

DRAFT
September 1, 2010



One Department, One Vision, One Mission, One Core Set of Values

Youth in Transition

and

Mental Health Transformation Collaboration



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Introduction

Through the support of the Mental Health Transformation Project and the leadership of the Department of Social and Health Service's (DSHS) Children's Administration and Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration, *The Youth in Transition and Mental Health Transformation Collaboration* was formed. The focus of the work is to evaluate issues related to the special populations of *Transition Youth and Bridging to Adulthood*.

The Youth in Transition and Mental Health Transformation Collaboration is providing leadership to identify and recommend transformation policies that promotes embedded and integrated services and supports for youth with special needs, including substance abuse and mental illness, who are at risk, in transition and/or bridging to adulthood in Washington State.

The Youth in Transition and Mental Health Transformation Collaboration is composed of two cross system committees representing agency policy leadership and program specialists who champion services for youth in transition. Agencies represented in the cross system collaboration are Department of Social and Health Services, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and Department of Correction. We are deeply appreciative of the commitment and dedication of the collaboration. Their expertise and unwavering passion to advocate for youth is commendable.

The intended and expected benefit of the work of the Youth in Transition and Mental Health Collaboration is to improve opportunities for youth to enter adulthood with needed access to vital supports that promote success including:

- ❖ primary and behavioral healthcare;
- ❖ housing;
- ❖ education and workforce development;
- ❖ employment;
- ❖ ongoing relationships with family and natural supports and
- ❖ services to increase skills and abilities to manage self, relationships and adult life developments.

The Collaboration focused their work on three primary goals.

- ❖ Identify the target population(s) of the Youth in Transition and priorities to transform services through an evaluation of the current assets, gaps and barriers for Youth in Transition.
- ❖ Identify a process to develop and fund a Wraparound process of service delivery to DSHS youth, who meet a defined threshold of need when discharged from DSHS funded residential facilities, foster care and outpatient mental health.

- ❖ Develop and implement Trauma Informed Care Training for DSHS staff, community level staff, foster parents and others who provide care to youth receiving DSHS services.

The Youth in Transition and Mental Health Transformation Collaboration has worked to provide perspective of their specialized cross systems knowledge. Our hope is our work will be embedded into a sustainable cross systems commitment to support Youth in Transition. We believe this report will provide leadership with significant information in which to raise awareness regarding Youth in Transition and stimulate crucial dialogue that will ultimately promote planful action to bridge our youth to adulthood. For youth, who are in transition to adulthood in our state's system of care, we are their net of safety, support and opportunity. The following report serves a summary of findings as of September 1, 2010.

Executive Summary

The following report from *The Youth in Transition and Mental Health Transformation Collaboration* is intended to identify and recommend transformation policy and program positions that promotes embedded and integrated services and supports for youth with special needs, including substance abuse and mental illness, who are at risk, in transition and/or bridging to adulthood in Washington State.

Youth in Transition are navigating through a distinct developmental stage, which has largely been under supported by research. 21st Century youth in transition are experiencing significantly different challenges than previous generations. For youth to have improved opportunities to enter adulthood vital supports and skill acquisition and generalization are critical in the life domains of:

- ❖ primary and behavioral healthcare;
- ❖ housing;
- ❖ education and workforce development;
- ❖ employment;
- ❖ ongoing relationships with family and natural supports and
- ❖ services to increase skills and abilities to manage self, relationships and adult life developments.

Many youth in transition also have significant histories of exposure to childhood trauma. Trauma may contribute to psychiatric conditions for a percentage of the youth population. Trauma can also prompt behaviors that may be inaccurately interpreted or labeled. Ill-informed responses or approaches to trauma-influenced behaviors may provide undesirable outcomes that are ineffective or harmful. Trauma Informed Care is more than providing good customer service it is a cultural shift of an organization to provide improved person centered services.

Youth are fluid throughout our systems and our ultimate goal is to provide youth with adult independence. To offer effective serves for youth in transition sustainable cross systems collaborations are necessary ensure youth are having the best opportunities within our care. Collaborations also promote statewide efficiencies through leveraging of resources.

Wraparound Principles are the bedrock of services that guides our performance and outcomes of person centered services for youth. Principles should be reflected in all aspects of performance including language, staff behaviors, planning, policy, procedures, contracting and evaluation.

In recognition that Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice are responsible for some of the state's most complex youth with co-occurring issues, who are at risk of moving deeper into the criminal justice and adult systems of care, we are supporting the pilots of Integrated Case Management Collaborations within local jurisdictions using a Wraparound approach.

In the evaluation of Washington State's Assets, Barriers, and Gaps of services for youth in transition, it should first be highlighted that by large there are many assets available for youth in transition to adulthood and the staff who facilitate and provide services for youth deliver extraordinary services to our state's most complex youth. Washington State has several opportunities to partner and replicate effective services.

One of the most significant gaps in our system of care is the lack of ongoing cross system collaboration. The proactive work of agencies does not have a forum in which to partner and there is replicable services that sub-populations could benefit from. A collaborative approach to planning youth care is person centered and extends ownership of *one department serving one youth*.

The climate and timing are aligned to improve services for youth in transition to adulthood through the resurgence of Wraparound programs, implementation of Trauma Informed Training and cross system collaboration to leverage service assets and overcome barriers and gaps for the success of our next generation of adults in Washington State.

Transition to Adulthood

Coming of Age

Transition to Adulthood can be described broadly as the process in which children develop and become adults. “Youth in Transition” are those youth who are navigating through this distinct developmental stage that is between and sometimes amidst childhood and adulthood. In the developmental stage of transition to adulthood, youth are experiencing no less than:

- ❖ physical maturation
- ❖ emotional development
- ❖ self identity and expression
- ❖ social engagement and connection
- ❖ cultural engagement and connection
- ❖ community identity
- ❖ independence from family
- ❖ establishment of new and/or permanent adult relationships
- ❖ independence from the identity and structure of grade, middle and high schools
- ❖ application of accumulative knowledge, skills, and abilities to formulate higher education or employment decisions
- ❖ autonomy of financial earnings and management
- ❖ assumption of responsibility for basic life needs including food, clothing, health care and housing

Despite the significance of this formative time in a youth’s life, the transition to adulthood is under supported by research. Thus there are limited evidenced based practices and programs. However, history has always presented the opportunity for individuals to experience a spectrum of challenges during the transition to adulthood. Memorable experiences of this time in life are common and everyone can relate that the transition to adulthood complex. The steps and missteps on the winding pathway is part of formulating identity and autonomy in the role of adulthood. 21st Century youth in transition are experiencing significantly different challenges than their parents and are even farther removed in experience from their grandparents.

Some of the global factors contributing to the changes for youth in transition include:

- ❖ As technology continues to advance, more and more employment opportunities require highly specialized knowledge, skills and abilities that can only be achieved through higher education.
- ❖ Fewer jobs are available for labor or non-skilled positions. When available, these jobs often provide lower salary and benefits and can be competitive with previous generations of labors and others seeking part time employment.

