)6, pg. A21. November 9, A31-33. http://chronicle.com/free/v54/i11/11a03101.htm?ccn

Bonnel, T. (2007). Making a difference: California community colleges target problems of foster youth. *Student Aid Transcript*, National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. 18 (3), 26-31. www.nasfaa.org/publications/2007/antranscript121907.html

Davis, R. J. (2006). *College access, financial aid, and college success for undergraduates from foster care.* Washington, DC**,** National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, July. www.nasfaa.org/publications/2006/rnfosterkids072506.html

Draeger, J. (2007). Access & success for the forgotten students. *Student Aid Transcript*, National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. 18 (3), 6-15.www.nasfaa.org/publications/2007/antranscript121907.html

Emerson, J. (2007). From foster care to college: supporting independent students, *Leadership Exchange,* NASPA, 4 (4), Winter. www.nasfaa.org/PDFs/2007/FosterSpread.pdf

Emerson, J. (2006). Strategies for working with college students from foster care. *E-source for College Transitions.* National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition. 3(4), 3-4. http://fyesit.metapress.com/content/8354x240j2j24673

Foster youth offer strategies for postsecondary success. Lumina Foundation for Education, Retrieved September 1, 2006, from Lumina Foundation www.luminafoundation.org/newsroom/newsletter/April2004/fosteryouth.html.

Fostering higher education success (2005). *Inside Higher Ed News,* December 15. Retrieved September 1, 2006, from Inside Higher Ed *www.insidehighered.com/news/2005/12/15/fostercare.*

Fried, T. (2008). Community colleges step Up to Support Foster Care Students. *Community College Journal*, February/March, 39. http://tracyfried.com/news.php

Guess, A. Reaching out to students in foster care, *Inside Higher Education News*, April 7, 2008, Retrieved April 14, 2008, from Inside Higher Ed www.insidehighered.com/news/2008/04/07/foster

Lovitt, T. & Emerson J. (2008). Foster youth who have succeeded in higher education: Common themes. Retrieved April 14, 2008, from NCSET www.ncset.org/publications/viewdesc.asp?id=4195

Martin, J. (2003). Foster youth desire college, study shows, but face roadblocks to learning. *News and Information*, University Communications, Washington University in St. Louis, October 2. Retrieved September 6, 2006, from Washington University in St. Louis http://mednews.wustl.edu/tips/page/normal/452.html

Never give up: How a Montana foster care youth beat the odds (2007). *Student Aid Transcript*, National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. 18 (3), 25. www.nasfaa.org/publications/2007/antranscript121907.html

The Chafee education and training voucher (ETV) program: Six states' experiences (2007),National Foster Care Coalition and Casey Family Programs, Washington, D.C. www.nationalfostercare.org

Walters, A. K. (2006). Colleges Should Do More to Serve Former Foster Children, Report Says. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, (52)6, pg. A21. http://chronicle.com/subscribe/login?url=/daily/2006/08/2006080806n.htm

Walters, A. K. (2005). Helping foster children feel at home in college. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, (51)49, pg. A21. http://chronicle.com/weekly/v51/i49/49a02101.htm

Resources

An overview of post-secondary support programs for former foster youth (2007). Ball State University, Muncie, IN www.bsu.edu/ssrc/guardianscholars

A road map for learning: Improving educational outcomes in foster care (2007). Casey Family Programs, Seattle, WA. www.casey.org/Resources/Publications/RoadMapForLearning.htm

Blueprint for change: Education success for children in foster care (2008). Legal Center for Foster Care and Education, American Bar Association. www.abanet.org/child/education

Casey Life Skills, Assessment Supplements, Education Level IV, Post Secondary. www.caseylifeskills.org/pages/assess/assess_supplement.htm

Education and Training Vouchers (ETVs) information by state. www.statevoucher.org

It's My Life: Employment (2006). Casey Family Programs, Seattle, WA. www.casey.org

It's My Life: Housing (2006). Casey Family Programs, Seattle, WA. www.casey.org

It's My Life: Postsecondary Education and Training and *Financial Aid Excerpt* (2006). Casey Family Programs, Seattle, WA. www.casey.org/Resources/Publications/IMLPostsecondaryEd.htm

The Chafee educational and training voucher (ETV) program: Six states' experiences (2008). National Foster Care Coalition and Casey Family Programs. www.casey.org/Resources/Publications/ETV.htm

