

California Social Work Education Center

C A L S W E C

**PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE:
UNDERSTANDING THE PSYCHOSOCIAL AND
SYSTEM-RELATED FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE
TO COLLEGE ENROLLMENT AND ATTENDANCE
AMONG EMANCIPATED FOSTER YOUTH:
AN EMPIRICALLY-BASED CURRICULUM**

Research Conducted By:

Joan M. Merdinger

Alice M. Hines

Kathy Lemon

Paige Wyatt

Curriculum Module Developed and Presented By:

Marty Tweed

Joan M. Merdinger

Project Administration:

College of Social Work

San José State University

2002

This project was supported by a research fund development grant from:
The California Social Work Education Center

Additional copies of this report can be obtained at cost from:
The California Child Welfare Resource Library
Department of Social Work
California State University, Long Beach
1250 Bellflower Boulevard
Long Beach, CA 90840-4602
562-985-4570
<http://www.csulb.edu/projects/ccwrl>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CalSWEC Preface	iii
About the Authors	v
Abstract	viii
Introduction – Project Description	x
Acknowledgements	xiv
Competencies	xvi
Module I – Pathways to College and College Attendance: A Review of the Literature	1
▪ Instructional Guide and Competency Sections Addressed	2
▪ Section 1: College Attendance, Completion, and Predictors for Success	4
▪ Section 2: At-Risk Students and Pathways to College	8
▪ Questions for Discussion	10
Module II – Pathways to College and College Attendance for Former Foster Youth	12
▪ Instructional Guide and Competencies Addressed	13
▪ Section 1: Review of the Literature on College Attendance for Former Foster Youth	15
▪ Questions for Discussion	24
Module III – College Experiences of Former Foster Youth in California	25
▪ Instructional Guide	26
▪ Section 1: Purpose and Design of Current Research on Former Foster Youth	29
▪ Section 2: Survey Results	30
▪ Section 3: Student Perspectives/In-Depth Interview Results	61
▪ Questions for Discussion	68
Module IV – Independent Living Programs in California	71
▪ Instructional Guide	72
▪ Section 1: The Foster Care Independence Act of 1999	74
▪ Section 3: Results by County	81
▪ Questions for Discussion	114

Module V – Implications of the Research and Practice Tips for Child Welfare Workers	116
▪ Instructional Guide	117
▪ Useful Websites	124
▪ Questions and Exercises	125
Bibliography	126
Appendixes and Surveys	131
A. Survey on Former Foster Youth in the CSU System	137
B. In-Depth Interview Guide	153
C. Services for Emancipating Foster Youth in Santa Clara County Pilot Study Key Informant Questionnaire	159
D. CSU Memo from Office of General Counsel	162
E. Overview of Research on Former Foster Youth (PowerPoint)	166

CalSWEC PREFACE

The California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) is the nation's largest state coalition of social work educators and practitioners. It is a consortium of the state's 16 accredited graduate schools of social work, the 58 county departments of social services and mental health, the California Department of Social Services, and the California Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers.

The primary purpose of CalSWEC is an educational one. Our central task is to provide specialized education and training for social workers who practice in the field of public child welfare. Our stated mission, in part, is "to facilitate the integration of education and practice." But this is not our ultimate goal. Our ultimate goal is to improve the lives of children and families who are the users and the purpose of the child welfare system. By educating others and ourselves, we intend a positive result for children: safety, a permanent home, and the opportunity to fulfill their developmental promise.

To achieve this challenging goal, the education and practice related activities of CalSWEC are varied: recruitment of a diverse group of social workers, defining a continuum of education and training, engaging in research and evaluation of best practices, advocating for responsive social policy, and exploring other avenues to accomplish the CalSWEC mission. Education is a process, and necessarily an ongoing one involving interaction with a changing world. One who hopes to practice successfully in any field does not become "educated" and then cease to observe and to learn

To foster continuing learning and evidence-based practice within the child

welfare field, CalSWEC funds a series of curriculum modules that employ applied research methods to advance the knowledge of best practices in child welfare. These modules, on varied child welfare topics, are intended to enhance curriculum for Title IV-E graduate social work education programs and for continuing education of child welfare agency staff. To increase distribution and learning throughout the state, curriculum modules are made available through the CalSWEC Child Welfare Resource Library to all participating schools and collaborating agencies.

The module that follows has been commissioned with your learning in mind. We at CalSWEC hope it serves you well.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Joan M. Merdinger, DSW, LCSW is Professor of Social Work and Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs at San José State University. She has collaborated with Dr. Alice Hines on a number of research projects focusing on children and youth, including the first year of a study of the disproportionate representation of children of color in the child welfare system in Santa Clara County. Drs. Merdinger and Hines have also collaborated on program evaluations for community agencies specializing in children and youth.

She is particularly interested in the effects of education on adolescents and young adults who have emancipated from the public child welfare system. She was formerly MSW Program Director and Associate Dean in the College of Social Work at San José State University. She has taught courses in Human Behavior and Social Environment and Social Work Practice, and also served as MSW Field Education Director.

Alice M. Hines, PhD, MSW is currently an Associate Professor in the School of Social Work at the University of Southern California. She has focused her scholarly work in three separate, but interrelated areas: substance abuse and risk of AIDS, particularly among ethnic and cultural minority groups; methodological issues in research especially as they pertain to diverse cultural and ethnic groups; and, research on child and family-related issues with a particular focus on examining family-based correlates of adolescent and young adult development.

In the area of family research, she is particularly interested in extending current research and theory to families from diverse cultural and ethnic groups, as well as to poor and disenfranchised families. Most recently, she has applied her work on family issues and child development to research in the area of Child Welfare with a particular focus on adolescents and young adults in the system. She is particularly interested in factors related to developmental risk and resilience among adolescents and young adults who have grown up in the foster care system.

In 2000, she was awarded a three-year grant aimed at examining factors related to the disproportionate involvement of children of color in the child welfare system in Santa Clara County. This topic is currently receiving much attention at the national level and the study in Santa Clara County is one of the few to examine these issues at the local level. The study has received national recognition and findings have been included in the *Child Welfare Summit: An Examination of the State of Child Welfare and Recommendations for Action*, a report published by the Center for the Study of Social Policy. She has taught courses in research methods to social work students at both the graduate and undergraduate level.

Kathy Lemon, MSW, is currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of California at Berkeley, School of Social Welfare. Ms. Lemon has worked on several child welfare research projects, including a study examining factors related to the disproportionate representation of children of color in the child welfare system, a study identifying factors contributing to the success of former foster youth who have emancipated from the child welfare system, as well as program evaluations of a

mentoring program for older adolescent foster youth. Her current research interests include examining the role of poverty and community context in the development of social problems affecting women and children of color.

Paige Wyatt, MSW, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of California Berkeley, School of Social Welfare has worked on multiple child welfare and mental health research projects. These projects include a study investigating the factors related to the disproportionate representation of children of color in the child welfare system, a study identifying factors that contribute to the success of emancipated foster youth, as well as a study examining the effectiveness of ethnic specific mental health services among immigrant and refugee populations. Her current research interests include examining the factors related to the disproportionate representation of children of color in the juvenile justice system and evaluating the effectiveness of child welfare policies and interventions for substance-affected families.

Marty Tweed, MSW, LCSW, has been a part-time member of the faculty of San Jose State University since 1993, and is the Field Faculty Liaison in the College of Social Work. Since 2000, she has also been a part-time member of the faculty and the Field Program Coordinator at the Institute for Collaborative Community Studies of California State University, Monterey Bay. Ms. Tweed's practice interests include public child welfare, mediation, foster care, and adoption. Her research interests include child welfare, graduate admissions criteria, and outcomes based education. She is responsible for adapting the CalSWEC funded *Pathways to College* research report into this curriculum.

ABSTRACT

One marker of successful achievement following emancipation from the foster care system is high school graduation and advancement to a four-year college or university. Emancipated foster youth attending college experience various psychosocial and system-related factors that have contributed to their success. While more research efforts are being aimed at tracking youth emancipating from the foster care system, little is known about those who are currently enrolled in post-secondary education. Research on youth exiting the foster care system has tended to highlight negative outcomes of out-of-home care, including homelessness, dependence on public assistance, substance abuse, increased psychological distress, and lack of educational achievement (Barth, 1990; Cook, 1991; Courtney, Piliavin, Grogan-Kaylor, & Nesmith, 2001; Festinger, 1983; Jones & Moses, 1984; Nevada KIDS COUNT, 2001; Piliavin, Sosin, Westerfelt, & Matsueda, 1993). We have little knowledge of former foster youth who go on to lead healthy and productive lives and what the contributing factors were that enabled them to succeed. Understanding former foster youths' pathways to college and identifying the factors related to their educational achievement can help inform program and service delivery to youth currently in the foster care system.

The primary purpose of the current research on pathways to high education by former foster youth (Merdinger, Hines, Lemon, & Wyatt, 2002) was to investigate the individual, system-related and county-specific resources that enabled youth who have emancipated from the foster care system to achieve educational success by planning

for and enrolling in college. Specific research questions addressed include: (a) What are the demographic and placement-related characteristics of youth who emancipated from the foster care system and who are currently in a four-year college or university, (b) What were their paths through and experiences within both the foster care system and the educational system, (c) What internal and external (services, programs, etc.) resources contributed to their being admitted to a four-year college or university, (d) What are the child welfare characteristics (i.e., number of children in out-of-home placement, number of youth emancipating each year, demographic and placement-related characteristics of emancipating youth) of specifically targeted counties throughout California, and (e) What college-related programs and services are available for foster youth in these specifically selected counties?

The purpose of this curriculum module is to provide an overview of the literature on pathways to higher education and to present the current research on former foster youth with an ultimate goal of improving service delivery for this special population.

INTRODUCTION—PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The College of Social Work at San José State University received a curriculum grant from the California Social Work Education Center to develop empirically-based teaching materials promoting competency-based social work practice in the provision of child welfare services.

This curriculum is designed to improve the quality of care and services (positive outcomes) provided to children in out-of-home care, especially children in long-term care. More specifically, it highlights the importance of providing child welfare services that are more responsive to the particular needs of children who must prepare for emancipation and the responsibilities of adult life. While more research efforts are being aimed at tracking youth emancipating from the foster care system, little is known about those who are currently enrolled in post-secondary education. Further, research on youth exiting the foster care system has tended to highlight negative outcomes of out-of-home care for this population. We have little knowledge of former foster youth who go on to lead healthy and productive lives and what the contributing factors were that enabled them to succeed. Understanding former foster youths' pathways to college and identifying the factors related to their educational achievement can help inform program and service delivery to youth currently in the foster care system.

As a teaching tool, this curriculum has two primary audiences: students in graduate schools of social work and child welfare workers who are already employed and providing service to this at-risk population. Depending on the audience and time

available, child welfare faculty and agency trainers may use the curriculum in its entirety or in part. Modules I and II provide an overview of the problem and describe existing research in the area. Modules III, IV, and V describe current research providing insight to professionals working with this population.

The curriculum modules are detailed as follows:

Pathways to College and College Attendance: A Review of the Literature. This module provides an overview and review of the literature focused on youth college attendance and completion rates across the nation. Nationwide statistics and predictors for success in college are discussed as well as the growth in jobs that will require a college degree. Pathways to college for at-risk students are identified and discussed. California statistics on educational achievement are contrasted with other states, due to high population and the diversity that exists in this large state. A guide for instructors and questions for discussion are included in the chapter.

Pathways to College and College Attendance for Former Foster Youth. This module reviews the scant literature on college attendance for former foster youth and begins to contrast the pathways of this population with that of the general population of youth. It is significant that few studies have been conducted in this area and most of the research conducted has had very small sample sizes. Important variables for at-risk youth and contributors to positive educational outcomes are discussed. A guide for instructors and questions for discussion are included in the chapter.

College Experiences for Former Foster Youth in California. Current research (Merdinger et al., 2002) is discussed and the research design is described (includes a

survey of former foster youth on 10 CSU campuses, qualitative in-depth interviews of the youth, and an ethnographic study of 10 California counties). This module highlights the findings of this research and describes both the quantitative (surveys) and qualitative (in-person interviews) results. Tables present the following data:

- Demographics of sample of former foster youth
- Educational history
- Current educational experiences
- Resources, social support, and health status
- Mental health and substance abuse
- History of out-of-home care and preparation for independent living
- Life satisfaction

Verbatim responses of former foster youth asked during the in-person interviews are included in this section as well as questions for discussion.

Independent Living Programs in California. This module begins with information about the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 and then describes the ethnographic study portion of the research in both design and findings. Detailed demographic information is presented for the nine counties surveyed as well as interviews with ILP coordinators that describe the specific services of each county. Questions and exercises are included.