- ❖ Higher education costs continue to rise. Many youth are dependent upon their families for financial support to pay for education and life supports until established in employment.
- ❖ Employers have a broader pool of candidates to select from due to mobility and advanced communications of our society.
- ❖ Employers are not only seeking knowledge and skills, but they are looking for employees who demonstrate emotional intelligence i.e....soft skills.
- ❖ A staggering economy has shrunk employment opportunities while the cost for housing, transportation, insurance, health care, food and other basic life necessities continues to rise.
- ❖ Youth are entering into marriages later than prior generations and staying with families longer.
- ❖ Minority youth are disproportionately represented in childhood systems of care which can translate to adult systems.
- ❖ Due to the specialty and competition of careers youth need to identify career tracks and education priorities as early on as middle school as opposed to previous generations who could address these issues upon entry to college.
- ❖ Youth are challenged by generational stereotyping through unconstructive media which has profiled and generalized the negative youth behaviors.
- ❖ The privacy of youth issues is moving toward more public dissemination, including publication of juvenile court proceedings.
- ❖ A significant number of youth are growing up in situational and generational poverty.
- ❖ Youth in military families are experiencing family members being deployed for multiple tours of duty.

Youth in Transition

The significance and value of a guided Transition to Adulthood simply cannot be underestimated when seeking positive life outcomes. Youth in transition are *interdependent* upon family, natural supports and systems of care to reach adulthood. Youth in transition who have an interdependency of supports and have acquired skills are positioned to generalize and apply supports and skills to move into adulthood. Youth who experienced a lack of supports and skills are more likely to encounter negative or life altering experiences that foster system(s) intervention or dependence.

Youth with mental health issues are even more vulnerable to encounter challenging delays and barriers as they transition to adulthood. Some youth have experienced the perils of adverse childhood experiences and struggle with trauma issues. In addition to managing their disability and meeting developmental milestones, many youth with mental health issues must also:

- ❖ Become independent from court ordered and voluntary family services (foster care, juvenile justice, mental health, chemical dependency, developmental disabilities, corrections, education) *and*
- ❖ Locate, comprehend and coordinate services from multiple agencies (federal, state and county) that will assist them with their unique needs without the support of family.

For a variety of reasons youth also disengage from family, natural supports and systems of care. The repeated inability find success and experience positive reinforcement for strengths has disheartening effects for youth. In addition to developing negative beliefs of themselves youth also develop negative perceptions of the systems of care. The system may not be viewed as a partner or helpful, particularly when youth do not have a voice in their life development. Systems without collaboration and coordination are confusing and discouraging.

So why focus on youth in transition? For youth, who are in transition to adulthood in our state's system of care, we are their net of safety, support and opportunity. Without a bridge of support any youth would be extremely challenged to reach their potential. We want for youth to gain independence from the system of care so that they can lead safe and healthy lives while contributing to their community.

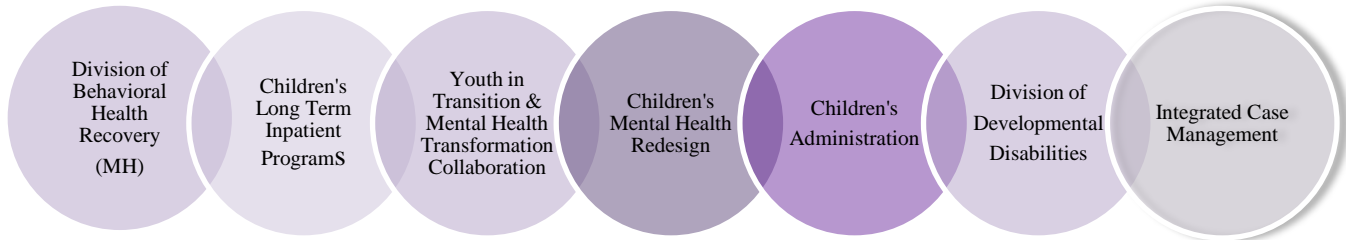
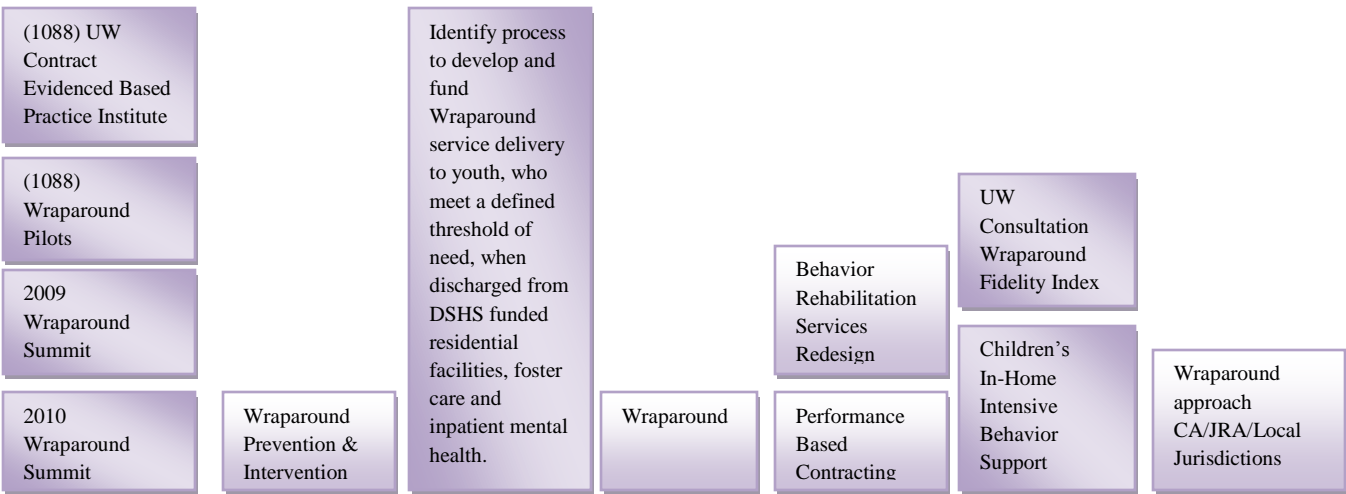
Wraparound

Goal: *Identify a process to develop and fund a Wraparound process of service delivery to DSHS youth, who meet a defined threshold of need when discharged from DSHS funded residential facilities, foster care and outpatient mental health.*

Washington State has a history of Wraparound training and program implementation since the 1970's. Wraparound has continued to flourish in some communities primarily with mental health services and has extended into some cross system work. Despite a considerable amount of expert training and substantial efforts by very dedicated individuals and teams, Wraparound did not become embedded within the cross systems of care. Some contributing factors are associated with changing priorities and/or lack of united leadership, funding barriers, lack of program evaluation and oversight of cross agency involvement. What has been solidly embedded, for those who have participated in Wraparound initiatives over the last 30 years, are the Principles of Wraparound.

Ten Principles of Wraparound

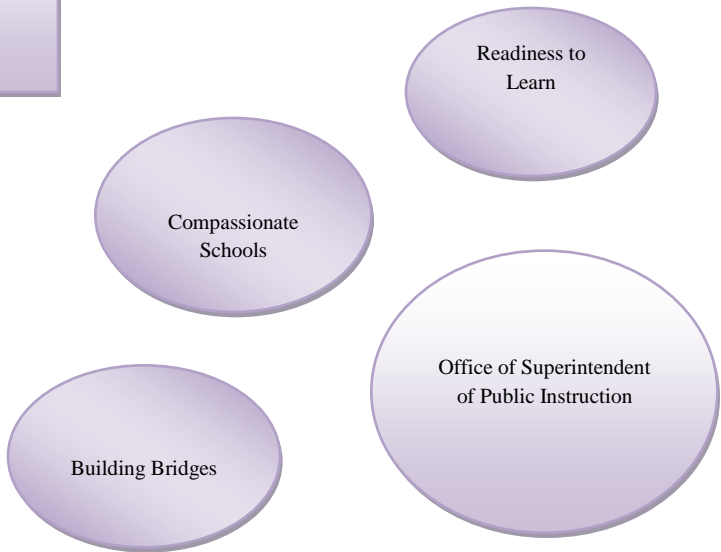
1. Family Voice and Choice	6. Culturally Competent
2. Team Based	7. Individualized
3. Natural Supports	8. Strength Based
4. Collaboration	9. Unconditional
5. Community Based	10. Outcome Based
	(Bruns, Walker, National Wraparound Initiative Advisory Group)