Endnotes

1 Martin, 2003

2 Weston & Cheng, 2007

3 United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, 2007

4 United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, 2007

5 Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2003; Jones, 1984; Pecora P. , et al., 2005; Yu, Day, & Williams, 2002

6 Pecora P. , et al., 2005 p. 36

7 Courtney, Dworsky, Cusick, Havicek, Perez, & Keller, 2007; Davis, 2006; Institute for Higher Education Policy, 2005

8 Casey Family Programs, 2005

9 Davis, 2006; Legal Center for Foster Care & Education, 2007; Casey Family Programs, 2006

10 Emerson, From Foster Care to College: Support Independent Students, 2007; Fried, Community Colleges Step Up to Support Foster Care Students, 2008; Andom, 2007; Walters, Colleges Should Do More to Serve Former Foster Children, Report Says, 2006; Walters, Helping Foster Children Feel At Home in College, 2005; Emerson, E-Source for College Transition, 2006

11 Davis, 2006, p. 35

12 The National Child Welfare Resource Center for Youth Development, 2006

13 United States Department of Health and Human Services: Administration for Children and Families, 2007

14 GovTrack.us. S. 1642—110th Congress, 2007); GovTrack.us H.R. 4137—110 the Congress, 2007

15 State of California Legislature, 1996

16 Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2007

17 The National Child Welfare Resource Center for Youth Development, 2006

18 Honoring Emancipated Youth, 2007

19 Deming, 2000

20 Davis, 2006 p. 35

21 United States Department of Education, 2008

22 National Center for the First-Year Experience & Students in Transition

23 Emerson, From Foster Care to College: Support Independent Students, 2007, p. 8

24 Orangewood Children's Foundation, n.d.

25 United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2006

26 United States Department of Health and Human Services: Administration for Children and Families, 2007

27 United States Department of Health and Human Services: Administration for Children and Families, 2007

28 Allen & Kazis, 2007

29 Retention rates are the percentage of freshmen that re-enroll the next academic year as sophomores. Persistence is a student's continuation behavior leading to a desired goal.

30 Sanchez-Zarama, 2007

31 McNamara, 2008

32 United States Department of Education, 2006

33 Schultz & Mueller, 2008

34 Orangewood Children's Foundation, n.d.

35 National Resource Center for Youth Development, 2004

36 State of California Legislature, 1996

37 Pecora P. , et al., 2006; Casey Family Programs, 2004

38 Fried, 2008 Foster Youth Success Initiative Manual, 2007

39 National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, 2005

40 Tinto, 2004

41 Kadison & DiGeronimo, 2004

42 Courtney, Dworsky, Cusick, Havicek, Perez, & Keller, 2007

43 Courtney, Terao, & Bost, 2004; Smithgall, Gladden, Howard, George, & Courtney, 2004

44 Courtney, Dworsky, Cusick, Havicek, Perez, & Keller, 2007

45 Hartnett, Leathers, Falconnier, & Testa, 1999; Webster, Barth, & Needell, 2000

46 Pecora P. , et al., 2005

47 Social Science Research Center College of Sciences and Humanities Ball State University, 2007

48 Johnson, 2007

49 Orangewood Children's Foundation, n.d. p.1

50 Orangewood Children's Foundation, n.d.

51 State of California Legislature, 1996

52 Merdinger, Hines, Osterling, & Wyatt, 2005

53 Division of Student Affairs, Cal Poly Pomona, 2007

References Cited

Allen, L., & Kazis, R. (2007). *Building a culture of evidence in community colleges: Lessons from exemplary institutions.* Retrieved April 7, 2008, from Jobs for the Future Web site: http://www.jff.org/Knowledge_Center.php

Andom, M. (2007, November 9). California Colleges Help Foster Dreams. *Chronicle of Higher Edudation, 52* (6), p. A21.

Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2003). *Connected by 25: A Plan for Investing in Successful Futures for Foster Youth.* Retrieved April 12, 2008, from Annie E. Casey Foundation Web site: http://www.aecf.org/KnowledgeCenter/Publications.aspx?pubguid=%7B061111FD-7991-4BFE-A794-48E1A4354BCF%7D

Bonnel, T. (2007). Making a Difference: California Community Colleges Target Problems fo Foster Youth. *Student Aid Transcript , 18* (3), 26-31.