Implications of the Research and Practice Tips for Child Welfare Workers. A review of the literature and interviews with former foster youth informs the development of practice tips for those working in the field. This module provides conclusions from all three phases of the research and is designed to assist child welfare worker improve the quality of care and services provided to youth. Useful websites and scholarship information are also included for further review.

Bibliography. This section includes both references used for the research as well as additional works used for the development of this curriculum module. Students are encouraged to conduct additional review of these works for enhanced learning.

Appendixes. This section includes copies of the surveys used in the research and a PowerPoint presentation that provides an overview of the research.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to thank the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) for the two years of funding that supported this research project.

We would like to acknowledge the help of the Office of General Counsel of the California State University system in providing a legal ruling on our request for information in order to collect data from the CSU campuses.

We would like to particularly thank Stacey Morgan-Foster, formerly AVP for Student Affairs at San José State University and now VP for Student Affairs at CSU Stanislaus. She was an early supporter of our study, and an advocate to other CSU campuses regarding participation.

We would like to thank the VPs for Student Affairs on the participating CSU campuses who assisted us by sponsoring our study and providing access to the students who participated in the study.

Drs. Merdinger and Hines, the project's principal investigators, want to extend additional thanks to Kathy Lemon and Paige Wyatt, the project's Research Associates, for their tireless work on this project from beginning to end. We could not have managed and completed this work without them.

We would like to thank the Independent Living Program (ILP) coordinators of the nine counties for providing us with information regarding programs and services for emancipating and emancipated foster youth.

And, finally, we offer our special thanks to the former foster youth on the 10 CSU

campuses who made the time to participate in our study by returning the self-administered questionnaire, and completing an in-depth interview. We are grateful for their interest in our research and their commitment to helping pave the pathway to college for more current and former foster youth.

COMPETENCIES

The list of CalSWEC Curriculum Competencies for Public Child Welfare was created for use by the graduate schools of social work to prepare their child welfare students. These competencies reflect the common priorities of schools and agencies, yet allow each institution suitable autonomy. The California Child Welfare Competencies, as they are also known, serve as a model for collaborative curriculum development across the nation (CalSWEC, 2003).

This curriculum addresses the competencies listed below. Each module provides an additional list of competencies specifically addressed in that module.

Section I – Ethnic Sensitive and Multicultural Practice

- 1.1 Student understands and is sensitive to cultural and ethnic differences of clients.
- 1.2 Student considers the cultural norms, beliefs, values, language, race, ethnicity, customs, family structure, and community dynamics of major ethnic groups in the State of California in assessments and continues training to increase knowledge in this area.
- 1.5 Student considers the influence of culture on behavior and is aware of the importance of utilizing this knowledge in helping families improve parenting and care of their children within their own cultural context.
- 1.6 Student has knowledge of the legal, socioeconomic and psychosocial issues facing immigrants/refugees.
- 1.11 Student is able to advocate for equity in availability of resources and services.

Section II – Core Child Welfare Skills

- 2.2 Student is able to assess the interaction of individual, family, and environmental factors, which contribute to abuse, neglect, and sexual abuse, and identifies strengths, which will preserve the family and protect the child.

- 2.10 Student understands policy issues and legal requirements affecting child welfare practice, including confidentiality, worker liability, reasonable effort requirements, minimum sufficient level of care, least restrictive environment, permanency planning, establishment of paternity, and knows how to implement these requirements in practice.
- 2.13 Student understands the potentially traumatic effects of the separation and placement experience for the child and the child's family and the negative effects on the child's physical, cognitive, social and emotional development.
- 2.15 Student understands the principles of permanency planning and the negative effects that inconsistent and impermanent living arrangements have on children.
- 2.16 Student understands the importance of the biological parent maintaining contact with the child in placement, of encouraging parents when appropriate to participate in planning, and of regular parent child visitations.
- 2.18 Student works collaboratively with foster families and kin networks, involving them in assessment and planning and supporting them in coping with special stresses and difficulties.

Section III – Social Work Skills and Methods

- 3.2 Student conducts effective, ongoing case assessment and planning.
- 3.3 Student demonstrates the ability to evaluate and incorporate information from others, including family members and professionals in assessment, treatment planning, and service delivery.
- 3.5 Student understands the importance of and demonstrates the ability to work with the client in the community, including home, school, etc.
- 3.9 Student uses a variety of methods and strategies to interview and elicit information from children and adolescents that are age appropriate and consistent with social work values and ethics.
- 3.13 Student has knowledge of and understands how to work collaboratively with other disciplines that are routinely involved in child welfare cases.
- 3.23 Student understands and conducts an ongoing process of reassessments and makes appropriate modifications to the case plan.

- 3.24 Student understands the strengths and concerns of diverse community groups and is able to work with community members to enhance services for families and children.

Section IV – Human Development and the Social Environment

- 4.1 Student understands children's developmental needs and how developmental levels affect a child's perception of events, coping strategies, and physical and psychological responses to stress and trauma.
- 4.4 Student understands the potential effects of child abuse and neglect on child/adult development and behavior.
- 4.5 Student can recognize when human development is delayed or follows abnormal patterns and can identify contributing factors.
- 4.6 Student understands the stages of the family life cycle as they occur in a variety of familial patterns.
- 4.7 Student understands the interaction between environmental factors especially in terms of racism, poverty, violence, and human development.
- 4.10 Student understands the impact of adult/parental psychopathology on child development and on family functioning.
- 4.11 Student understands the dynamics of adolescent sexuality and teen pregnancy and can assist the teenage parent in understanding his or her developmental needs in assuming parental responsibilities.

Section V – Workplace Management

- 5.6 Student can effectively use advocacy skills in the organization to enhance service delivery.
- 5.7 Student seeks both client and organizational feedback in practice evaluation and in improving effectiveness of service delivery
- 5.9 Student can develop a strategy to identify new agency and community resources to meet client needs.

Section VI – Child Welfare Policy, Planning, and Administration

- 6.2 Student demonstrates knowledge of specific laws, policies, court decisions and regulations essential to child welfare services.
- 6.3 Student understands how a leader facilitates effective teamwork for the purpose of planning, formulating policy and implementing service.
- 6.8 Student can demonstrate knowledge of contracting for services in public child welfare and understands how these services can be evaluated.

MODULE I

PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE AND COLLEGE ATTENDANCE: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

MODULE I INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

This chapter provides an overview and review of the literature focused on youth college attendance and completion rates across the nation. Significant points include the following:

- College degrees are increasingly necessary to secure adequate employment; college graduates earn approximately \$15,000 more than non-college graduates on the job.
- California lags behind the national average in percentage of high school completers attending college.
- Socio-economic status, education level of parents/caretakers, and race/ethnicity all impact college attendance and completion rates for youth.
- The intervention of one significant person at a critical point in the life of a student is extremely significant to educational success for students from low-income backgrounds.

Contents

- Introduction
- Impact of race, ethnicity, gender, and income level on educational achievement
- Predictors of college attendance and completion
- At-risk students and pathways to college

Instructors are encouraged to use this chapter in a range of ways that meet their needs. This chapter provides foundation knowledge and an introduction to the topic of educational achievement for youth to broaden understanding about the issues for former foster youth. This chapter can be used to foster competency in the following

sections of the Child Welfare Curriculum Competencies:

Section I: Ethnic Sensitive and Multicultural Practice

- 1.2 Student understands and is sensitive to cultural and ethnic differences of clients.
- 1.2 Student considers the cultural norms, beliefs, values, language, race, ethnicity, customs, family structure, and community dynamics of major ethnic groups in the State of California in assessments and continues training to increase knowledge in this area.
- 1.5 Student considers the influence of culture on behavior and is aware of the importance of utilizing this knowledge in helping families improve parenting and care of their children within their own cultural context.
- 1.11 Student is able to advocate for equity in availability of resources and services.

Section IV: Human Development and the Social Environment

- 4.4 Student understands the potential effects of child abuse and neglect on child/adult development and behavior.
- 4.5 Student can recognize when human development is delayed or follows abnormal patterns and can identify contributing factors.
- 4.7 Student understands the interaction between environmental factors especially in terms of racism, poverty, violence, and human development.
- 4.10 Student understands the impact of adult/parental psychopathology on child development and on family functioning.

MODULE I

PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE AND COLLEGE ATTENDENCE: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Section 1: College Attendance, Completion, and Predictors for Success

The path to college attendance is influenced by numerous internal and external factors. Yet, for all young adults, post-secondary education has never been more important than in this present era. Recent reports from the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate that the number of college level jobs will grow faster than the number of jobs for people with less than college education during the years of 1998-2008 (U.S. Department of Education, 2000). In addition to the increased likelihood of being employed, college graduates also earn more money than non-college graduates. In 1999, 25-34-year-old college graduates earned \$15,000 more yearly than high school graduates, and \$22,000 more than high school dropouts (U.S. Department of Education, 2000).

As such, young adults who do not possess a certain level of education—which in the current work force increasingly means a BA/BS—are often at a disadvantage. Research indicates that certain demographic and socioeconomic factors including gender, race and ethnicity, family income, educational preparation, and neighborhood and school characteristics are all predictors of youth who are *the most and the least* likely to attend college. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reported that in 1996 the national dropout rate in college was 5%, with an equal number of male and female students dropping out.

These rates are compounded by race/ethnicity, and income level. In 2000, the percentage of 25-29-year-olds who had completed high school was 88.1%, but only 86.8% of African-Americans, and 62.8% of Latino/as completed high school.

Race and ethnicity, socioeconomic background, and family characteristics impact both high school completion, and college completion rates. The NCES (1998) reports that the higher the socioeconomic status (SES) and parental educational attainment level of a student, the greater the likelihood that student will complete a bachelor's degree, or any degree within 5 years (see Figures A and B).

Figure A		
College Dropout Rates and High School Completion Rates		
	College Dropout Rates	High School Completion Rates
National	5.0% (1996)	88.1%
White	4.1% (1998)	94.0%
African American	6.7%	86.8%
Latino/a	9.0%	62.8%

(National Center for Education Statistics, 2001)

Figure B		
Income Level, Percentage of Academically Qualified for College, and Percentage Attending College		
	Academically Qualified	Attending
High Income	86.0%	78.0%
Middle Income	68.0%	62.7%
Low Income	53.0%	48.6%

While 78% of the high school completers with high-income families attended college, 62.7% of high school completers with middle-income families, and only 48.6%

of high school completers with low-income families attended college (NCES, 1998). Naturally, an important factor in college attendance is cost. The costs of post-secondary education are substantial, and students from low-income families have greater difficulty meeting the costs of their education than students from middle and high-income families (NCES, 1998).

There are also important differences for students enrolled in 2-year or 4-year institutions. Students who enroll in a 4-year institution are much more likely to complete a BA/BS degree in 5 years than students enrolled in a 2-year institution (57% vs. 8%). Students who begin college at 18 years of age or younger are more likely to complete a college degree in 5 years than students who begin their college career from the ages of 20-29 (51% vs. 19%). Students who enroll full time are more likely to complete their degree in 5 years than students who enroll part time (52% vs. 15%; NCES, 1998).

The population of the U.S. has become increasingly educated over time. “In 1999, 88% of those ages 25-29 had earned a high school diploma or its equivalent; 66% of the high school completers in this age group had completed some college; and 32% had earned a bachelor’s degree or higher” (NCES, 2000). When examined by gender, it appears that females are somewhat more likely to attend and complete college than males (see Figure C).

Figure C		
College Attendance Rates by Gender and Ethnicity		
	Male	Female
White	66.1%	71.2%
African American	52.1%	62.3%
Latino/a	47.0%	53.2%

Of the 66% of the high school completers who had completed some college, 63.5% were male and 68.5% were female (NCES, 2001). Of the white high school completers who had completed some college, 66.1% were male and 71.2% were female; of the 57.8% of African American high school completers who had completed some college, 52.1% were male and 62.3% were female; and of the 50.6% of Latino/a high school completers, 47.7% were male and 53.2% were female (NCES, 2000).

Similar findings with regard to gender pertain to *college graduation rates*. Of the 32.1% college graduates among 25-29-year-old high school completers, 31.2% were male and 33% female. White college graduates were 34.8% male and 37.3% female; African American college graduates were 14.9% male and 18.6% female; Latino/a college graduates were 13% male and 15.8% female (NCES, 2000; see Figure D).

Figure D		
College Completion Rates		
	Male	Female
White	34.8%	37.3%
African American	14.9%	18.6%
Latino/a	13.0%	15.8%

It is significant to note the educational achievement and pathway to college for students who live in the state of California. A recent study reported that in 1998, 54.8% of California's recent high school graduates were enrolled in college (Kipp, Price, & Wohlford, 2002); this is in contrast to national statistics indicating that 62.9% of all high school completers were enrolled in college directly after high school graduation; California lags behind the national average.