Statewide Training, Consultation and Program Development (1980)

DSHS
DOC
OSPI

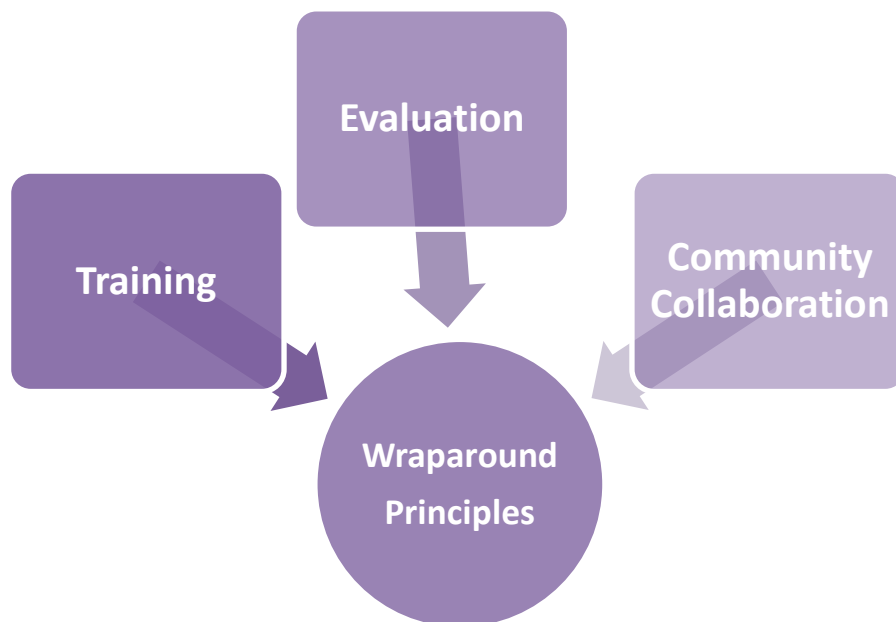
Regional Support Networks
Community Mental Health
Community Providers
Family & Youth



Wraparound Washington

The climate and timing to resurge Wraparound in Washington State are aligned. Leadership has provided commitment and direction.

- ❖ Legislation has supported community pilots and evaluation.
- ❖ Training and consultants are available.
- ❖ Evaluation tools have been developed.
- ❖ Collaborations are forming to leverage resources to address the needs of the highest risk youth.
- ❖ Health care is reforming.
- ❖ Families are benefiting and advocating from the long term outcomes of Wraparound.
- ❖ Improved screening and data identifies youth within child welfare and juvenile justice have high incidence of mental health and co-occurring issues.
- ❖ Most importantly we understand that youth are best served with their families in their local communities.



Outcomes for Wraparound Principles

Target	Youth Outcomes	System Outcomes
Health	<p><i>Ability to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~express voice and be heard ~access healthcare, mental health and substance abuse as needed ~manage recovery, wellness, and self care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~Youth and Family are involved in all levels of planning ~Integrated Case Management of Multi-System youth ~Improve seamless Medicaid Coverage
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~access to affordable and safe housing in their community ~manage housing responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~Cross system planning and integrated policy and procedures ~Reduction of out of home placements ~Increase housing options for sub populations ~Decrease of Homeless Youth
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~participate in job readiness programs ~apply skills and abilities to obtain and maintain meaningful employment ~demonstrate soft skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~Increased enrollment in Employment Readiness Programs ~Increased partnerships opportunities with private employers
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~regulate emotions ~assume responsibility for basic life needs including food, clothing, and finances ~problem solve ~plan for future life events ~access parenting resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~Decreased involvement in the criminal justice system ~Decreased dependence on public assistance
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~ graduate from high school ~experience greater connections to schools ~feel safe and free from adverse stigma at school ~apply and enter higher or enhanced education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~Re-engagement of disengaged youth ~Decreased drop-outs ~Increased college or technical program enrollment
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~have Natural Supports in the community ~engage in social, cultural and family activities ~healthy and safe relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~Increased family partnerships ~Increase of family and generational family functioning ~Reduced disproportionate minority contact/confinement

Options for a Wraparound Process for Youth in Transition

- ❖ Build upon existing resources of the state to engage cross systems who were previously omitted from Wraparound initiatives.
- ❖ In recognition that Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice are responsible for some of the state's most complex youth, pilot Integrated Case Management Collaborations within local jurisdictions that are supported with a Wraparound approach by applying the ten guiding principles to service. The goals of Integrated Case Management and Wraparound include:
 - Leverage DSHS and local resources to prevent youth from penetrating deeper into the juvenile justice system;
 - Provide a collaborative wraparound approach to prevent youth from entering or penetrating deeper into the criminal justice system; and
 - Increase cross system collaboration to assist youth re-entry the community from residential placement to prevent them from reoffending.
- ❖ Evaluate implemented services to verify what we are doing works.
- ❖ Existing assessment and fidelity tools exist through the National Wraparound Initiative <http://www.nwi.pdx.edu/> and the local partners at the University of Washington's Evidence Based Practice Institute <http://depts.washington.edu/ebpi/> are positioned as evaluators.
- ❖ Seek national expertise to consult on the issues of community collaboration and funding.
 - Wraparound Milwaukee
 - Medicaid Consultants
- ❖ Acknowledge the Wraparound Principles as the bedrock of services that guides our performance and outcomes of person centered services for youth. Principles should be reflected in all aspects of performance including planning, policy, procedures, contracting and evaluation.

Trauma Informed Care

“The first step toward healing comes with understanding the problem.”

Robert Anda, MD, MS

Goal: *Develop and implement Trauma Informed Care Training for DSHS staff, community level staff, foster parents and others who provide care to youth receiving DSHS services.*

Prior to entering systems of care, many youth in transition have significant histories of exposure to childhood trauma. Trauma can be defined as “an emotional or psychological injury, usually resulting from an extremely stressful or life-threatening situation (Wikipedia)”. With either voluntary or court ordered relationships with systems, youth not only need safety and recovery from adverse experiences, but also the ability to build resiliency to combat any potential experiences.

Trauma may contribute to psychiatric conditions for a percentage of the youth population. Trauma can also prompt behaviors that may be inaccurately interpreted or labeled. Ill-informed responses or approaches to trauma-influenced behaviors may provide undesirable outcomes that are ineffective or harmful.

Youth can also experience trauma while in systems of care. The Bureau of Justice Statistics released the first National Survey of Youth in Custody (January 2010) <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/press/svjfry09pr.cfm>. The study reports about 12% of youth in juvenile facilities nationwide reported experiencing one or more incidents of sexual victimization by another youth or facility staff in the past 12 months.

Trauma Informed Care is more than providing good customer service it is a cultural shift of an organization to provide improved person centered services. “TIC provides a new paradigm under which the basic premise for organizing services is transformed from “What is wrong with you?” to “What has happened to you?” TIC is initiated through an organizational shift from a traditional “top-down” environment to one that is based on collaboration with consumers and survivors.” (Center for Mental Health Service’s National Center for Trauma-Informed Care <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/nctic/default.asp>) .