California State University, Fullerton. (n.d.). *California State University, Fullerton*. Retrieved March 25, 2008, from California State University, Fullerton Web site: http://www.fullerton.edu/guardianscholars/

California State University, Fullerton: Guardian Scholars. (1998). *Guardian Scholars Home Page*. Retrieved April 11, 2008, from California State University: http://www.fullerton.edu/GuardianScholars/default.htm

Casey Family Programs. (2005, May). *Frequently Asked Questions I, II, and III: Helping child welfare professionals, advocates, and young people to use and udnerstand the Chafee Foster Care Indpendence Program and the Chafee Education and Training Voucher Program.* Retrieved April 7, 2008, from Casey Family Programs Web site: http://www.casey.org/Resources/Publications/ChafeeFAQ.htm

Casey Family Programs. (2004). *It's My Life: Employment.* Retrieved April 7, 2008, from Casey Family Programs Web site: http://www.casey.org/Resources/Publications/ItsMyLIfeEmployment.htm

Casey Family Programs. (2006). *It's My Life: Postsecondary Education and Training Guide and Financial Aid Excerpt.* Seattle: Casey Family Programs.

Courtney, M., Dworsky, A., Cusick, G., Havicek, J., Perez, A., & Keller, T. (2007, December). *Executive Summary: Midwest Evaluation of Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth: Outcomes at Age 21*. Retrieved April 6, 2008, from The Chapin Call Center for Children at the University of Chicago Web site: www.chapinhall.org/article_abstract.aspx?ar=1355

Courtney, M., Terao, S., & Bost, N. (2004). *Midwest evaluation of the adult functioning of former foster youth: Conditions of youth preparing to leave state care.* Chicago: Chapin Hall Center for Chiildren at the University of Chicago.

Davis, R. J. (2006, July). *College Access, Fianancial Aid, and College Success for Students from Foster Care.* Retrieved April 9, 2008, from National Association of Financial Aid Administrators Web site: www.nasfaa.org/subhomes/researchhome/nasfaafostercare%20report.pdf

Deming, W. E. (2000). *Out of the Crisis* . Cambridge: MIT Press.

Division of Student Affairs, Cal Poly Pomona. (2007). *Renaissance Scholars: Empower former foster yout through higher education.* Pomona: California Poly Pomona, Division of Student Affairs.

Emerson, J. (2006). *E-Source for College Transition.* Retrieved March 22, 2008, from National Resource Center for the Firt-Year Experience and Students in Transition Web site: http://fyesit.metapress.com/content/8354x240j2j24673/?p=c8220cc65b944001944ebbf0649de009&pi=1

Emerson, J. (2007). From Foster Care to College: Support Independent Students. *Leadership Exchange: Solutions for Student Affairs Management*, 6-10.

Fried, T. (2007). *2008 Foster Youth Success Initiative Manual.* Retrieved April 12, 2008, from CA.GOV The California Community College System Office Web site: http://www.cccco.edu/SystemOffice/Divisions /StudentServices/StudentFinancialAssistancePrograms/FosterYouthSuccessInitiativeFYSI/tabid/997/Default.aspx

Fried, T. (2008). Community Colleges Step Up to Support Foster Care Students. *Community College Journal* .

GovTrack.us H.R. 4137--110 the Congress. (2007). *H.R. 4137.* Retrieved April 7, 2008, from GovTrack.us Web site: http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h110-4137

GovTrack.us. S. 1642--110th Congress. (2007). *S. 1642" Higher Eduction Amendments pf 2007.* Retrieved April 7, 2008, from GovTrack.us Web site: http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=s110-1642

Hartnett, M., Leathers, S., Falconnier, L., & Testa, M. (1999). *Placement stability study.* Urbana: Child and Famil Research Center.

Honoring Emancipated Youth. (2007, July 11). *Honoring Emancipated Youth: Essential Elements of On-Campus Support Programs for Former Foster Youth.* Retrieved April 6, 2008, from Honoring Emancipated Youth Web site: http://www.heysf.org/pdfs/HEY_EssentialElementsCollegeSupportPograms.pdf

Inside Higher Ed. (2005, December 15). *Fostering Higher Education Success.* Retrieved April 8, 2008, from The Inside Higher Ed Web site: http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2005/12/15/fostercare

Institute for Higher Education Policy. (2005). *Opportunities for Foster Youth.* Retrieved April 7, 2008, from Institute for Higher Education Policy Web site: http://www.ihep.org/press-room/news_release-detail.cfm?id=89

Johnson, G. (2007, June 7). Program Director of the Guardian Scholars Program at California State University, Fullerton. (L. F. Bassett, Interviewer)

Jones, M. A. (1984). *West Virginia's former foster children, their experience. and lives as young adults.* Washington, CC: Child Welfare League.