Predictors of College Attendance and Completion

The literature on college admissions and retention suggests that particular student characteristics predict success. Strage (2000) states:

By the end of the 1980s, researchers had compiled a fairly clear picture of the formulas of success for *traditional* college students, that is 18-22 year old non-minority students from middle-class backgrounds whose parents had attended college. This formula included consideration of the adequacy of students' academic preparation, the appropriateness of their educational expectations and career goals, 'anticipatory socialization' they had received from parents, peers, and others prior to entering college, and their assimilation into their new milieu upon matriculation (p. 732).

Research in the field of college admissions and retention indicates that the *traditional* student model does not fit the increasingly diverse population of current college students. Strage (1999, 2000) has found in her research on college students that Asian American, Latino/a, and White students differ in their patterns of academic and social integration into college. She suggests that ethnicity and race need to be considered when looking at college adjustment and success. She also questions the emphasis that has been placed on first generation to attend college vs. later-generation students. Finally, she points out the importance of positive relationships with professors, and college peers for all the students studied.

Section 2: At-Risk Students and the Pathway to College

Due to gaps in the research on former foster youth after emancipation and

particularly about former foster youth and college attendance, looking to literature on minority, non-traditional and at-risk youth provides insight into the questions posed by this research. In a recent examination of neighborhood conditions affecting high school dropout and college graduation rates, Vartanian and Gleason (1999) found:

Among black youth, growing up in a neighborhood with wealthier residents, more two parent families, and a greater percentage of workers in professionals or managerial occupations [these factors] lead to a substantial decrease in the high school drop out rate...Among white youth, neighborhood conditions positively affect the probability of graduating from college...(p. 21).

Kowaleski-Jones (2000) found that residential stability of a neighborhood and mother's perception of a high quality school decreased adolescent risk-taking and aggressive behavior, both predictors of high school dropping out, in a sample of African American, Latino/a and economically disadvantaged White youth. These studies point to the importance of a stable community, including significant role models, mitigating risk and influencing positive behaviors such as high school attendance and completion.

Other studies provide additional ideas about how at-risk youth may be able to successfully navigate their way to college. Romo and Falbo (1996), in an in-depth qualitative study of Latino high-risk high school students in Texas, found that those who successfully graduated from high school had better educated mothers, and families that earned more money than those students who did not graduate. The authors cited several qualities of parenting and of the school system that enabled the students to complete their education.

Levine and Nidiffer (1996), in an in-depth comparison study of students who came from low-income backgrounds and who attended either a very selective college or a community college, found:

What mattered most was not carefully constructed educational policy but the intervention by one person at a critical point in the life of each student. Sometimes the mentor was a loving relative; other times it was someone paid to offer expert advice. In either case, it was the human contact that made the difference (p. 65).

In a 1998 study in Great Britain on successful former foster youth, Jackson and Martin found the following factors that contributed to positive educational outcomes: continuity of schooling, regular school attendance, friends outside of foster care who did well at school, out of school interests and hobbies, and a significant adult mentor/role model. The most recent report from the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES, 2000) indicates that at-risk students who enrolled in college were able to do so because of the following factors: they had taken an advanced academic program; and they had parental, peer, and school support.

Questions for Discussion

Review Module I and address the following in small groups:

1. What factors have contributed to an increased need for a college degree?
2. List the factors contributing to college *attendance* and *completion* as described in the research. Did any of these apply to you?
3. If you *did not* fit the *traditional profile* of a college student likely to succeed, what supports were in place to help you attend and complete college? If you *did* fit the

traditional profile, what outcomes might have occurred if you did not have these privileges?

4. Identify at-risk groups and discuss the factors that can positively influence college attendance.

MODULE II

PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE AND COLLEGE ATTENDANCE FOR FORMER FOSTER YOUTH

MODULE II

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

This chapter reviews the scant literature on college attendance for former foster youth and begins to contrast pathways for this population with that of the general population. Following are significant points:

- Former foster youth remain behind their peers in high school and GED graduation rates.
- Few studies have been conducted on college attendance and completion rates for former foster youth.
- Former foster youth tend to have generally poor outcomes for a variety of reasons.
- Factors contributing to educational achievement include resilience, expectations of others for college attendance, positive role models, educational stability in high school, the presence of *significant adults*, and use of ILP services.

Contents

- Educational outcomes for emancipating and former foster youth
- Internal factors contributing to educational achievement
- External factors contributing to educational achievement

Instructors are encouraged to use this chapter to highlight the special needs and circumstances of former foster youth to facilitate positive educational outcomes.

Competencies

Section II: Core Child Welfare Skills

- 2.2 Student is able to assess the interaction of individual, family, and environmental factors, which contribute to abuse, neglect, and sexual abuse, and identifies strengths, which will preserve the family and protect the child.

- 2.15 Student understands the principles of permanency planning and the negative effects that inconsistent and impermanent living arrangements have on children.

Section IV: Human Development and the Social Environment

- 4.1 Student understands children's developmental needs and how developmental levels affect a child's perception of events, coping strategies, and physical and psychological responses to stress and trauma.
- 4.4 Student understands the potential effects of child abuse and neglect on child/adult development and behavior.
- 4.5 Student can recognize when human development is delayed or follows abnormal patterns and can identify contributing factors.
- 4.7 Student understands the interaction between environmental factors especially in terms of racism, poverty, violence, and human development.
- 4.10 Student understands the impact of adult/parental psychopathology on child development and on family functioning.
- 4.12 Student understands the dynamics of adolescent sexuality and teen pregnancy and can assist the teenage parent in understanding his or her developmental needs in assuming parental responsibilities.

MODULE II

PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE AND COLLEGE ATTENDANCE FOR FORMER FOSTER YOUTH

Section 1: Review of the Literature on College Attendance for Former Foster Youth

Educational Outcomes for Emancipating and Former Foster Youth

As mentioned in the introduction, little is known about former foster youth currently enrolled in post-secondary education. A review of the literature on *high school* completion rates of former foster youth (studies conducted from 1980-2001) indicates that former foster youth remain behind their peers in high school and GED graduation rates (Figure 1). Zimmerman (1982) reported a 39% graduation rate of former foster youth in New Orleans, Louisiana. Festinger (1983) found in her study of New York metropolitan area former foster youth that 65% had completed high school. In a study conducted in West Virginia, Jones and Moses (1984) found that 51% of the study respondents had completed high school. Barth's (1990) study of former foster youth in Northern California found that 62% of the respondents had completed high school. Cook's (1991) well-known study, often referred to as the Westat study, found that 54% of former foster youth had graduated from high school. In a meta-analysis of the Festinger (1983), Jones and Moses (1984), Barth (1990), and Cook (1991) studies, Mech (1994) concluded that 58% of the former foster youth respondents in the combined studies were high school graduates.

More recent studies including those of Courtney and Piliavin (1995; 1998) conducted in Wisconsin, McMillen and Tucker (1999) conducted in Missouri, the Grand

Jury of Orange County, California (2000), and Clark County, Nevada (2001) indicated the following high school completion rates of former foster youth respectively: 64%, 39%, 63% and 50%. Wedeven, Pecora, Hurwitz, Howell, and Newell (1997) reported a notable exception to the low rates of high school completion for former foster youth. Their study of the Boise, Idaho Casey Family program found that 94% of the former foster youth in the program had graduated from high school or completed their GED.

In the only comparison group study to date, Blome (1997), using the *High School and Beyond* data sets from the Department of Education, matched former foster youth with comparison youth who lived with at least one parent, on gender, race, verbal and math inventories. She found that in 1986, 77% of former foster youth had graduated from high school or completed their GED in comparison to a matched group of same age youth whose graduation/GED rate was 93%.

Figure 1: Studies on Former Foster Youth: High School Completion Rates

Design			Outcomes	Comparisons	
Study	Sample	Method	Study participants' high school/GED completion rate	Percent (%) of 25- to 29-year-olds who have completed high school	Reference Year
Zimmerman (1982)	61 former foster youth, ages 19-29 at follow-up in New Orleans	Interviews	39%	85.4%	1980
Festinger (1983)	277 former foster youth in New York City	Structured interviews	65%	85.4%	1980
Jones and Moses (1984)	328 former foster youth (in care for a minimum of one year) in West Virginia	Pre-coded interview schedule. 89% conducted in person, 11% by phone or mail.	51%	86.3%	1981
Barth (1990)	55 young adults who had been in foster care in the San Francisco Bay area/Sacramento	Interviews, 76% in person and 24% by phone	62%	85.5%	1989
Cook (1991)	810 former foster youth from Arizona, California, North Carolina, Illinois, Missouri, Pennsylvania, New York, Tennessee.	Interviews conducted 2.5 to 4 years after youth left foster care. 69% conducted on phone, 31% in person	54%	85.7%	1990
Mech (1994)	1,465 former foster youth aggregated across 4 outcome studies: Barth 1990; Festinger 1983; Jones and Moses 1984; and Cook 1991	All used interview data	58%	85%	1980-1990

Figure 1: Studies on Former Foster Youth: High School Completion Rates (continued)

Design			Outcomes	Comparisons	
Study	Sample	Method	Study participants' high school/GED completion rate	Percent (%) of 25-29-year-olds who have completed high school	Reference Year
Wedeven, Pecora, Hurwitz, Howell, and Newell (1997)	68 former foster youth from Boise, Idaho Casey Family Program	Survey	94%	86.7%	1993
Blome (1997)	167 foster youth matched with 167 non-foster youth (N = 334), from the High School and Beyond National Survey, bi-annual survey 1980-1986.	Longitudinal quasi-experimental design, matching variables: age, gender, race, verbal and math abilities	77% (versus 93% with matched group)	86.1%	1986
Courtney and Piliavin (1998, 2001)	113 former foster youth in Wisconsin (out of foster care for 12-18 months)	Longitudinal study using interviews conducted in person	64%	86.9%	1995
McMillen and Tucker (1999)	252 former foster youth in Missouri	Case record and administrative data review	39%	87.3%	1996
Grand Jury, Orange County (2000)	38 former foster youth in Orange County, California	Interviews and case record reviews	63%	88.1%	1998
Nevada KIDS COUNT (2001)	100 former foster youth in Southern Nevada	Interviews	50%	88.1%	2000

The following studies, focused on former foster youth, report on college attendance of their samples: Festinger (1983), 39%; Jones and Moses (1984), 7%; Barth (1990), 33%; Cook (1991), 18%; Wedeven, et al. (1997), 57%; Courtney and Piliavin (1998), 9%; and Clark County, Nevada (2001), 30%. Only two studies report college graduation rates: Festinger (1983) reported that 5% of her sample had earned college degrees; Barth (1990) reported that 2% of his sample had earned college degrees (Figure 2).

The generally poor educational outcomes found among former foster youth are likely due to numerous factors and stressors often associated with emancipating from out-of-home care and transitioning to adulthood. Research suggests that these factors and stressors include: being maltreated, type of out-of-home placement, having multiple placements and associated changes in schools attended, inconsistent social support, low educational expectations from caregivers and the tracking of youth into vocational education (rather than college), the poor quality of some group home education and *on-site* schools, and lack of access to educational assistance or college preparation classes and advising (Collins, 2001; Colton, Heath, & Aldgate, 1995; Courtney et al. 2001; Mech & Fung, 1999).

**Figure 2: Studies on Former Foster Youth:
College Attendance and Graduation Rates**

Study	College Attendance	College Graduation
Zimmerman (1982)	No information	
Festinger (1983)	39% had attended college	5% college degree or beyond
Jones and Moses (1984)	7% of former foster youth had one year of college	
Barth (1990)	33% had attended college	2% completed college
Cook (1991)	18% reported college enrollment	
Mech (1994)	No information	
Wedeven, Pecora, Hurwitz, Howell, & Newell (1997)	57% had entered college	
Blome (1997)	45% taking college courses compared to the matched group at 54%	
Courtney and Piliavin (1998)	9% had entered college	
McMillen and Tucker (1999)	No information	
Grand Jury Orange County (2000)	No information	
Nevada KIDS COUNT (2001)	30% were currently enrolled or had attended college	

For instance, using a sample of 171 former foster youth in Illinois, Mech and Fung (1999) found that approximately 85% of the sample who were enrolled in post-secondary education had been in placements rated as *low in restrictive*, prior to emancipation. Additionally, in a longitudinal examination of foster youth transitions to adulthood, Courtney et al. (2001) found that at Wave I (conducted while youth were still

in foster care) approximately 30% of the sample (N = 141) reported having failed to complete a grade; 37% reported enrollment in special education classes; almost 50% had to change schools at least four times in their formal education. Yet, while still in care, the majority of the sample (79%) reported their desire to graduate from high school and 63% reported their desire to complete college.