Trauma Informed Care

Mental Health Treatment that is directed by a thorough understanding of the profound neurological, biological, psychological and social effects of trauma and violence on the individual *and* an appreciation for the high prevalence of traumatic experiences in persons who receive mental health services.

(Jennings, 2004)

In review of resources to develop and implement Trauma Informed Care Training it was important to first understand what Trauma Informed Care Training is available and what our current practices and resources are. The Youth in Transition and Mental Health Transformation Collaboration determined for our own framework that Trauma Informed Care Training exists at three levels with distinctive target audience and purposes.

Trauma Informed Care Training Level One (T1):

Education that will provide research regarding trauma and its impact on youth.

Trauma Informed Care Training Level Two (T2):

Training on behavior management and supports through psycho-education with youth who have been identified with PTSD.

Trauma Informed Care Training Level Three (T3):

Training on the clinical treatment of Post Traumatic Symptoms or PTSD.

Trauma Informed Care Training Level One (T1):

*(*Note: This is the work group believes we have been charged to deliver.)*

The audience of T1 is appropriate for educate any audience ranging from professional, parent, community, youth etc.... T1 sets the stage for a Trauma Informed Care system by providing a foundation of facts related to trauma. The appropriate delivery of information is viable in such forms as lecture, on-line training, and media presentations. Although we were not able to find a specific curriculum we did identify several resources including:

Harborview Center for Sexual Assault and Traumatic Stress

University of Washington at Harborview Medical Center <http://depts.washington.edu/hcsats/> provides statewide training and has the ability to shape information to meet the needs of youth, families and cross systems.

Family Policy Council (FPC) <http://www.fpc.wa.gov/> is working to have the [Adverse Childhood Experiences & Population Health in Washington: The Face of a Chronic Public Health Disaster](#) on line to DSHS with access to the community. FPC has a cadre of community trainers and the ability to train trainers to present Adverse Childhood Experiences. FPC is also moving to expand to a second training and trainers that will application of the study.

Dr. Bruce Perry and the Child Trauma Academy

<http://www.childtrauma.org/index.php/home> offers free online enrichment courses, consultation, education and training services to assist individuals and organizations in their work with high-risk children.

National Child Traumatic Stress Network

http://www.nctsn.org/nccts/nav.do?pid=hom_main:

Learning Center for Child and Adolescent Trauma Child Welfare Trauma Training Tool Kit (2008).

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Compassionate Schools: The Heart of Learning <http://www.k12.wa.us/CompassionateSchools/HeartofLearning.aspx> Trauma informed curriculum for educators is being piloted across the state.

Healing Neen <http://healingneen.com/> (2010) Tonier Caine's inspirational life story shared in a video presentation. An all important message is evident. You can have an ACE score of TEN, and still recover and have a good quality of life.

I Am You (by Nathalie Shapiro) <http://www.vimeo.com/9075649> The awakening story told by Michelle Moeller regarding the traumatic experiences of her life, as well as her mothers and grandmothers.

Sidran Institute <http://www.sidranspeakers.com/>

Traumatic Stress Education and Advocacy Creating Trauma-Informed Services Training to help agencies make use of the state of the art in trauma theory and treatment to provide trauma-informed services that will support and enhance existing program.

Trauma Informed Care Training Level Two (T2):

The audience of T2 is directed training to staff who provide manualized psycho-education for client behavioral support and management. Some limitations to the curriculums including that they were adult models and not developed for youth. T2 curriculums seemed to focus on specific adult sub groups such as women or Substance Abuse and PTSD. Seeking Safety (Najavits) <http://www.seekingsafety.org/> has been embedded in the community through the previous work of the Mental Health Transformation Project.

Trauma Informed Care Training Level Three (T3):

T3 is Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) is an evidence-based treatment that has a demonstrated ability to help youth who have been exposed to trauma and diagnosed with PTSD. TF-CBT can also provide guidance to family and natural supports. TF-CBT helps to translate *interactions into interventions*.

Currently the *only* reported Trauma Informed Care training within DSHS has been delivered as a pilot to Children's Administration and Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration through a contract between Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery and **Harborview Center for Sexual Assault and Traumatic Stress**.

Options for TIC Training Development and Implementation

Develop a “*Statewide Trauma Informed Collaboration*” by constructing a united foundation of knowledge and resources by supporting our state’s existing resources with:

Family Policy Council

- Train Cross Systems Partners in ACES.
- Embed Certified Trainers in Cross System Agencies.
- Provide support to the FPC’s second phase application.

Harborview Center for Sexual Assault and Traumatic Stress

- Engage Harborview to assist in the development of a curriculum that can be trained to regional Cross System Trainers and converted to an on-line resource.
- Implement a standard broad based trauma screen that identifies experiences, responses and impacts of youth trauma.
- Systematically screen youth for trauma.
- Assess youth for trauma specific impact “PTSD”.
- Collect data from screening to identify prevalence.
- Integrate TF-CBT into referral and treatment of youth identified with “PTSD” to community providers who have already been trained across Washington State.
- Continue work to better serve youth with PTSD in evidence based practices by evaluating existing TF-CBT Pilots at JRA and CLIP for expansion.

Staff who are screening youth will feel engaged in the process of recovery if they see their work is relevant and connected to improved outcomes for youth.

Sponsor a Trauma Informed Care Conference to kick-off initiative.

- Engage national speakers such as Dr. Bruce Perry and Tonier Arcane to present.
- Embed Trauma Informed Care into all active state sponsored conferences.
- Place media on-line for cross system agencies.

Remain mindful that many staff have also been exposed to trauma. Use skilled and approachable co-trainers to facilitate trainings and events. Co-trainers should be trained to watch for reactive signs in participants and have resources available to Employee Assistance Programs.

Support the movement of Compassionate Schools across the community. Promote training for school districts that serve youth in residential placements.

Consider Wisconsin’s Trauma Care System as a model for community engagement, partnership, expansion and sustainability.

The purpose of Wisconsin’s statewide trauma care system is to reduce death and disability resulting from traumatic injury by decreasing the incidence of trauma, providing optimal care of trauma victims and their families and collecting and analyzing trauma-related data (DHS 118.01).

Wisconsin’s Trauma Care System is supported through program planning efforts that include:

- [Lead Agency/Department Functions](#)
- [Statewide Trauma Meetings](#)
- [Regional/Local Trauma Meetings](#)
- [WI Trauma Advisory Council 2009-10 Strategic Operational Plan](#) (PDF, 117 KB)
- [Healthiest Wisconsin 2020: Everyone Living Better, Longer: Injury and Violence; Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Recovery](#)

Care for Trauma patients and their families is supported through key program activities related to:

- [Education and Training for Health Care Providers](#)
- [Implementation of Triage Protocols](#)
- [Hospital Trauma Classification Process](#)
- [Wisconsin Trauma Registry](#)
- Performance Improvement
- [Injury Prevention](#)

Wisconsin’s Trauma System is closely aligned with the efforts and activities in the [Emergency Medical Services \(EMS\) Program](#), [Emergency Medical Services for Children \(EMSC\) Program](#) and [Emergency Preparedness and Planning](#). The departmental lead for the trauma system is the [State Trauma Coordinator](#).

The implementation and development of Wisconsin’s trauma care system is a result of several important pieces of legislation including: [WI Statute 15.19\(25\) \(Structure of the Executive Branch\)](#) (PDF, 334 KB), [WI Statute 256 \(Emergency Medical Services\)](#) (PDF, 102 KB) and [DHS 118 \(Trauma Care\)](#) (PDF, 65 KB) which directs the Department of Health Services to develop and implement a statewide trauma care system and provides the Administrative Rules for the department.