Kadison, R. D., & DiGeronimo, T. F. (2004). *College of the Overwhelmed: The Campus Menatl Health Crisis and What to do About It.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Legal Center for Foster Care & Education. (2007). *Blueprint for Change: Education Success for Children in Foster Care*. Retrieved March 22, 2008, from The American Bar Association Web site: www.abanet.org/child /education/blueprint

Martin, J. (2003). *Foster Youth desire college, study shows, but face roadblocks learning.* Retrieved April 14, 2008, from Washington University in Saint Louis, School of Medicine, News and Information: http://mednews.wustl .edu/tips/page/normal/452.html

McNamara, C. (2008). *Guidelines and Framework for Developing a Logic Model*. Retrieved March 25, 2008, from Free Management Library Web site: http://www.managementhelp.org/np_progs/np _mod/org_frm.htm

Merdinger, J. M., Hines, A. M., Osterling, K. L., & Wyatt, P. (2005). Pathways to College for Former Foster Youth: Understanding Factors that Contribute to Educational Success. *Child Welfare, 84* (6), p 867-896.

National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. (2005, July 25). *Foster Youth: Tips for Completing the FAFSA.* Retrieved April 11, 2008, from NASFAA.org: http://www.nasfaa.org /publications/2005/rfosteryouth072505.html

National Center for the First-Year Experience & Students in Transition. (n.d.). *The First-Year Experience Monograph Series*. Retrieved April 10, 2008, from National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience & Students in Transition Web site: http://www.sc.edu/fye/publications/catalog/acs/index.html

National Resource Center for Youth Development. (2004). *Improving Outcomes for Older Youth: What Judges and Attorneys need to Know.* Retrieved April 12, 2008, from National Resource Center for Youth Development: http://www.nrcys.ou.edu/yd/resources/publications.html

Orangewood Children's Foundation. (n.d.). *Guardian Scholars "Making Dreams Come True".* Retrieved April 14, 2008, from Orangewood Children's Foundation: http://www.orangewoodfoundation.org/docs /Guardian%20Scholars/GS-ProgramDescr%20revised.pdf

Orangewood Children's Foundation. (n.d.). Guardian Scholars Program. Retrieved June 12, 2008, from www.orangewoodfoundation.org/programs_scholars.asp

Orphan Foundation of America. (2003-2007). *StateVoucher.org*. Retrieved March 20, 2008, from Orphan Foundation of America StateVoucher.org Web site: https://www.statevoucher.org/

Pecora, P., Kessler, R., O'Brien, K., White, C., Williams, J. H., English, D., et al. (2006). Educational and employment outcomes of adults formerly placed in foster care: Results from the Northwest Foster Care Alumni Study. *Children and Youth Services Review , 28* (12), 1459-1481.

Pecora, P., Kessler, R., Williams, J., O'Brien, K., Downs, C., English, D., et al. (2005). *Improving family foster care: Findings from the Northwest Foster Care Alumni Study.* Seattle: Casey Family Programs.

Sanchez-Zarama, X. (2007). Guardian Scholars Program: Creating housing communities for former foster youth. *Creating a Blueprint: Building Support for Students from Foster Care on Higher Education Campuses* (pp. 5-6). San Jose: Silicon Valley Children's Fund.

Schultz, J. L., & Mueller, D. (2008). *Draft Building a data sharing network of scholarship program for alumni of foster care, Pilot phase process and findings.* Saint Paul: Wilder Research.

Smithgall, C., Gladden, R., Howard, E., George, R., & Courtney, M. (2004). *Educational experiences of chiildren in out-of-home care.* Chicago: Chapiin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago.

Social Science Research Center College of Sciences and Humanities Ball State University. (2007). *An Overview of Post-Secondary Support Programs for Former Foster Youth.* Muncie: Social Science Research Center College of Sciences and Humanities Ball State University.

State of California Legislature. (1996, September 30). *Higher Education Outreach and Assistance Act for Emancipated Foster Youth*. (S. o. California, Producer) Retrieved March 25, 2008, from Official California Legislative Information Web site: http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/95-96/bill/asm/ab_2451-2500 /ab_2463_bill_960930_chaptered.pdf

The National Child Welfare Resource Center for Youth Development. (2006). *State by State Fact Pages.* Retrieved March 20, 2008, from The National Child Welfare Resource Center for Youth Development Web site: http://www.nrcys.ou.edu/yd/state_pages.html

Tinto, V. (2004). *Student Retention and Graduation: Facing the truth, living with the consequences.* Washington D.C.: The Pell Institute.