Internal Factors That Contribute to Educational Achievement Among Former Foster Youth: The Role of Resilience

To date, with the exception of a pilot study conducted by the authors, consisting of qualitative in-depth interviews with a group of 15 former foster youth who successfully made the transition from high school to a four-year college (Hines, Merdinger, & Wyatt, 2000, Merdinger, Hines, & Wyatt, 2001), there have been no studies of former foster youth attending a four-year college or university. The results from the pilot study indicated that the majority of the youth possessed internal characteristics including: being intelligent; being identified as gifted and talented in elementary school; and being enrolled in AP, honors, and college prep courses in high school. These findings mirror those in the literature on resilient youth, youth who have succeeded despite adversity (Levine & Nidiffer, 1996; Masten et al., 1999). In addition, the majority of the respondents also spoke about an internal expectation that they would attend college and a feeling that there would be negative outcomes in their lives if they failed to attend. They were also extremely goal oriented, determined, and disciplined, and had strong aspirations to achieve a better life than they currently had or than their parents had led.

Findings from the study also indicated that using college enrollment as a marker

of success for former foster youth may be misleading (Hines, Merdinger, & Wyatt, 2002). When asked about current functioning, more than half of the respondents reported struggling academically, financially, and emotionally, indicating a need for continuing support in order to ensure successful college outcomes.

External Factors That Contribute to Educational Achievement Amongst Former Foster Youth: Role Models, and Access to Educational Resources

The most important external factors to emerge from the pilot study referenced above included *educational stability in high school* coupled with a challenging high school curriculum. The majority of the youth also reported that they felt they were expected to attend college. Additionally, the presence of role models in the lives of these successful youth was notable. The most frequently cited role models were elementary, middle, and high school teachers who often made such a strong impression on our respondents that they actually remembered the names of their teachers and classes that they had taught.

Another important finding was that these “significant adults” often did something extra or special that kept the student in school or on the path to college, intervening in or advocating for the youth in the place of a parent or caregiver. This finding regarding the importance of a crucial person at a critical juncture is corroborated by research on students from low-income backgrounds who attended either a very selective college or a community college (Levine & Nidiffer, 1996).

Additionally, although not specifically addressed by the pilot study, the role of other external resources, such as Independent Living Program (ILP) services, may shed

light on system-related factors that can increase the likelihood of college attendance. The role of external resources, such as ILP services, to ensure the educational achievement and self-sufficiency of youth exiting foster care has received increasing attention in recent years. ILP services were first mandated in 1985 and were designed specifically to assist foster youth in their transition out of foster care. Recently, the passage of the federal Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 doubled overall annual funding (from \$70 million to \$140 million) to states to implement the John H. Chafee Independence Program, which has increased overall ILP services, as well as increased state and county flexibility in service delivery.

Although research on the impact of ILP services on the educational achievement of older adolescent and emancipated foster youth is limited, available evidence suggests that use of ILP services in general, is associated with more positive outcomes, including educational achievement for foster youth both at discharge from the foster care system and post-emancipation, including educational achievement. The use of ILP services has been linked to the acquisition of skills such as: the ability to maintain a job for at least one year post-emancipation; employment at discharge from care; financial self-sufficiency; ability to access health care; avoidance of young parenthood; overall life satisfaction; availability of a social network; possession of a savings account; budgeting skills and educational achievements, such as high school graduation or GED, and college enrollment (Cook, 1991; Mallon, 1998; Lindsey & Ahmed, 1999).

Questions for Discussion

1. Discuss college completion and dropout rates by former foster youth detailed in the research. Why are there generally poor educational outcomes for former foster youth?
2. Identify the internal factors that contribute to educational achievement among former foster youth.
3. Identify the external factors that contribute to educational achievement among former foster youth.
4. Interview a foster youth. What are his or her plans for continuing education? What external and internal factors can you identify that has impacted his or her decision? (Interview the ILP Coordinator if you are not able to interview a foster youth. What internal and external factors does the coordinator tend to see in the youth with which he or she works?)

MODULE III

COLLEGE EXPERIENCES OF FORMER FOSTER YOUTH IN CALIFORNIA

MODULE III INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

This chapter presents the current research conducted by Merdinger, Hines, Lemon, and Wyatt (2002), which included three phases of data collection and analysis over a 2-year period. The data collection included a survey of former foster youth on 10 participating CSU campuses, a qualitative in-depth interview of a subsample of the youth, and an ethnographic study of nine California counties where the 10 campuses were located. Significant findings from the first two phases of the research include the following:

- Respondents reported the most important experiences in making decisions about attending college included information about financial aid, advising about college, and taking college prep classes.
- Respondents spent a median of 6 years in placement, were approximately age 12 at the time of the first placement, and attended two different high schools.
- Having a stable high school experience provided opportunities for most of the respondents to make a significant linkage with role models in their schools.
- Almost half received mental health services since their discharge from the foster care system.
- Multiple influences shape the pathways to college.

Contents

- College experiences of former foster youth
- Descriptive statistics for the overall sample of respondents (N = 189)
- Descriptive statistics of the subsample (N = 27)
- In-depth interview results for the subsample

- External factors
- Role models
- Internal characteristics
- Overheads of Tables 1-15

Competencies

Section I: Ethnic Sensitive and Multicultural Practice

- 1.3 Student understands and is sensitive to cultural and ethnic differences of clients.
- 1.2 Student considers the cultural norms, beliefs, values, language, race, ethnicity, customs, family structure, and community dynamics of major ethnic groups in the State of California in assessments and continues training to increase knowledge in this area.
- 1.5 Student considers the influence of culture on behavior and is aware of the importance of utilizing this knowledge in helping families improve parenting and care of their children within their own cultural context.

Section II: Core Child Welfare Skills

- 2.13 Student understands the potentially traumatic effects of the separation and placement experience for the child and the child's family and the negative effects on the child's physical, cognitive, social and emotional development.
- 2.15 Student understands the principles of permanency planning and the negative effects that inconsistent and impermanent living arrangements have on children.
- 2.18 Student works collaboratively with foster families and kin networks, involving them in assessment and planning and supporting them in coping with special stresses and difficulties.

Section IV: Human Development and the Social Environment

- 4.1 Student understands children's developmental needs and how developmental levels affect a child's perception of events, coping strategies, and physical and psychological responses to stress and trauma.

- 4.4 Student understands the potential effects of child abuse and neglect on child/adult development and behavior.
- 4.6 Student understands the stages of the family life cycle as they occur in a variety of familial patterns.
- 4.7 Student understands the interaction between environmental factors especially in terms of racism, poverty, violence, and human development.

MODULE III

COLLEGE EXPERIENCES OF FORMER FOSTER YOUTH IN CALIFORNIA

Section 1 - Purpose and Design of Current Research on Former Foster Youth

The primary purpose of the current study (Merdinger et al., 2002) was to investigate the individual, system-related, and county-specific resources that enabled youth who have emancipated from the foster care system to achieve educational success by planning for and enrolling in college. Specific research questions addressed include: a) What are the demographic and placement-related characteristics of youth who emancipated from the foster care system and who are currently in a 4-year college or university, b) What were their paths through and experiences within both the foster care system and the educational system, c) What internal and external resources (services, programs, etc.) contributed to their being admitted to a 4-year college or university, d) What are the child welfare characteristics (i.e., number of children in out-of-home placement, number of youth emancipating each year, demographic and placement-related characteristics of emancipating youth) of specifically targeted counties throughout California, and e) What college-related programs and services are available for foster youth in these specifically selected counties?

Research Design

In order to address the research questions described above, the study (conducted over a 2-year period) utilized an exploratory-descriptive design with quantitative and qualitative research methods. The study consisted of three phases of

data collection. In the first phase, a *survey in the form of a self-administered questionnaire (SAQ)* was mailed to former foster youth on 10 CSU campuses. The survey took 20-30 minutes to complete. An incentive of \$10 was mailed to respondents who returned the completed survey and a postcard requesting an incentive.

The second phase of data collection consisted of *qualitative, in-depth interviews* with a small subgroup of respondents who indicated their interest in a follow-up, in-depth interview. One primary researcher and one research assistant were present during the interviews, which lasted from 1½ to 2 hours. The primary researcher conducted the interview and the research assistant took notes and audiotaped the interviews that were subsequently transcribed verbatim. For this part of the study, the researchers interviewed students from 3 of the 10 campuses.

The third phase of data collection involved an *ethnographic study* of the nine counties in which the CSU sites were located (one county housed two of the CSU sites). One research assistant conducted a 30-40 minute telephone interview with an ILP worker with the title of ILP coordinator. Interviews were audiotaped and reviewed to identify pertinent information.

Section 2 - Survey Results

The current study (Merdinger, et al., 2002) examined the pathways to educational achievement for former foster youth, who were attending college on one of 10 campuses in the CSU system. Results indicated that respondents for the *survey portion of the study* (N = 189) were predominantly young adults from a variety of ethnic and racial backgrounds, mirroring the race and ethnicity of the state. Most of the

respondents (75.6%) had attended two high schools or less; 53% had attended only one high school, 22.6% had attended two high schools. Over 80% had completed high school or some amount of college at the point of emancipation. A significant finding included the respondents reporting that the most important activities and experiences in making the decision to attend college included: information about financial aid, advising about college, and college preparation classes. A little more than half of the sample attended a community college prior to attending a 4-year university.

Descriptive statistics for the overall sample of former foster youth (Tables 1-7)

Table 1 provides the descriptive statistics on the demographics of the sample of former foster youth (N = 189). The sample was 74.6% female, with a mean age of 24.6 years, a median age of 22.0 years, and a range of ages from 18 to 58 years. The sample was 42.6% White, 23.4% African American, 20.3% Mexican American/Other Latino, 6.9% Asian, 1.6% Filipino, 1.6% American Indian, and 3.7% Other. An additional 30.1% of the sample considered themselves to be multiethnic, and 20.7% reported that a language other than English was spoken while growing up. The majority of respondents reported being single, never married (65.1%); 14.3% reported living as a couple, and 10.6% reported being married and living with their spouse. An additional 19.2% of participants reported having given birth to or fathered children, with a range of 1 to 4 children and a mean of 1.5 children, with a median of 1.0 children.

Table 1: Demographics (N = 189)

	Frequency	Percentage	Range	Mean	Median
Gender					
<i>Female</i>	141	74.6%			
<i>Male</i>	48	25.1%			
Age			18 - 58	24.6 yrs.	22.0 yrs.
Ethnicity					
<i>White</i>	80	42.6%			
<i>African American</i>	44	23.4%			
<i>Mexican American or</i> <i>Other Latino</i>	38	20.3%			
<i>Asian</i>	13	6.9%			
<i>American Indian</i>	3	1.6%			
<i>Filipino</i>	3	1.6%			
<i>Other</i>	7	3.7%			
Consider self multiethnic?					
Yes	55	30.1%			
Spoke language other than English while growing up?					
Yes	39	20.7%			
Current relationship status					
<i>Single—never married</i>	123	65.1%			
<i>Living as couple</i>	27	14.3%			
<i>Married—living with spouse</i>	20	10.6%			
<i>Divorced</i>	13	6.9%			
<i>Married—not living with spouse</i>	6	3.2%			
<i>Legally separated</i>	1	0.5%			
Given birth or fathered children?					
Yes	36	19.2%			
If yes, number of children			1 - 4	1.5	1.0

Table 2 describes the educational history of the sample. Respondents attended a mean of 2.18 elementary schools, with a median of 2.0 (range 0 - 10); 1.35 middle schools, with a median of 1.0 (range 0 - 4); and 1.91 high schools, with a median of 1.0 (range 1 - 12). The majority of the sample reported completing high school (61.6%) at time of emancipation or discharge from foster care; 21.6% reported having attended

some college; and 14.1% had finished some high school. Most of the sample indicated that they had participated in college preparation classes in high school (67.7%); 65.6% participated in extra-curricular activities; 56.1% received advising about college; and 52.9% received information about financial aid. The mean length of time to complete high school or GED was 4.05 years, with a median of 4.0 years and a range from 1 - 12 years. The mean age at high school graduation or GED attainment was 17.94 years, with a median of 18.0 years and a range of 16 to 32 years. The mean overall GPA of the sample while in high school was 3.10, with a median of 3.11 (range of <1.00 - 4.40)

Experiences that were most important in the decision to go to college included: information about financial aid (43.9%), advising about college (42.9%), other experiences (36.0%), and college preparation classes (31.7%). The mean age when participants first began college was 18.8 years, with a median of 18.0 years and a range from 15 - 38 years. Most respondents (61.2%) reported having attended any college or university before coming to their current university, with 53.4% having attended a community college.