Service Assets, Barriers and Gaps for Washington State Youth in Transition

Goal: *Identify the target population(s) of the Youth in Transition and priorities to transform services through an evaluation of the current assets, gaps and barriers for Youth in Transition.*

In the evaluation of Washington State's Assets, Barriers, and Gaps of services for youth in transition, it should first be highlighted that by large there are many assets available for youth in transition to adulthood and the staff who facilitate and provide services for youth deliver extraordinary services to our state's most complex youth. Washington State has several opportunities to partner and replicate effective services.

Each agency has a specific mission related to the youth in their care, such as juvenile justice's responsibility for public safety. The specificity of responsibility has historically placed agencies into silos of care, meeting infrequently and more often than not when dually served youth are facing crisis. The problem with this is that many of our youth have multiple needs and are fluid throughout agencies and either are receiving services or have been or could benefit from a cross system wraparound approach.

One of the most significant gaps in our system of care is the lack of ongoing cross system collaboration. The proactive work of agencies does not have a forum in which to partner and there is replicable services that sub-populations could benefit from. A collaborative approach to planning youth care is person centered and extends ownership of *one department serving one youth*.

In consideration of implementation of any of the recommendation reflection and dialogue of the Wraparound Principles should be applied to not only programs but cross system policy.

Short and Long Term Strategies to Improve Transition to Adulthood

Each agency conducted an inventory of their respective assets, gaps and barrier of services for youth in transition in the areas of:

- primary and behavioral healthcare;
- housing;
- education and workforce development;
- employment;
- ongoing relationships with family and natural supports and
- services to increase skills and abilities to manage self, relationships and adult life developments.

All agency resources were compiled into the five domains. The Collaboration identified the top priorities for short and long term strategies to improve transition to adulthood. A sixth domain emerged in the process “Staff and Systems”. The Collaboration recognizes to be effective with youth, staff must have the resources to support their work.

The following is a summary of the Collaboration’s short and long term strategies to improve transition to adulthood.

Primary and Behavioral Healthcare

Short Term Priorities

- ❖ Recognize youth in transition are a unique population that is different from childhood and adulthood. Cross agency systems (policy, practice, programs, and coordination) are currently not positioned to holistically address the needs of youth in transition. Research, data and expertise should be consulted on all levels to provide systems improvement.
- ❖ Youth in transition need separate messaging regarding Health Issues from children and adult populations.
- ❖ Establish a united formulary for the youth in transition of psychiatric medication for youth who are under the care of the state.
- ❖ Integrate real time data of youth in transition through bringing PRISM to full scale.
- ❖ Evaluate WAC changes and Access to Care Standards to extend children's mental health services for youth in transition to the age of 25.
- ❖ Integrate Wraparound Principles to care coordination and review options to utilize Medicaid for Wraparound services.

Long Term Priorities

- ❖ Integrate health and behavioral health through coordination and implementation of Health Care Reform. Seek collaboration with Department of Health.
- ❖ Identify (review existing screens) a Standard Health Screen that loads Person Centered Health Home.

Housing

Short Term Priorities

- ❖ Evaluate DBHR's *Ready to Rent* pilot. Expand to all counties to include program availability to youth in DSHS facilities.
- ❖ Evaluate web based housing services such as *Housing Connections* <http://www.housingconnections.org/>. Opportunities exist to
 - assist youth with locating and securing housing;
 - educating landlords to reduce concerns and misconceptions regarding youth tenants and
 - promote positive messaging for youth in transition to the community.
- ❖ Review the Regional Support Network's (RSN) survey regarding relationship with the local Housing Authorities. Evaluate a recommendation to a contract requirement.
- ❖ Evaluate expanding to cross system agencies the Casey Foundation's "*It's My Life Housing*" <http://www.casey.org/Resources/Publications/ItsMyLife/Housing.htm>. *It's My Life* provides information for professionals and others who work with youth transitioning to adulthood and independent living. Currently Children's Administration is using this resource.

It's My Life: Housing provides:

- An abundance of Web links to online resources
- Practical strategies to help young people find, get, and keep housing
- Developmentally appropriate strategies for adolescents to young adults

Housing

Long Term Priorities

- ❖ Build partnership and support with Department of Commerce:
 - MOU
 - Education
 - Analyze County Plans to End Homeless to advocate to addresses YIT population.
- ❖ Build partnerships with local Housing Authorities and Homeless Coalition.
- ❖ Provide community education and positive messaging regarding youthful offenders and other subpopulations of youth in transition. Example: *Clark County Housing Connections: Landlord Training and Outreach.*
- ❖ Evaluate the Rise Program (which assist with houses special population) provided by Community Youth Services in Thurston County to expand across state.
- ❖ Explore, identify and implement solutions to Section 8 Housing barriers and prohibitions with Housing Authority for youth in transition and their families.

Employment

Short Term Priorities

- ❖ Expand employment readiness through programs that focus on skill development.

Opportunities:

Department of Labor (Summer Youth Employment)

Supported Employment

<http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/CommunitySupport/toolkits/employment/default.aspx> an approach to helping people with mental illnesses find and keep competitive employment within their communities. Supported employment programs are staffed by employment specialists who have frequent meetings with treatment providers to integrate supported employment with mental health services.

- ❖ Expand Partnership Base of Employer Readiness Programs.

Opportunities:

Washington Youth Academy (WYA) <http://www.ngycp.org/site/state/wa/>

a division of the National Guard Youth Challenge Program located in Bremerton, Washington. WYA a quasi-military training and mentoring program provides the opportunity for youth the opportunity to improve life skills, education levels and employment potential. Established under authority of federal and state law, is a residential and post-residential program for 16-19 year olds who have dropped out of high school or are at risk of dropping out. The vision of the Washington Youth Academy is to provide at-risk youth a quality education, positive values, and life and job skills training that will change their lives and give them hope and opportunity for a new future.

Job Corps (JC) <http://www.jobcorps.gov/Home.aspx> is a free education and training program that helps young people learn a career, earn a high school diploma or GED, and find and keep a good job. For eligible youth at least 16 years of age, Job Corps provides the all-around skills needed to succeed in a career and in life. There are four JC sites in Washington State that include:

- *Cascades* (Sedro-Woolley <http://cascades.jobcorps.gov>)
- *Columbia* (Basin Moses Lake <http://ColumbiaBasin.jobcorps.gov>)
- *Curlew* (Curlew <http://curlew.jobcorps.gov>)
- *Fort Simcoe* White Swan <http://fortsimcoe.jobcorps.gov>)

JC has been awarded funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) <http://www.jobcorps.gov/AboutJobCorps/recovery.aspx> of 2009 to be used for construction, rehabilitation and acquisition, as well as operations needs. Since the act was signed into law one year ago, Job Corps has implemented “green” student training programs and commenced construction projects on more than 65 centers, including *Cascades and Columbia Basin* helping create and retain jobs.

Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife have collaborated to operate a cooperative Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) Program http://www.dnr.wa.gov/RecreationEducation/Topics/OtherRecreationInformation/Pages/washington_conservation_corps.aspx. The mission of WCC is to conserve and enhance the natural resources of Washington and to help young adults enrich themselves by providing a meaningful work and service experience.

AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps)

<http://www.americorps.gov/about/programs/nccc.asp> is a full-time, team-based residential program for men and women age 18–24. Members are assigned to one of five campuses, located in Denver, Colorado; Sacramento, California; Perry Point, Maryland; Vicksburg, Mississippi; and Vinton, Iowa.