United States Department of Education. (2008). *FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Financial Aid*. Retrieved April 7, 2008, from United States Department of Education Web site: http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/

United States Department of Education. (2006, May 23). *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Regulations (FERPA)*. Retrieved April 12, 2008, from United States Department of Education Web site: http://www.ed.gov /policy/gen/reg/ferpa/index.html

United States Department of Health and Human Services. (2006, April 19). *The John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program*. Retrieved April 12, 2008, from United States Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Youth and Families Web site: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs_fund /state_tribal/jh_chafee.htm

United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. (2007). *United States Department of Health and Human Services AFCARS report: Preliminary FY 2005 Estimates of September 2006/.* Retrieved April 8, 2008, from United States Department of Health and Human Services Web site: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats_research/afcars/tar/report13.htm

United States Department of Health and Human Services: Administration for Children and Families. (2007, October 9). *John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program*. Retrieved April 12, 2008, from United States Department of Health and Human Services: Administration for Children and Families Web site: www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/region10/programs/region_10_chafee.html

Virginia General Assembly. (2008, January). *Code of Virginia 23-7.4:5.* Retrieved March 20, 2008, from Virginia General Assembly Legislative Information System Web site: http://198.246.135.1/cgi-bin /legp504.exe?000+cod+23-7.4C5

Walters, A. (2006). Colleges Should Do More to Serve Former Foster Children, Report Says. *Chronicle of Higher Education, 52* (6), p. A21.

Walters, A. (2005). Helping Foster Children Feel At Home in College. *Chronicle of Higher Education, 51* (49), p. A21.

Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board. (2007). *Paying for College: Passport to College Promise Scholarship.* Retrieved April 7, 2008, from Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board Web site: www.hecb.wa.gov/paying/waaidprgm/Passport.asp

Webster, D., Barth, R., & Needell, B. (2000). Placement Stability for Children in Out-of-Home Care: A Longitudinal Analysis. *Child Welfare , 79* (5), p 14-32.

Weston, M., & Cheng, K. (2007). Living in survival mode: Foster care youth talk about their needs. *Student Aid Transcript , 18* (3), 16-23.

Yu, E., Day, P., & Williams, M. (2002). *Improving educational outcomes for youth in care: A National Collaboration.* Washington, D. C.: CSLA Press.

Supporting Success: Improving Higher Education Outcomes for Students from Foster Care

Acknowledgments

We want to thank the following individuals and their organizations for their contributions in providing information or reviewing drafts of this framework: Kevin Bristow, California State University, East Bay; Kathleen E. Christensen, Austin Community College; Loretta Edelen, Austin Community College; Pamela Fleming, Cuyamaca College; Marcy Foster, College of the Redwoods; Amy Freeman, Stuart Foundation; Tracy Fried, Tracy Fried and Associates; Jaymie Gonzaga, Miracosta College; Alishea R. Hawkins, Ball State University; Connie Hernandez-Robbins, San Jose State University; Mary Anne Herrick, College Success Foundation; Gene Howard, Orangewood Children's Foundation; Grace C. Johnson, California State University, Fullerton; Jenny Jones, San Jose City College; Giulii Kraemer, California State University, Fullerton; Kelly Kravitz, Centralia Community College; Diana LaMar, Orangewood Children's Foundation; Heidi Lockhart, Mount San Antonio College; Daren Maeda, Linkage to Education; Michael McPartlin, City College of San Francisco; Karen Micalizio, Butte College; Colleen Montoya, Seattle University; Joe Murray, National Academic Advising Association (NACADA);Tina Raheem, Orphan Foundation of America; Sara Razavi, Honoring Emancipated Youth; Theresa Reed, Pasadena City College; Xochitl V. Sanchez-Zarama, San Francisco State University; Carol Schneider, Seattle University; Ruth Sherman, Pathways to College Network; Denis Udall, Walter S. Johnson Foundation; Koji M. Uesugi, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona; and Jenny Vinopal, California State University, Office of the Chancellor.

Principal Writers

Lee Bassett, Consultant

John Emerson, Casey Family Programs

casey family programs
fostering families. fostering change.

325-3230-08