Table 2: Educational History

	Frequency	Percentage	Range	Mean	Median
While in out-of-home care:					
<i>Number of elementary schools attended</i>			0 - 10	2.18	2.0
<i>Number of middle schools attended</i>			0 - 4	1.35	1.0
<i>Number of high schools attended</i>			1 - 12	1.91	1.0
Highest level of schooling completed at time of emancipation or other discharge from the child welfare system					
<i>Completed high school</i>	114	61.6%			
<i>Some college</i>	40	21.6%			
<i>Some high school</i>	26	14.1%			
<i>Less than high school</i>	4	2.2%			
<i>GED</i>	1	0.5%			
Activities and experiences in high school:					
<i>College preparation classes</i>	128	67.7%			
<i>Extra curricular activities</i>	124	65.6%			
<i>Advising about college</i>	106	56.1%			
<i>Information about financial aid</i>	100	52.9%			
<i>Tutoring</i>	35	18.5%			
<i>Special education classes</i>	6	3.2%			
<i>Other experiences</i>	22	11.6%			
Number of years to completion of high school or attainment of GED			1 - 12	4.05 yrs.	4.0 yrs.
Age when graduated from high school or attained GED			16 - 32 yrs.	17.94 yrs.	18.0 yrs.
Overall high school Grade Point Average (GPA)			<1.00 - 4.40	3.10	3.11

Table 2: Educational History (Continued)

	Frequency	Percentage	Range	Mean	Median
Which activities and experiences were most important in your decision to go to college:					
<i>Information about financial aid</i>	83	43.9%			
<i>Advising about college</i>	81	42.9%			
<i>College preparation classes</i>	60	31.7%			
<i>Extra curricular activities</i>	29	15.3%			
<i>Tutoring</i>	4	2.1%			
<i>Other experiences</i>	68	36.0%			
Age when first began college			15 - 38	18.8 yrs	18.0 yrs.
Attend any college or university before coming to this university					
Yes	115	61.2%			
Type of college or university attended before coming to this university					
<i>Community college</i>	101	53.4%			
<i>Another CSU campus</i>	14	7.4%			
<i>Private college or university</i>	12	6.3%			
<i>University of California</i>	6	3.2%			
<i>Other type of college or university</i>	9	4.8%			

The current educational experiences of the sample are shown in Table 3. The majority of the participants were either seniors (25.9%) or juniors (25.4%); 20.0% reported being freshmen, 14.1% sophomores, and 14.1% graduate students. In addition, 46.6% were transfer students. The current living situation of the sample included 51.7% renting an apartment, 13.4% renting a room and 19.6% living on campus. The most frequently occurring proposed major included social sciences (24.6%), other (19.0%), education (12.3%), business (11.7%), and humanities (11.7%). The majority of the sample also reported that their current degree objective was a BA/BS (81.5%) and 50.3% indicated their final degree objective was a master's degree. The mean and median overall current GPA was 3.00, with a range from 1.00 - 4.00.

Most respondents indicated the major barriers to obtaining needed services at their university were: lack of time (59.8%), not knowing how to obtain the services (30.7%), and not knowing where to obtain the services (29.6%). Of the 22.3% of respondents who had ever withdrawn or taken a leave of absence from their current university, the average number of months away was 7.93, with a median of 6 months and a range from less than one month to 48 months; 15.1% also reported that they are currently considering withdrawing or taking a leave of absence. Sixty-three percent of the sample reported that the foster care system did not prepare them very well for college; 26.5% felt fairly well prepared, and 10.5% felt extremely well prepared.

Table 3: Current Educational Experiences

	Frequency	Percentage	Range	Mean	Median
Current class level					
<i>Freshman</i>	37	20.0%			
<i>Sophomore</i>	26	14.1%			
<i>Junior</i>	47	25.4%			
<i>Senior</i>	48	25.9%			
<i>Graduate</i>	26	14.1%			
Transfer student?					
<i>Yes</i>	88	46.6%			
Live on campus?					
<i>Yes</i>	37	19.6%			
Current living situation					
<i>Rented apartment</i>	77	51.7%			
<i>Rented room</i>	20	13.4%			
<i>Live with parents</i>	14	9.4%			
<i>Own house</i>	13	8.7%			
<i>Rented house</i>	12	8.1%			
<i>Other</i>	13	8.7%			
Current proposed major					
<i>Social Sciences</i>	44	24.6%			
<i>Education</i>	22	12.3%			
<i>Business</i>	21	11.7%			
<i>Humanities</i>	21	11.7%			
<i>Health Professions</i>	11	6.1%			
<i>Social Work</i>	10	5.6%			
<i>Engineering</i>	8	4.5%			
<i>Life Sciences</i>	4	2.2%			
<i>Physical Sciences</i>	4	2.2%			
<i>Other</i>	34	19.0%			
Current degree objective					
<i>BA/BS</i>	150	81.5%			
<i>Masters</i>	33	17.9%			
<i>Doctorate</i>	1	0.5%			
Final degree objective					
<i>Masters</i>	91	50.3%			
<i>Doctorate</i>	49	27.1%			
<i>BA/BS</i>	41	22.7%			
Overall current GPA			1.00 - 4.00	3.00	3.00
Major barriers to obtaining needed services at university:					
<i>Lack of time</i>	113	59.8%			
<i>Did not know how to obtain services</i>	58	30.7%			
<i>Did not know where to obtain services</i>	56	29.6%			
<i>Transportation problems</i>	36	19.0%			
<i>No barriers</i>	34	18.0%			
<i>Language difficulties</i>	2	1.1%			
<i>Other</i>	23	12.2%			

Table 3: Current Educational Experiences (Continued)

	Frequency	Percentage	Range	Mean	Median
Ever withdrawn, taken a leave of absence, or dropped out from this university?					
Yes	42	22.3%			
If so, number of months away from this university			0 - 48	7.93 months	6.0 months
Currently thinking of withdrawing or taking a leave of absence?					
Yes	28	15.1%			
How well did foster care system prepare you for college?					
Extremely well	19	10.5%			
Fairly well	48	26.5%			
Not very well	114	63.0%			

Table 4 contains information on resources, social support, and the health status of the sample. Eighty-one percent of respondents indicated that they are currently supporting themselves through financial aid; 75.1% through employment; 28.0% from scholarship(s), and 20.1% with help from family. Most also reported working off-campus (75.9%), and if employed, the mean number of hours worked weekly was 26.12, with a median of 25.0 (range from 2 - 60 hours). Respondents' current financial situation was described as fair (44.1%), poor (36.0%), and good (19.9%); 48.6% of the sample considered their financial situation to be worse than others their age, 35.5% reported it was about the same as others their age, and 17.8% indicated their financial situation is better than others their age.

The majority of the sample (78.2%) indicated that they do have someone to borrow \$200 from, with 49.7% reporting that they would borrow the money from a family member, 37.6% from a friend, and 11.6% from a member of their foster family. Most

respondents (86.6%) also indicated that they do have someone to ask for help or advice, with 65.1% reporting they would ask a friend, 41.3% a family member, 19.0% a counselor or therapist, 13.8% a mentor, 12.2% someone from another relationship, and 11.6% a member of their foster family. Sixty-one percent reported that their current friends include people they knew while in foster care; 60.2% still maintain contact with foster, group home, or kin care parents; 79.8% still maintain contact with their biological family; and 16.8% still maintain contact with their past caseworkers or counselors. Of the sample 23.8% also indicated that they have been without a place to sleep, with a mean of 64.32 homeless nights, a median of 25.5, and a range from 1 - 365.

Compared to others their age, 42.0% of respondents felt their present health status was very good, 27.7% felt their health was excellent and, 22.9% felt their health was fair, when compared to others their age. Many participants (44.6%) indicated that they currently do not have health insurance, 29.9% have private insurance, and 19.6% have Medi-Cal. Of those who do not have health insurance, 57.1% are very concerned about it, and 16.8% are somewhat concerned. Since being discharged from the foster care system, 58.0% of participants indicated that they have sometimes been unable to get medical care, and 34.4% reported they have always been able to get medical care.

Table 4: Resources, Social Support, and Health

	Frequency	Percentage	Range	Mean	Median
Currently supporting self through:					
Financial aid	153	81.0%			
Employment	142	75.1%			
Scholarship	53	28.0%			
Help from family	38	20.1%			
Help from friends	15	7.9%			
Public assistance	11	5.8%			
Money saved while in foster care	9	4.8%			
Money from other sources	26	13.8%			
Current work situation:					
Off-campus work	110	75.9%			
On-campus work	22	15.2%			
Both on and off-campus work	12	9.0%			
If employed, number of hours worked weekly			2 - 60 hrs.	26.12 hrs.	25.0 hrs.
Describe current financial situation					
Fair	82	44.1%			
Poor	67	36.0%			
Good	37	19.9%			
Compared to others your age, would you describe your financial situation as:					
Worse	90	48.6%			
About the same	62	33.5%			
Better	33	17.8%			
Have someone to borrow \$200 from?					
Yes	147	78.2%			
Person's relationship to you					
Family member	94	49.7%			
Friend	71	37.6%			
Member of foster family	22	11.6%			
Mentor	14	7.4%			
Neighbor	6	3.2%			
Teacher of other staff	4	2.1%			
Coach	2	1.1%			
Counselor or therapist	2	1.1%			
Social worker	2	1.1%			
Other relationship	14	7.4%			
Have someone to ask for help or advice?					
Yes	162	86.6%			

Table 4: Resources, Social Support, and Health (Continued)

	Frequency	Percentage	Range	Mean	Median
Person's relationship to you					
<i>Friend</i>	123	65.1%			
<i>Family member</i>	78	41.3%			
<i>Counselor or therapist</i>	36	19.0%			
<i>Mentor</i>	26	13.8%			
<i>Member of foster family</i>	22	11.6%			
<i>Social Worker</i>	8	4.2%			
<i>Neighbor</i>	5	2.6%			
<i>Coach</i>	2	1.1%			
<i>Other relationship</i>	23	12.2%			
Current friends include people you knew while in foster care?					
Yes	114	61.0%			
Still maintain contact with foster group home or kin care parents?					
Yes	112	60.2%			
Still maintain contact with your biological family?					
Yes	150	79.8%			
Still maintain contact with past caseworkers or counselors?					
Yes	31	16.8%			
Ever been without a place to sleep?					
Yes	45	23.8%			
Number of nights without a place to sleep			1 - 365	64.32	25.5
Compared to others your age, what is your present health status					
<i>Very good</i>	79	42.0%			
<i>Excellent</i>	52	27.7%			
<i>Fair</i>	43	22.9%			
<i>Poor</i>	14	7.4%			
Currently covered by health insurance, such as					
<i>No insurance</i>	82	44.6%			
<i>Private insurance</i>	55	29.9%			
<i>Medi-Cal</i>	36	19.6%			
<i>Medi-Care</i>	2	1.1%			
<i>Other insurance</i>	9	4.9%			

Table 4: Resources, Social Support, and Health (Continued)

	Frequency	Percentage	Range	Mean	Median
If you do not have health insurance, how do you feel about that?					
<i>Very concerned</i>	68	57.1%			
<i>Somewhat concerned</i>	20	16.8%			
<i>Not concerned</i>	2	1.7%			
Since discharged from foster care, have you always been able to get medical care?					
<i>No, sometime unable</i>	105	58.0%			
<i>Yes, always able</i>	62	34.3%			
<i>Did not need medical care</i>	14	7.7%			

Table 5 provides a description of the sample's mental health, substance use, and delinquent behavior problems. Since being discharged from the foster care system, 36.4% of participants have received mental health services. Of those, 31.7% received therapy or counseling, 10.6% outpatient services, and 7.4% inpatient services.

A small percentage of respondents indicated having a current problem with drinking alcohol (7.5%) and using other drugs (6.9%). While in foster care, 11.1% received alcohol treatment services, and 15.7% received drug treatment services. Since being discharged from foster care, 15.2% have received alcohol treatment services and 12.0% have received drug treatment services.

Responses to delinquency variables indicated that 27.1% of participants have done something illegal to obtain money, 13.4% were arrested while in foster care; and 12.9% resided in juvenile hall before leaving foster care. Since being discharged from foster care, 16.9% of the sample reported ever having a problem with the law; 26.7% reported that the incident involved alcohol, 13.6% indicated the incident involved drugs, and 62.2% were arrested.