United States Military Service <http://www.todaysmilitary.com/>
http://www.military.com/Recruiting/Content/0,13898,rec_step02_eligibility,,00.html

- ❖ Evaluate expanding to cross system agencies the Casey Foundation’s “*It’s My Life Employment*”
<http://www.casey.org/Resources/Publications/ItsMyLife/Employment.htm>. *It’s My Life* is a handbook that provides information for professionals and others who work with youth transitioning to adulthood and the workplace.

It’s My Life: Employment provides:

- Start early to develop employability
- Cultivate interests and skills, and relate them to future employment
- Promote activities that help young people explore careers
- Build job-readiness skills
- Help young people get and keep jobs
- Promote work-related education and training after high school

Long Term Priorities

- ❖ Adopt a standard Job Model in every community.
- ❖ Adopt statewide standards for pre-employment programs.
- ❖ Build “soft skills” in pre-employment competency.
- ❖ Expand partnerships and incentives for private employers to mentor and hire YIT.

Skills and Abilities Manage Self, Relationships and Adult Life Developments

Short Term Priorities

- ❖ Evaluate adopting the **Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA)** <http://www.caseylifeskills.org/pages/assess/whatis.htm> for all youth in transition including internalizing sustainable, authorized Trainers http://www.caseylifeskills.org/pages/train/train_index.htm.

ACLS provides strength based, age appropriate online assessments, learning plans and resources that can be utilized for no cost to assist you build life skills in the domains of:

- *Communication*
- *Career Planning*
- *Daily Living*
- *Home Life*
- *Housing and Money Management*
- *Self Care*
- *Social Relationships*
- *Work Life*
- *Work and Study Skills*

Additional assessments are also online for a *pregnancy and parenting infants and young children, homelessness, youth values, education, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth (GLBTQ), and American Indian.*

Currently Children's Administration utilizes ACLSA for youth in foster care and has authorized trainers. Expanding ACLSA across systems will further embed a consistent approach to assess youth skills and strengthen a universal language.

Skills and Abilities

Manage Self, Relationships and Adult Life Developments

Short Term Priorities

- ❖ Pilot the Transition to Independence Process (TIP) <http://tip.fmhi.usf.edu/> and evaluate for expansion.

TIP was developed for working with youth and young adults (14-29 years old) with emotional/behavioral difficulties (EBD) to: a) engage them in their own futures planning process; b) provide them with developmentally-appropriate, non-stigmatizing, culturally-competent, and appealing services and supports; and c) involve them and their families and other informal key players in a process that prepares and facilitates them in their movement toward greater self-sufficiency and successful achievement of their goals related to relevant transition domains -- employment/career, educational opportunities, living situation, personal effectiveness and wellbeing, and community-life functioning.

TIP has seven guidelines (*which correlate to Wraparound Principles*) and their associated core practices that drive the activities with the young people and provide the framework for the program and community system to support these functions.

TIP System Guidelines

1. Engage young people through relationship development, person-centered planning, and a focus on their futures.
2. Tailor services and supports to be accessible, coordinated, appealing, non-stigmatizing, developmentally-appropriate, and build on strengths to enable the young people to pursue their goals across all transition domains.
3. Acknowledge and develop personal choice and social responsibility with young people.
4. Ensure a safety-net of support by involving a young person's parents, family members, and other informal and formal key players.
5. Enhance young persons competencies to assist them in achieving greater self-sufficiency and confidence.
6. Maintain an outcome focus in the TIP system at the young person, program, and community levels.
7. Involve young people, parents, and other community partners in the TIP system at the practice, program, and community levels.

- ❖ Evaluate a cross agency partnership with Washington Association of School Principals, http://www.awsp.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Summer_Camps&Template=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=14095 to develop, plan and sponsor a Youth in Transition Leadership Camp in partnership with Youth Organizations.

April 14, 2010

Dear Principal

We've all heard the saying, *"When life gives you lemons, make lemonade."* As we wait for final budget decisions from Olympia, I can't help but visualize bushels of lemons on the doorsteps of schools throughout Washington. It's hard to know what next year will bring. What guarantees are there for 2010-11?

1. You will need to do more with less— less money, staff and resources.
2. Standards will still need to be met.
3. Students will continue to fill your hallways and classrooms.

Consider this—your students can help provide the solutions for that load of lemons. Last summer 3,165 students and 148 advisers and coaches representing 364 schools in Washington attended an AWSP sponsored student leadership and cheerleadership camps. What did these trained student leaders do? The examples are as varied as the needs of a school. Here's what participating schools have found...

- two student leaders at Eisenhower High organized over 1,000 students to help pass a building bond to replace their aging school.
- Frontier Middle School in Moses Lake sent 13 student leaders to summer camp and because of their experience, they were able to lead and create an amazing welcome orientation for new 6th graders.
- an emerging Latino leader from Kalama High attended the La Cima session of camp, gained the confidence to run and was elected to an ASB office, creating a tangible bridge between diverse groups in the school.
- a delegation of cheerleaders, elected and non-traditional leaders from White Pass Jr/Sr High markedly improved the content and climate at school assemblies. Key to their success was involving all groups.
- a deaf student at Oroville Jr/Sr High created an American Sign Language club for her hearing peers as a result of her experience at Deaf Teen Leadership Camp. The whole school is benefiting!
- ❖ students from Meeker Middle School in Tacoma brought back the "stop light for appropriate humor" concept. The kids who attended camp created a presentation that they made to each class and gave each teacher a paper stop light to reinforce the idea. The school learned the difference between laughing at broad base funny material and bullying laughter that puts people down. The appropriate humor stop signs still hang in most classrooms and the concept is part of the school's vocabulary.

Encouraging a cadre of elected officers and student leaders to attend an AWSP summer leadership camp can be the first step in shaping a more positive climate. Students come with natural creativity and energy, and are willing to give freely of their time when they know they are making a difference. With training, your student leaders will become your partners in creating a school where all students are connected and engaged. The lemonade stand they create will be amazing!

Best wishes,



Susan Fortin, Director of Student Leadership
Association of Washington School Principals

susanf@awsp.org
www.awsp.org/leadership
360-497-5323

Long Term Priorities

- ❖ Evaluate and plan for the expansion of the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration's (JRA) Integrated Treatment Model (ITM) to include:
 - other cross system programs serving youth in transition;
 - families;
 - natural supports and
 - schools.

Child Study and Treatment Center has also adopted the ITM with positive reports. Providing a consistent evidence based treatment model for youth in transition will strengthen the statewide knowledge base, build and expand resources and unite an approach and responses of systems, families and natural supports.

Increase skills and abilities to manage self, relationships and adult life developments.

- ❖ *Distress Tolerance*
- ❖ *Interpersonal Effectiveness*
 - ❖ *Mindfulness*
 - ❖ *Emotion Regulation*
 - ❖ *Problem Solving*
- ❖ *Chemical Dependency*

- ❖ Evaluate the possibilities of expanding *School To Work Programs* into Community Colleges.

School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994

Public Law 103-239

108 Stat 568

May 4, 1994

H.R. 2884

ONE HUNDRED THIRD CONGRESS

OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Begun and held at the City of Washington on Tuesday, the twenty-fifth day of January, one thousand nine hundred and ninety-four

AN ACT

To establish a national framework for the development of School-to-Work Opportunities systems in all [States](#), and for other purposes.

SECTION 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that--

- (1) three-fourths of high school students in the United States enter the workforce without baccalaureate degrees, and many do not possess the academic and entry-level occupational skills necessary to succeed in the changing United States workplace;
- (2) a substantial number of youths in the United States, especially disadvantaged students, students of diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, and students with disabilities, do not complete high school;
- (3) unemployment among youths in the United States is intolerably high, and earnings of high school graduates have been falling relative to earnings of individuals with more education;
- (4) the workplace in the United States is changing in response to heightened international competition and new technologies, and such forces, which are ultimately beneficial to the Nation, are shrinking the demand for and undermining the earning power of unskilled labor;
- (5) the United States lacks a comprehensive and coherent system to help its youths acquire the knowledge, skills, abilities, and information about and access to the labor market necessary to make an effective transition from school to career-oriented work or to further education and training;
- (6) students in the United States can achieve high academic and occupational standards, and many learn better and retain more when the students learn in context, rather than in the abstract;
- (7) while many students in the United States have part-time jobs, there is infrequent linkage between--
 - (A) such jobs; and
 - (B) the career planning or exploration, or the school-based learning, of such students;
- (8) the work-based learning approach, which is modeled after the time-honored apprenticeship concept, integrates theoretical instruction with structured on-the-job training, and this approach, combined with school-based learning, can be very effective in engaging student interest, enhancing skill acquisition, developing positive work attitudes, and preparing youths for high-skill, high-wage careers;
- (9) Federal resources currently fund a series of categorical, work-related education and training programs, many of which serve disadvantaged youths, that are not administered as a coherent whole; and
- (10) in 1992 approximately 3,400,000 individuals in the United States age 16 through 24 had not completed high school and were not currently enrolled in school, a number representing approximately 11 percent of all individuals in this age group, which indicates that these young persons are particularly unprepared for the demands of a 21st century workforce.

- ❖ Integrate Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction’s *Career and Technical Education (CTE)* into cross systems.

“Regardless of a student’s path, it takes all three of these broad skill sets – academic, employability and technical – for students to be ready for a career. Twenty-first century schools should focus on providing all students a strong foundation across all three areas so they are prepared for whatever their lives may bring.”

*Association for Career and Technical Education
What Is “Career Ready”?*

Education

Short Term Priorities

- ❖ Review OSPI MOU's with local school districts and expands to cross system agencies.
- ❖ Continue to support OSPI's Building Bridges, Compassionate Schools and Readiness to Learn.
- ❖ Dialogue with State Board of Community and Technical Colleges to link youth in transition programs and services to Community Colleges.
- ❖ Support and expand re-entry efforts of Education Advocates.
- ❖ Advocate adjusting funding formulas for the local school districts that have residential facilities to better meet vocational education needs.
- ❖ Develop and promote positive media, outreach and conferences to educate Educators on youth in transition issues. Including such topics as Parent Support, Trauma Informed Care, Youth Who Sexually Offend, Substance Abuse and Developmental Disabilities.
- ❖ Evaluate expanding to cross system agencies the Casey Foundation's "*It's My Life Post Secondary Education and Financial Aide*"
<http://www.casey.org/Resources/Publications/ItsMyLife/Education.htm>. *It's My Life* is a handbook provides information for professionals and others who work with youth transitioning to adulthood and college.

It's My Life: Postsecondary Education and Training

- A wealth of Web links to online resources on preparation, study skills, financial aid, and student housing
- A comprehensive guide to standardized tests
- A step-by-step plan for applying for financial aid
- Resources for students with special needs
- Checklists for students in each secondary grade level

Long Term Priorities

- ❖ Create and maintain an education resource web.
- ❖ Conducts a study to review school based behavioral health integration and develop a plan to build and replicate successes.

Relationships

Short Term Priorities

- ❖ Elevate the consciousness of Washington State to the issues of youth in transition to adulthood. Develop strength based messaging campaign to advocate and promote the positive aspects of youth and negate stigma.
- ❖ Campaign for every youth to have at least three CHAMPIONS (natural supports) in their lives.

Youth in Transition to Adulthood need Champions

- ❖ *One to be more Resilient*
- ❖ *Two to achieve more Success*
- ❖ *Three to Thrive*

- ❖ Develop and conduct a Wraparound Readiness Assessment to:
 - help educate communities;
 - identify where to implement Wraparound principles;
 - identify barriers and
 - identify measurable outcomes for Washington State.
- ❖ Collaborate with established youth organizations to expand opportunities for youth in transition. Including: 4-H, Sierra Club, Youth in Action and YMCA.
- ❖ Support the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration's vision to regionalize small residential programs into communities close to families.
- ❖ Review Department of Corrections Family Advisory Committee and consider implementing a Cross System Youth and Family Advisory Committee.

Long Term Priorities

- ❖ Develop and expand Cross System Training to partner expertise with youth and families.

Focus topics to include:

- Wraparound 101
- Getting to Partnership...Systems and Families Working Together

Staff and Systems

Short Term Priorities

- ❖ Evaluate training needs to help support staff, providers, and caregivers to YIT including:
 - Trauma Informed Care
 - Gender
 - Adolescent Development
 - Poverty
 - Adverse Childhood Experiences
 - Cultural Competency
 - Wraparound
 - Validation and Coaching

- ❖ Develop a Youth in Transition Training Consortium to support cross systems, providers, youth, families and natural supports that is mobile, regionalized and supports academies.

- ❖ Hardwire youth in transition into sustainable Cross Systems Leadership. Empower a permanent Cross Systems Leadership Team to champion a proactive focus of youth in transition issues and facilitates ongoing dialogue to maintain a pulse of barriers and gaps for youth in transition services and build assets that provides proactive positive outcomes.

- ❖ Formally expand and embed Wraparound Principle into Cross Systems Policy, Contracts and Procedures.

Long Term

- ❖ Expand and embed Cross Systems Leadership Teams into communities to expand a Wraparound Approach to support youth in transition.

- ❖ Provide youth in transition a clear identity by defining youth in transition in WAC.

- ❖ Conduct an analysis of the Age of Consent? How is it working?

TAY Academy Immersion

Continue your education with the TAY Immersion Training at the Mental Health Association's Transition Age Youth Academy. The National Mental Health Association of Greater Los Angeles (MHA) and the MHA Village offer a new "immersion" training that focuses on the unique needs of and service/support strategies for young adults with emotional and behavioral difficulties. The training will be particularly helpful for new providers who are shifting from an adult-oriented, case-management, recovery model toward a youth-oriented, teaching, "discovery" model.

The MHA Transition Age Youth Academy's two-day training at the MHA Village in Long Beach combines lecture, process groups and field experience. Topics include:

- **TAY Matrix** – an assessment/planning tool to evaluate communities and providers' strengths and weaknesses in their capacity to support transition age youth
- **Developmental appropriateness of supports** – the importance of assessing functional/behavioral strengths and deficits from a perspective that is age appropriate
- **Engagement strategies** – discussion of the development of a youth-oriented, welcoming culture
- **Service approaches** – focus on teaching/mentoring vs. case-management
- **Career development** – presentation on supported education and supported employment
- **Housing continuum** – identification of gaps in the housing array and potential solutions
- **Community living skills** – approaches to the teaching/mentoring of life skills
- **Wellness** – strategies to inspire and nurture life dreams of transition age youth and to identify barriers such as psychiatric symptoms, drugs and alcohol, and lack of skills
- **Discussion/process groups** – exploration of the common struggles and value conflicts that arise when working with transition age youth. The groups will emphasize storytelling by providers and members.

The training will include substantial involvement of MHA's TAY Academy members, and participating programs are encouraged to bring their own clients/members.