Table 5: Mental Health, Substance Use Problems, and Delinquency

	Frequency	Percentage
Since discharged from foster care, ever received mental health services? Yes	68	36.4%
If yes, type of mental health services received		
<i>Therapy or counseling</i>	60	31.7%
<i>Outpatient services</i>	20	10.6%
<i>Inpatient services</i>	14	7.4%
<i>Other services</i>	3	1.6%
Currently have a problem with drinking? Yes	12	7.5%
While in foster care, ever receive alcohol treatment services? Yes	5	11.1%
Since discharged from foster care, ever receive alcohol treatment services? Yes	7	15.2%
Currently have a problem with drug use? Yes	7	6.9%
While in foster care, ever receive drug treatment services? Yes	8	15.7%
Since discharged from foster care, ever receive drug treatment services? Yes	6	12.0%
Ever done something illegal to get money? Yes	51	27.1%
Ever arrested while in foster care? Yes	25	13.4%
Reside in juvenile hall anytime before leaving foster care? Yes	24	12.9%
Since discharged from foster care, ever had a problem with the law? Yes	32	16.9%
Did the incident involve alcohol? Yes	12	26.7%
Did the incident involve drugs? Yes	6	13.6%
Were you arrested? Yes	28	62.2%

Table 6 shows the sample's history in out-of-home care and preparation for independent living. The mean number of years spent in out-of-home care was 7.1, with a median of 6.0 years (range of < 1 month - 20 years). The mean age when first placed

in out-of-home care was 10.31 years, with a median of 12 years (range of < 1 year - 17 years of age). The mean number of out-of-home placements while in foster care was 3.39 with a median of 2.00 (range from 1 - 20 placements). Most participants had been placed in a non-relative (57.7%) and/or a relative (53.4%) foster home, with 20.1% being placed in a group home, 12.2% at a friend's house, 10.6% at a residential home, 10.6% at another placement, and 10.1% at a shelter. An additional 22.6% of participants reported that they had run away from an out-of-home placement. Enrollment in an independent living skills program while in foster care was 37.3%; 41.3% of respondents felt they were somewhat prepared for independent living when emancipated, 33.7% felt they were not well prepared, and 25.0% felt well-prepared for independent living when emancipated.

Table 6: History in Out-of-Home Care and Preparation for Independent Living

	Frequency	Percentage	Range	Mean	Median
Number of years spent in out-of-home care			<1 yr. - 20	7.1 yrs	6.0 yrs
Age when first placed in out-of-home care			<1 yr. - 17	10.31 yrs	12 yrs.
Number of out-of-home placements while in foster care			1 - 20	3.39	2.00
Types of placements while in out-of-home care					
<i>Non-relative foster home</i>	109	57.7%			
<i>Relative foster home</i>	101	53.4%			
<i>Group home</i>	38	20.1%			
<i>Friend's house</i>	23	12.2%			
<i>Residential home</i>	20	10.6%			
<i>Shelter</i>	19	10.1%			
<i>Apartment</i>	9	4.8%			
<i>Transitional living home</i>	6	3.2%			
<i>Boarding house</i>	1	0.5%			
<i>Other placement</i>	20	10.6%			
Ever run away from an out-of-home placement?					
Yes	42	22.6%			
Were you enrolled in an Independent Living Skills Program?					
Yes	69	37.3%			
Overall, how prepared did you feel for independent living when emancipated?					
<i>Well prepared</i>	46	25.0 %			
<i>Somewhat prepared</i>	76	41.3%			
<i>Not well prepared</i>	62	33.7%			

Table 7 contains a rating of the sample's current life satisfaction, as well as hopefulness for the future. Most respondents felt they were somewhat happy (49.2%) or very happy (41.5%) with their current life. The majority of participants also felt very (77.0%) or somewhat (22.5%) hopeful about the future.

Table 7: Life Satisfaction

	Frequency	Percentage
Overall, how happy are you with your life these days?		
Very happy	76	41.5%
Somewhat happy	90	49.2%
Not very happy	17	9.3%
Overall, how hopeful are you about the future?		
Very hopeful	144	77.0%
Somewhat hopeful	42	22.5%
Not very hopeful	1	0.5%

Results — Descriptive Statistics for In-Depth Interview Subsample

A subsample (N = 27) of respondents participated in the in-depth interviews. The subsample was 70.4% female, with a mean age of 27.19 years, a median age of 25.00 years and a range of ages from 18 - 58 years, as shown in Table 8. The subsample was 51.9% White, 22.2% Mexican American/Other Latino, 14.8% African American, 3.7% Asian, 3.7% American Indian, and 3.7% Other. An additional 29.6% of the subsample considered themselves to be multiethnic and 18.5% reported that a language other than English was spoken while growing up. The majority of respondents reported being single, never married (40.7%), 18.5% reported living as a couple, and 22.2% reported being married and living with their spouse. An additional 29.6% of participants reported having given birth to, or fathered children, with a range of 1 - 3 children and a mean of 1.1 children (median 1.0).

Table 8: Demographics (N = 27)

	Frequency	Percentage	Range	Mean	Median
Gender					
<i>Female</i>	19	70.4%			
<i>Male</i>	8	29.6%			
Age			18 - 58 yrs.	27.19 yrs.	25.00 yrs.
Ethnicity					
<i>White</i>	14	51.9%			
<i>African American</i>	4	14.8%			
<i>Mexican American or</i> <i>Other Latino</i>	6	22.2%			
<i>Asian</i>	1	3.7%			
<i>American Indian</i>	1	3.7%			
<i>Filipino</i>	0	0.0%			
<i>Other</i>	1	3.7%			
Consider self multi-ethnic?					
<i>Yes</i>	8	29.6%			
Spoke language other than English while growing up?					
<i>Yes</i>	5	18.5%			
Current relationship status					
<i>Single—never married</i>	11	40.7%			
<i>Living as couple</i>	5	18.5%			
<i>Married—living with spouse*</i>	6	22.2%			
<i>Divorced*</i>	5	18.5%			
<i>Married—not living with spouse</i>	1	3.7%			
<i>Legally separated</i>	0	0.0%			
Given birth or fathered children?					
<i>Yes</i>	8	29.6%			
If yes, number of children			1 - 3	1.1	1.0

* Statistically significant difference

Table 9 provides a description of the educational history of the subsample. Respondents attended a mean of 2.20 elementary schools, with a median of 2.0 (range 1 - 5); a mean of 1.33 middle schools, with a median of 1.0 (range 1 - 3); and a mean of 2.67 high schools, with a median of 2.0 (range 1 - 25). The majority of the sample reported completing high school (70.4%) at time of emancipation or discharge from foster care, 7.4% reported having attended some college, and 22.2% had finished some

high school. Most of the sample indicated that they had participated in college preparation classes in high school (63.0%), 48.1% participated in extra curricular activities, 51.9% received advising about college, and 44.4% received information about financial aid. The mean length of time to complete high school or GED was 4.52 years, with a median of 4.0 years and a range from 1 - 12 years. Mean age when graduated from high school or attainment of GED was 18.08 years, with a median of 18.0 years and a range of 16 - 32 years. The mean overall GPA of the sample while in high school was 3.13, with a median of 3.00 (range 2.00 - 4.00).

Experiences that were most important in the decision to go to college included: information about financial aid (33.3%), advising about college (25.9%), other experiences (37.0%), and college preparation classes (18.5%). The mean age when participants first began college was 18.89 years, with a median of 18.00 years and a range from 17 - 26 years. Most respondents (66.7%) reported having attended any college or university before coming to their current university, with 63.0% having attended a community college.

Table 9: Educational History

	Frequency	Percentage	Range	Mean	Median
While in out-of-home care:					
<i>Number of elementary schools attended</i>			1 - 5	2.20	2.00
<i>Number of middle schools attended</i>			1 - 3	1.33	1.00
<i>Number of high schools attended*</i>			1 - 25	2.67	2.00
Highest level of schooling completed at time of emancipation or other discharge from the child welfare system					
<i>Completed high school</i>	19	70.4%			
<i>Some college</i>	2	7.4%			
<i>Some high school</i>	6	22.2%			
<i>Less than high school</i>	0	0.00%			
<i>GED</i>	0	0.00%			
Activities and experiences in high school:					
<i>College preparation classes</i>	17	63.0%			
<i>Extra curricular activities</i>	13	48.1%			
<i>Advising about college</i>	14	51.9%			
<i>Information about financial aid</i>	12	44.4%			
<i>Tutoring</i>	7	25.9%			
<i>Special education classes</i>	1	3.7%			
<i>Other experiences</i>	6	22.2%			
Number of years to completion of high school or attainment of GED*			3 - 12 yrs.	4.52 yrs	4.0 yrs.
Age when graduated from high school or attained GED			17 - 26 yrs.	18.08 yrs.	18.0 yrs.
Overall high school Grade Point Average (GPA)			2.00 - 4.00	3.13	3.00

Table 9: Educational History (Continued)

	Frequency	Percentage	Range	Mean	Median
Which activities and experiences were most important in your decision to go to college:					
<i>Information about financial aid</i>	9	33.3%			
<i>Advising about college</i>	7	25.9%			
<i>College preparation classes</i>	5	18.5%			
<i>Extra curricular activities</i>	2	7.4%			
<i>Tutoring</i>	0	0.0%			
<i>Other experiences</i>	10	37.0%			
Age when first began college			17 - 26 yrs.	18.89 yrs.	18.00 yrs.
Attend any college or university before coming to this university					
Yes	18	66.7%			
Type of college or university attended before coming to this University					
<i>Community college</i>	17	63.0%			
<i>Another CSU campus</i>	0	0.0%			
<i>Private college or university</i>	2	7.4%			
<i>University of California</i>	1	3.7%			
<i>Other type of college or university</i>	2	7.4%			

* Statistically significant difference.

Table 10 describes the current educational experiences of the subsample. The majority of the participants were either seniors (37.0%) or graduate students (25.9%); 14.8% reported being freshmen, 11.1% sophomores and 11.1% juniors. An additional 51.9% were also transfer students. The current living situation of the sample included 39.1% renting an apartment, 21.7% renting a room, and 14.8% living on campus. The most frequently occurring proposed major included social sciences (32.0%), other (28.0%), life sciences (12.0%), humanities (8.0%), and engineering (8.0%). The majority of the sample also reported that their current degree objective is a BA/BS (76.9%) and 50.0% indicated their final degree objective is a master's degree. The mean overall current GPA was 3.20, with a median of 3.27 and a range from 2.00 - 3.91.

Most respondents indicated the major barriers to obtaining needed services at their university were: lack of time (59.3%), not knowing how to obtain the services (40.7%), and not knowing where to obtain the services (29.6%). Of the 22.2% of respondents who had ever withdrawn or taken a leave of absence from their current university, the average number of months away was 8, with a median of 6, and a range from 4 - 12 months; 11.1% also reported that they are currently considering withdrawing or taking a leave of absence. The sample reported that the foster care system did not prepare them very well for college (74.1%), prepared them fairly well (14.8%), and prepared them extremely well (11.1%).

Table 10: Current Educational Experiences

	Frequency	Percentage	Range	Mean	Median
Current class level					
<i>Freshman</i>	4	14.8%			
<i>Sophomore</i>	3	11.1%			
<i>Junior</i>	3	11.1%			
<i>Senior</i>	10	37.0%			
<i>Graduate</i>	7	25.9%			
Transfer student?					
<i>Yes</i>	14	51.9%			
Live on campus?					
<i>Yes</i>	4	14.8%			
Current living situation					
<i>Rented apartment</i>	9	39.1%			
<i>Rented room</i>	5	21.7%			
<i>Live with parents</i>	1	4.3%			
<i>Own house</i>	4	17.4%			
<i>Rented house</i>	3	13.0%			
<i>Other</i>	1	4.3%			
Current proposed major					
<i>Social Sciences</i>	8	32.0%			
<i>Education</i>	1	4.0%			
<i>Business</i>	1	4.0%			
<i>Humanities</i>	2	8.0%			
<i>Health Professions</i>	1	4.0%			
<i>Social Work</i>	0	0.0%			
<i>Engineering</i>	2	8.0%			
<i>Life Sciences</i>	3	12.0%			
<i>Physical Sciences</i>	0	0.0%			
<i>Other</i>	7	28.0%			
Current degree objective					
<i>BA/BS</i>	20	76.9%			
<i>Masters</i>	6	23.1%			
<i>Doctorate</i>	0	0.0%			
Final degree objective					
<i>Masters</i>	12	50.0%			
<i>Doctorate</i>	6	25.0%			
<i>BA/BS</i>	6	25.0%			
Overall current GPA			2.00 - 3.91	3.20	3.27
Major barriers to obtaining needed services at your university:					
<i>Lack of time</i>	16	59.3%			
<i>Did not know how to obtain services</i>	11	40.7%			
<i>Did not know where to obtain services</i>	8	29.6%			
<i>Transportation problems</i>	5	18.5%			
<i>No barriers</i>	4	14.8%			
<i>Language difficulties</i>	1	3.7%			
<i>Other</i>	4	14.8%			

Table 10: Current Educational Experiences (Continued)

	Frequency	Percentage	Range	Mean	Median
Ever withdrawn, taken a leave of absence, or dropped out from this university?					
Yes	6	22.2%			
If so, number of months away from this university			4 - 12 months	8 months	6 months
Currently thinking of withdrawing or taking a leave of absence?					
Yes	3	11.1%			
How well did foster care system prepare you for college?					
Extremely well	3	11.1%			
Fairly well	4	14.8%			
Not very well	20	74.1%			

Table 11 provides information on resources, social support, and the health status of the sample. The majority of the sample are currently supporting themselves through financial aid (92.6%), employment (77.8%), scholarships (29.6), and family help (22.2%). Most also reported working off-campus (75.0%), and if employed, the mean number of hours worked weekly was 27.52, with a median of 24 (range from 2 - 55 hours). Respondents' current financial situation was described as fair (59.3%), poor (14.8%), and good (25.9%); 51.9% of the sample considered their financial situation to be worse than others their age, 25.9% reported it was about the same as others their age, and 22.2% indicated their financial situation is better than others their age.