About the MHA Training Division

MHA has provided immersion training to system planners, providers, people with mental illness and families since 1994. MHA's core immersion is a three-day training in the integrated services model, where participants study the MHA Village's philosophy and programs and team up with staff to practice the principles they have learned. In 2000, MHA began a two-day employment immersion that emphasizes and encourages employment services for people with mental illness.

For more information about the TAY Academy Immersion or other MHA training services, contact Catherine Bond, MFT, Director of Training, at 562-437-6717, ext. 486.

Resources

The following pages contain a small list of resources. It is also recommended in the work of youth in transition this resource bank will grow and provide information for guided decisions.

State Youth in Transition Models

Ohio

Department of Mental Health

<http://www.mh.state.oh.us/what-we-do/provide/children-youth-and-families/transition-age/>

Florida

University of South Florida

National Network on Youth Transitions for Behavioral Health

<http://nnyt.fmhi.usf.edu/default.cfm>

New Jersey

Rutgers School of Social Work

Transitions for Youth

<http://www.transitionsforyouth.org/aboutus.aspx>

Transitions for Youth (TFY) is a multifaceted statewide initiative that utilizes a positive youth development framework to address the complex needs of youth transitioning to adulthood, particularly those who are aging out of foster care or who were involved with New Jersey's juvenile justice or behavioral health systems.

Vermont

Youth in Transition Grant <http://youth-in-transition-grant.com/> six year project to improve the system of care for Vermont's transition aged youth and young adults 16-21 so that they have adequate preparation and the necessary supports to be productively engaged in the community and free from incarceration.

Resources

Disability*gov

http://www.disability.gov/education/student_resources/self-advocacy

Video on Staying Healthy for Youth in Transition

This video explains to young people with medical conditions or disabilities the importance of taking care of their health as they transition into adulthood and take responsibility for themselves. Includes information on taking medicines, talking with doctors, carrying an emergency health information card, keeping a health care notebook, paying for health care, going to college and planning for accommodations, eating the right foods, exercising and more.

Strength of Us Online Resource for Young Adults

An online social community for teens and young adults to learn about mental health conditions, services and supports and handling the unique challenges and opportunities in transition-age years. Begin your trek into adulthood by checking out information about employment, housing, [college life](#), money matters and much more.

My Future My Plan: A Transition Planning Resource for Life After High School

Curriculum designed to motivate and guide students with disabilities and their families as they begin early transition planning for life after high school.

National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities

http://www.nichcy.org/EducateChildren/transition_adulthood/Pages/Default.aspx

**U.S. Department of Labor
Office of Disability Employment Policy
Youth
The Guideposts for Success**

What all youth need to successfully transition into adulthood

Based on an extensive literature review of research, demonstration projects and effective practices covering a wide range of programs and services, including youth development, quality education, and workforce development programs—the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), in collaboration with the National Collaborative on Workforce Disability for Youth, has identified Guideposts for Success. The Guideposts reflect what research has identified as key educational and career development interventions that can make a positive difference in the lives of all youth, including youth with disabilities.

The five Guideposts are the following:

- [School-based Preparatory Experiences](#)
- [Career Preparation and Work-Based Learning Experiences](#)
- [Youth Development and Leadership](#)
- [Connecting Activities](#)
- [Family Involvement and Supports](#)

These Guideposts are built on the following underlying assumptions:

- Highest expectations for all youth, including youth with disabilities
- Equality of opportunity for everyone, including nondiscrimination, individualization, and inclusion and integration
- Full participation through self-determination, informed choice, and participation in decision making
- Independent living, including skill development and long term supports and services
- Competitive employment and economic self-sufficiency, even if with supports, as everyone's life goal.
- Transition planning that is individualized, person-driven and culturally and linguistically appropriate.

The Guideposts framework is organized in the following manner. After providing a detailed list within each Guidepost of what all youth need, the framework then describes additional specific needs pertaining to youth with disabilities.

The Guideposts can be used by state policy makers in developing a more coordinated transition system focusing on successful outcomes for all youth. They can also help administrators and policy makers at the local level in making decisions regarding funding, in setting and establishing local priorities, and in evaluating local efforts.

[Paving the Way to Work: A Guide to Career-Focused Mentoring](#)

Mentoring is recognized as one of the most important strategies for assisting youth in making a positive transition into adulthood. This Guide, created by NCWD/Youth, through an agreement with the Office of Disability Employment Policy, is intended for individuals designing

mentoring programs for youth, including youth with disabilities, in the transition phase to adulthood.

[Kids as Self-Advocates \(KASA\)](#)

Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, a youth leadership organization which helps spread helpful, positive information on various issues, including living with disabilities and health care needs, health care transition issues, school and work.

Successful Transition Models for Youth with Mental Health Needs: A Guide for Workforce Professionals, an InfoBrief issued in May of 2009 available at <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/information-brief-23>

Navigating Tunnels & Cliffs: Empowering Families and Caregivers to Assist Youth with Mental Health Needs in Preparing for Work, a May 2008 publication available at <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/short-cut/navigating-tunnels-and-cliffs>

Tunnels & Cliffs: A Guide for Workforce Development Practitioners and Policymakers Serving Youth with Mental Health Needs, a May 2008 publication available at <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/short-cut/tunnels-and-cliffs>

Tunnels & Cliffs: A Guide for Workforce Development Practitioners and Policymakers Serving Youth with Mental Health Needs, a 2007 comprehensive guide available online at <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/tunnels-and-cliffs>

Transitioning Youth with Mental Health Needs to Meaningful Employment & Independent Living, a 2008 publication available online at <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/white-paper/transitioning-youth-with-mental-health-needs>

For more information on issues related to youth with mental health needs and/or professional development for youth service professionals, please contact the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth at <http://www.ncwd-youth.info>.

Foster Parent College www.FosterParentCollege.com

Foster Parent College offers high quality online in-service training to foster, adoptive and kinship parents. Our classes provide research-based parenting information and skills delivered in an engaging multi-media format.

Agencies of all sizes, public or private, faith-based or secular, can offer training to their parents through Foster Parent College. We provide 3 options to supplement your agency in-service training program.

Portland State University Regional Research Institute and School of Social Work The Rehabilitation Research and Training Center for Pathways to Positive Futures: Supporting Successful Transition for Youth and Young Adults with Serious Mental Health Conditions.

<http://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/index.shtml>

Our goal is to improve the lives of youth and young adults with serious mental health conditions through rigorous research and effective training and dissemination. Our work is guided by the perspectives of young people and their families, and based in a positive development framework.

National Alliance on Mental Illness “Strength of Us” <http://www.strengthofus.org/>

Strength of Us is an online community designed to empower young adults through resource sharing and peer support and to build connections for those navigating the unique challenges and opportunities in the transition-age years. Strength of Us provides opportunities for you to connect with your peers and offer support, encouragement and advice and share your real world experiences, personal stories, creativity, resources and ultimately, a little bit of your wonderful and unique self. It is a user-generated and user-driven community; so basically it's whatever *you* make it. Everything here has been developed and created by and for young adults with you specifically in mind...because we think you're worth it! We hope every time you visit, you find hope, encouragement, support and most of all, the strength to live your dreams and goals.

Transition to Adulthood:

A Recourse for Assisting Young People with Emotional or Behavioral Difficulties

Edited by Hewitt B. "Rusty" Clark, Ph.D. & Maryann Davis, Ph.D.

Transition of Youth and Young Adults with Emotional or Behavioral Difficulties: An Evidence-Supported Handbook

Edited by Hewitt B. "Rusty" Clark, Ph.D., & Deanne K. Unruh, Ph.D