The majority of the sample (85.2%) indicated that they do have someone to borrow \$200 from, with 48.1% reporting that they would borrow the money from a family member, 40.7% from a friend, and 7.4% from a member of their foster family. Most respondents (85.2%) also indicated that they do have someone to ask for help or

advice, reporting that they would ask a friend (55.6%), a family member (37.0%), a counselor or therapist (18.5%), a mentor (7.4%), or someone from another relationship (11.1%). Much of the sample had current friends who included people they knew while in foster care (44.4%); 55.6% still maintain contact with foster, group home, or kin care parents; 70.4% still maintain contact with their biological family; and 18.5% still maintain contact with their past caseworkers or counselors. Thirty-seven percent of the participants also indicated they have been without a place to sleep, with a mean of 44.14 homeless nights, a median of 45.0, and a range from 1 - 100.

Compared to others their age, 37.0% of respondents felt their present health status was very good, 11.1% felt their health was excellent, and 37.0% felt their health was fair. Many participants indicated that they currently do not have health insurance (29.6%), 44.4% have private insurance, and 11.1% have Medi-Cal. Of those who do not have health insurance, 46.7% are very concerned about it, 13.3% are somewhat concerned, and 40.0% are not concerned. Since being discharged from the foster care system, 70.4% of participants indicated that they have sometimes been unable to get medical care, while 25.9% reported they have always been able to get medical care.

Table 11: Resources, Social Support, and Health

	Frequency	Percentage	Range	Mean	Median
Currently supporting self through:					
<i>Financial aid</i>	25	92.6%			
<i>Employment</i>	21	77.8%			
<i>Scholarship</i>	8	29.6%			
<i>Help from family</i>	6	22.2%			
<i>Help from friends</i>	1	3.7%			
<i>Public assistance</i>	2	7.4%			
<i>Money saved while in foster care</i>	0	0.0%			
<i>Money from other sources</i>	5	18.5%			
Current work situation:					
<i>Off-campus work</i>	15	75.0%			
<i>On-campus work</i>	4	20.0%			
<i>Both on and off-campus work</i>	1	5.0%			
If employed, number of hours worked weekly			2 - 55 hours	27.52 hours	24.00 hours
Describe current financial situation					
<i>Fair</i>	16	59.3%			
<i>Poor</i>	4	14.8%			
<i>Good</i>	7	25.9%			
Compared to others your age, would you describe your financial situation as:					
<i>Worse</i>	14	51.9%			
<i>About the same</i>	7	25.9%			
<i>Better</i>	6	22.2%			
Have someone to borrow \$200 from?					
Yes	23	85.2%			
Person's relationship to you:					
<i>Family member</i>	13	48.1%			
<i>Friend</i>	11	40.7%			
<i>Member of foster family</i>	2	7.4%			
<i>Mentor</i>	1	3.7%			
<i>Neighbor</i>	1	3.7%			
<i>Teacher or other staff</i>	1	3.7%			
<i>Coach</i>	0	0.0%			
<i>Counselor or therapist</i>	0	0.0%			
<i>Social worker</i>	1	3.7%			
<i>Other relationship</i>	4	14.8%			
Have someone to ask for help or advice?					
Yes	23	85.2%			

Table 11 – Resources, Social Support, and Health (Continued)

	Frequency	Percentage	Range	Mean	Median
Person's relationship to you:					
<i>Friend</i>	15	55.6%			
<i>Family member</i>	10	37.0%			
<i>Counselor or therapist</i>	5	18.5%			
<i>Mentor</i>	2	7.4%			
<i>Member of foster family</i>	1	3.7%			
<i>Social Worker</i>	2	7.4%			
<i>Neighbor</i>	0	0.0%			
<i>Coach</i>	0	0.0%			
<i>Other relationship</i>	3	11.1%			
Current friends include people you knew while in foster care?					
Yes	12	44.4%			
Still maintain contact with foster, group home or kin care parents?					
Yes	15	55.6%			
Still maintain contact with your biological family?					
Yes	19	70.4%			
Still maintain contact with past caseworkers or counselors?					
Yes	5	18.5%			
Ever been without a place to sleep?					
Yes	10	37.0%			
Number of nights without a place to sleep			1 - 100	44.14	45.0
Compared to others your age, what is your present health status					
<i>Very good</i>	10	37.0%			
<i>Excellent</i>	3	11.1%			
<i>Fair</i>	10	37.0%			
<i>Poor</i>	4	14.8%			
If you do not have health insurance, how do you feel about that?					
<i>Very concerned</i>	7	46.7%			
<i>Somewhat concerned</i>	2	13.3%			
<i>Not concerned</i>	6	40.0%			
Since discharged from foster care, have you always been able to get medical care?					
<i>No, sometime unable</i>	19	70.4%			
<i>Yes, always able</i>	7	25.9%			
<i>Did not need medical care</i>	1	3.7%			

Table 12 provides information on the mental health, substance use problems, and delinquent behavior of the subsample. Since being discharged from the foster care system, 48.1% of the sample has received mental health services. Of those, 40.7% received therapy or counseling, 11.1% received outpatient services, and 7.4% inpatient services.

A small percentage of respondents indicated having a current problem with drinking alcohol (4.8%) and using other drugs (15.4%). While in foster care, 28.6% received alcohol treatment and 28.6% received drug treatment services. Since being discharged from foster care, 28.6% have received alcohol treatment services and 28.6% have received drug treatment services.

Responses to delinquency variables indicated that 33.3% of participants have done something illegal to obtain money, 18.5% were arrested while in foster care; and 14.8% resided in juvenile hall before leaving foster care. Since being discharged from foster care, 11.1% of the sample reported ever having a problem with the law; 20.0% reported that the incident involved alcohol, and 75.0% were arrested.

Table 12: Mental Health, Substance Use Problems and Delinquency

	Frequency	Percentage
Since discharged from foster care, ever received mental health services?		
Yes	13	48.1%
If yes, type of mental health services received		
Therapy or counseling	11	40.7%
Outpatient services	3	11.1%
Inpatient services	2	7.4%
Other services	0	0.0%
Currently have a problem with drinking?		
Yes	1	4.8%
While in foster care, ever receive alcohol treatment services?		
Yes	2	28.6%
Since discharged from foster care, ever receive alcohol treatment services?		
Yes	2	28.6%
Currently have a problem with drug use?		
Yes	2	15.4%
While in foster care, ever receive drug treatment services?		
Yes	2	28.6%
Since discharged from foster care, ever receive drug treatment services?		
Yes	2	28.6%
Ever done something illegal to get money?		
Yes	9	33.3%
Ever arrested while in foster care?		
Yes	5	18.5%
Reside in juvenile hall anytime before leaving foster care?		
Yes	4	14.8%
Since discharged from foster care, ever had a problem with the law?		
Yes	3	11.1%
Did the incident involve alcohol?		
Yes	1	20.0%
Did the incident involve drugs?		
Yes	0	0.0%
Were you arrested?		
Yes	3	75.0%

Frequencies and percentages in this table vary due to low response rates for the individual items and to a large number of missing values.

Table 13 provides information on the subsample's history in out-of-home care and preparation for independent living. The mean number of years spent in out-of-home care was 6.08, with a median of 5.0 (range of <1 year - 18 years). The mean age when

first placed in out-of-home care was 10.42 years, with a median of 12 years (range of <1 year - 17 years of age). The mean number of out-of-home placements while in foster care was 4.11 with a median of 4.00 (range from 1 - 19 placements). Most participants had been placed in a non-relative (63.0%) and/or a relative (40.7%) foster home, with 33.3% being placed in a group home, 18.5% at a friend's house, 18.5% at a shelter, 7.4% in an apartment, and 3.7% at a residential home. An additional 19.2% of participants reported that they had run away from an out-of-home placement. Enrollment in an independent living skills program while in foster care was 50.0%, and 18.5% of respondents felt they were well prepared for independent living when emancipated.

Table 13: History in Out-of-Home Care and Preparation for Independent Living

	Frequency	Percentage	Range	Mean	Median
Number of years spent in out-of-home care			1 - 18 yrs.	6.08 yrs.	5.0 yrs.
Age when first placed in out-of-home care			<1 - 17 yrs.	10.42 yrs.	12.00 yrs.
Number of out-of-home placements while in foster care			1 - 19	4.11	4.00
Types of placements while in out-of-home care					
<i>Non-relative foster home</i>	17	63.0%			
<i>Relative foster home</i>	11	40.7%			
<i>Group home</i>	9	33.3%			
<i>Friend's house</i>	5	18.5%			
<i>Residential home</i>	1	3.7%			
<i>Shelter</i>	5	18.5%			
<i>Apartment</i>	2	7.4%			
<i>Transitional living home</i>	1	3.7%			
<i>Boarding house</i>	0	0.0%			
<i>Other placement</i>	4	14.8%			
Ever run away from an out-of-home placement?					
Yes	5	19.2%			
Were you enrolled in an Independent Living Skills Program?					
Yes	13	50.0%			
Overall, how prepared did you feel for independent living when emancipated?					
<i>Well prepared</i>	5	18.5%			
<i>Somewhat prepared</i>	11	40.7%			
<i>Not well prepared</i>	11	40.7%			

Regarding current life satisfaction, most respondents felt they were somewhat happy (65.4%) or very happy (30.8%) with their current life, as indicated in Table 14. The majority of participants also felt very (63.0%) or somewhat (33.3%) hopeful about the future.

Table 14: Life Satisfaction

	Frequency	Percentage
Overall, how happy are you with your life these days?		
Very happy	8	30.8%
Somewhat happy	17	65.4%
Not very happy	1	3.8%
Overall, how hopeful are you about the future?		
Very hopeful	17	63.0%
Somewhat hopeful	9	33.3%
Not very hopeful	1	3.7%

Section 3: Student Perspectives/In-Depth Interview Results

A subsample of 27 respondents participated in the in-depth interviews and provided a more detailed picture of their pathways from elementary, middle, and high school into college. The categories that emerged from an analysis of these interviews indicated the following factors influenced the respondents' pathway to college: external systems, role models, and internal characteristics. Table 15 describes external and internal characteristics of the sample.

Table 15: External and Internal Characteristics of the Sub-Sample (N = 27)

External Systems			Role Models			Internal Characteristics		
	N	%		N	%		N	%
College Expectations/ Outside Influences	19	70.3%	School Role Models (All)	21	77.7%	Goal-Oriented/Determined	20	74.1%
			<i>Teacher</i>	13	48.1%	Intelligence		
AP/College Prep/Honors	18	66.7%	<i>Academic Counselor</i>	8	29.6%	<i>AP/College Prep/Honors</i>	18	66.7%
			Significant People Did Extra	13	48.1%	<i>GATE</i>	7	25.9%
Special Programs (All)	16	59.2%				Negative Outcome if No College	16	59.2%
<i>Other</i>	8	29.6%	Biological Family (All)	12	44.4%			
<i>EOP</i>	6	22.2%	<i>Extended Family</i>	8	29.6%	Motivation for a Better Life	15	55.6%
<i>Summer Bridge</i>	2	7.4%	<i>Sibling/s</i>	4	14.8%			
ILS Participation	12	44.4%	Foster Family Role Model	9	33.3%	College Expectations Within	11	40.7%
School Clubs/Organizations	11	40.7%	Parents			Reading as an Escape	5	18.5%
School Sports	9	33.3%	Peer Role Model Close Friend	8	29.6%	Achieving Built Confidence	3	11.1%
						Interest in Learning	2	7.4%
Educational Stability			Outside Positive Role Model/ Group Home Staff	6	22.2%			
<i>High School</i>	7	25.9%						
<i>Middle School</i>	6	22.2%	Outside Positive Role Model/ Therapist	6	22.2%			
<i>Elementary School</i>	5	18.5%						
Employment in Foster Care	7	25.9%	Peer Role Model/Significant	4	14.8%			

External Systems

External factors included: college expectations encouraged by others, including biological family members, foster parents, and group home staff; taking a challenging curriculum; attending special programs that focused specifically on college; participating in ILS; belonging to clubs and organizations; playing a sport; and having a stable high school experience. A special point needs to be made about high school stability; 44% of the subsample attended one high school and another 29.6% attended two high schools. Having a stable school experience provided the opportunity for most of our respondents to make significant linkages with role models in their schools. The following statements illustrate the external expectations cited by the respondents:

...and seeing all of my friends go (to college). I felt like I should make something of myself and make them proud. And also make myself proud.

My parents and my brother and sister always stressed the fact that at least when you go to school you have a back up plan. You can always find a job. But you know, school is very important. That's just something that kind of stuck with me.

The person I was married to, he kind of encouraged me to go to college. And just, his words exactly were, you have to believe in yourself. It's not that you can't do it, you just don't believe you can. So I just took baby steps. And then, I got in. And then it just went from there.

My independent living skills coordinator sat down with me and a member of the CYC (California Youth Connection)...they both sat down and said, there is no way out for us. We have to go to college because if we don't we are not going to make it...And your only way out is going to school. Because you can't stay in foster care all your life. And in foster care, either you go to school or you end up homeless with a baby.

Role Models

Because students in the sample were removed from their families of origin and lived in out-of-home placements, it was important to find out who served as their role models with their biological parents absent. The findings, based on analyses of in-depth interview data, indicate that school personnel provided most of the role models named by our respondents. Both teachers and academic counselors were named most often, mirroring Levine and Nidiffer's (1996) research on low-income students and college attendance. They reported that *primary institutions*, the family and the school, provided the "...one person at a critical point in the life of each student" (p. 65). Without a biological family, our respondents turned to adults at school for their role models.

One of the most interesting findings to emerge from the qualitative phase of the study, was the code "Significant people did extra." During the in-depth interviews, 48.1% of the respondents reported that a significant person in his or her life, often a teacher or academic counselor, did something special that kept the student in school and on a path to college. Other significant people who provided *extras* were biological family members, notably extended family members and siblings, foster families, peers,

group home staff, therapists, and significant others. The following statements illustrate the role models cited by the respondents:

Usually my (high school) teachers. It's kind of like, I didn't have anything at home, so I built a really strong bond with them. And I asked them to stay after school and help them. And I remember, like, a teacher would leave, like go to another school and I would cry. It was pretty hard.

I still talk to a lot of my teachers. Because they were, kind of, my family.

And I think I was really looking for someone to cling to, and to connect with, and I did with her (high school teacher), and actually she ended up, I really think, she mentored me, you know, and I went back to her years after high school, while I was in college, for what, I don't know what I'm going to do, I don't know what to major in, I don't know where I should go, and she really gave me a lot of insight as to directions.

Internal Characteristics

In the most recent research on resiliency, (Masten et al., 1999) the authors found that for those youth who faced adversity successfully, good parenting and intelligence were present. The interview sample of youth had been removed from parents for, on average, 6 years, and had been placed in, on average, four placements. The respondents, mirroring the findings of Masten et al. (1999) on resilient youth, were intelligent; 66.7% had participated in AP, college prep or honors classes in high school.

Nearly 26% were identified as gifted and talented in elementary school, a finding consistent with that of Levine and Nidiffer (1996), whose student respondents in selective colleges were also identified in elementary school.

For the majority of the in-depth interview respondents (74.1%), the themes of goal orientation and determination to reach stated goals emerged from the interviews. While many of the respondents discussed their motivation for a better life, there was also the fear, stated by 59.2%, that there would be negative consequences if they did not attend and graduate from college. The following statements illustrate the *internal characteristics* cited by the respondents:

But I think primarily what helped me...get where I am today...was just sheer stubbornness and drive, you know, I was just not, I was very determined to not let myself become what everyone else around me was. I wanted something more for myself.

I mean I pretty much was my self-talking advocate telling me what I wanted to do. Nobody else was going to do it for me, so I pretty much just made sure that I'd try to stay on course. That would help me get to college.

In conclusion, results of in-depth interviews indicate that former foster youth experienced numerous psychosocial and system-related factors that interacted in various ways to contribute to their own unique pathways to college. In-depth interviews did not reveal any one factor that lead to college attendance, but rather suggested that

multiple influences shape the pathway to college for former foster youth. One respondent commented:

A lot of it was just, I don't know. I guess chance, luck, however you want to look at it; God. But where I was placed at a home that took care of me, that was stable, and I felt loved and got situated. I didn't have to take care of my brothers and sisters no more, where I could focus on me. Just being placed somewhere that was stable, and care and compassionate and loving home. That was number one step. And then getting into it, a good education system, where they recognized my needs, took care of and helped promote my needs, kind of access what I needed. And then gave me programs and stuff like that I was involved with, and being involved with Programs like ILP which was like a county program and SUCCESS, which was a school program, and other college-bound programs, and that helped. And just people pushing me along the way, encouraging me, and overall words of wisdom from others and people encouraging me, pushing me, telling me what to do to get this done. So...I guess just meeting the right people at the right time. But overall, it wasn't really any one thing.

Questions for Discussion

1. Describe the primary purpose of the current research by Merdinger, Hines, Lemon, and Wyatt. How can this study inform and improve child welfare practice?
2. Review and discuss information found in Tables 1-7. Which category was most significant to you and why?

3. Discuss findings from the in-depth interviews with former foster youth that identify external systems, role models, and internal characteristics. Summarize the main points.
4. Review the vignette located on the following page. Knowing that school stability is essential, conduct a role-play between a child welfare worker and the female foster youth around a probable change in placement. Explore all realistic options for continued school stability.
5. Using the same vignette, create an eco-map for this youth.

Vignette

The interview/meeting takes place at Tina's current foster home. It is after school and the foster parents are both at work. Tina is a multiracial 15-year-old girl from a single parent family. Her biological mother is African American, which is the group with which Tina most identifies. Tina knows little about her father, whom she has never met.

Tina has been in long-term foster care for over 3 years. Her mother does not visit anymore and Tina has limited contact with extended relatives who live out of state. She was initially removed from her mother's home where she had been sexually abused by the mother's boyfriend. Tina is very bright, and despite adverse circumstances, has done very well in school. She is liked by her teachers and has demonstrated leadership skills at the high school. She attends church regularly and is involved in a church youth group.

Unfortunately, there has been increasing tension between Tina and her foster parents over issues of dating, homework, clothing, curfews, etc. Counseling has not been effective in addressing the issues and both Tina and the foster parents are unhappy with the situation. The foster parents are now asking that she be moved to a new placement.

MODULE IV

INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAMS IN CALIFORNIA

MODULE IV INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

This chapter contains information about the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 and the portion of the current research detailing ILP services in each of the nine participating California counties. Main points include the following:

- The ethnographic portion of the study clarifies that most ILP services available to youth focused on instructional services geared towards acquisition of skills such as money management, job readiness and retention skills, how to obtain housing and health care, nutrition, and stress management.
- All selected counties provided ILP services to youth after emancipation and some extend ILP services to the age of 21.
- Most counties also assisted youth after emancipation through financial assistance and scholarships for school, and work-related and housing expenses.
- Many counties offered *Foster Youth Services*, a program designed to ensure foster youth's educational progress and help with obtaining their school records.

Contents

- Foster Care Independence Act of 1999
- Research design for ethnographic portion of the current research
- Findings of current research that includes demographic information and ILP services for each of the nine participating California counties

Competencies

Section I: Ethnic Sensitive and Multicultural Practice

- 1.4 Student understands and is sensitive to cultural and ethnic differences of clients.
- 1.5 Student considers the influence of culture on behavior and is aware of the importance of utilizing this knowledge in helping families improve parenting and care of their children within their own cultural context.

- 1.6 Student has knowledge of the legal, socioeconomic and psychosocial issues facing immigrants/refugees.

Section II: Social Work Skills and Methods

- 3.2 Student conducts effective, ongoing case assessment and planning.
- 3.3 Student demonstrates the ability to evaluate and incorporate information from others, including family members and professionals in assessment, treatment planning, and service delivery.
- 3.9 Student uses a variety of methods and strategies to interview and elicit information from children and adolescents that are age appropriate and consistent with social work values and ethics.
- 3.23 Student understands and conducts an ongoing process of reassessments and makes appropriate modifications to the case plan.

Section VI: Child Welfare Policy, Planning, and Administration

- 6.2 Student demonstrates knowledge of specific laws, policies, court decisions and regulations essential to child welfare services.
- 6.3 Student understands how a leader facilitates effective teamwork for the purpose of planning, formulating policy and implementing service.
- 6.8 Student can demonstrate knowledge of contracting for services in public child welfare and understands how these services can be evaluated.

MODULE IV

INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAMS (ILP) IN CALIFORNIA

Section 1: The Foster Care Independence Act of 1999

While available research suggests that Independent Living Program (ILP) services are an important external factor that may contribute to educational achievement and college enrollment among former foster youth, little is known about specific ILP activities that increase the likelihood of college attendance. Additionally, with the passage of the Chafee Bill in 1999 directed toward emancipating foster youth, there are myriad new programs and services that are now available to current and former foster youth that are geared, not only to self-sufficiency, but to college attendance as well. Results from the ethnographic portion of the current study presented later in this curriculum module will add to the knowledge base of the types of college-related programs and services available to current and former foster youth in targeted California counties.

Of particular interest are findings that link ILP services to the increased educational achievement of older adolescent and former foster youth. With the recent implementation of the Foster Care Independence Act (i.e., the *Chafee Bill*), ILP services are expanding to include a broader array of activities and assistance--including in the area of education--to foster youth making the transition out of care. The Chafee Bill establishes several new provisions that are aimed toward increasing the success of youth emancipating from the foster care system, such as: allowing states to serve former foster youth until the age of 21; allowing Medicaid coverage to former foster

youth until the age of 21, and the use of up to 30% of ILP funds for room and board (National Foster Care Awareness Project, 2000).

The Chafee Bill stipulates five broad purposes of ILP services including: increased identification and outreach to youth who are likely to be in foster care until the age of 18; increased personal and emotional support for these youth; increased services and support for former foster youth between the ages of 18 and 21; assisting emancipating and former foster youth to obtain the education, training, and services necessary to obtain employment; and *“helping them prepare for and enter post-secondary training and education institutions”* (National Foster Care Awareness Project, 2000, p. 18, italics added).

The nine counties that house the CSU sites of the former foster youth surveyed for the study were selected as the counties of interest. All county-related data were taken from the California Report Card 2001 (Children NOW, 2001) and include the following information specific to each county:

- ethnic breakdown of child population,
- median household income,
- number of children in foster care and number emancipating,
- percent completing UC/CSU requirements,
- and overall high school dropout rate.

Table A summarizes county data based on information from Children NOW (2001).

Table A
Summary of County Specific Data

County	Child Population	Median Household Income	# of Children in Foster Care	# of Children Emancipated (2001)	% Completing UC/CSU Requirements	Overall High School Dropout Rate
Alameda	Asian/PI: 22.3% African American: 19% American Indian: 0.4% Latino/a: 24.6% White: 33.7% (17.6% in poverty)	\$50,196	4,725	117	40.30%	2.30%
Butte	Asian/PI: 7.5% African American: 1.8% American Indian: 1.7% Latino/a: 13.8% White: 75.1% (30.9% in poverty)	\$31,501	701	17	30.40%	3.90%
Fresno	Asian/PI: 13.8% African American: 5.7% American Indian: 0.8% Latino/a: 48.1% White: 31.1% (38% in poverty)	\$33,882	3,298	126	32.30%	3.80%
Los Angeles	Asian/PI: 10.8% African American: 9.0% American Indian: 0.2% Latino/a: 60.1% White: 19.8% (30.5% in poverty)	\$39,089	35,063	1,448	36.10%	3.50%
Monterey	Asian/PI: 5.8% African American: 4.3% American Indian: 0.4% Latino/a: 57.6% White: 32.0% (24.1% in poverty)	\$47,127	329	13	27.80%	2.70%
Orange	Asian/PI: 13.7% African American: 1.8% American Indian: 0.2% Latino/a: 43.3% White: 40.9% (17.4% in poverty)	\$53,186	4,061	190	28%	2%

Table A
Summary of County Specific Data (Continued)

County	Child Population	Median Household Income	# of Children in Foster Care	# of Children Emancipated (2001)	% Completing UC/CSU Requirements	Overall High School Dropout Rate
Sacramento	Asian/PI: 14.9% African American: 12.5% American Indian: 1.0% Latino/a: 17.9% White: 53.7% (27.3% in poverty)	\$42,329	5,285	170	30.40%	4.30%
San Diego	Asian/PI: 9.9% African American: 7.1% American Indian: 0.5% Latino/a: 36.6% White: 46.0% (22% in poverty)	\$42,292	6,916	210	37.10%	2.20%
Stanislaus	Asian/PI: 8.4% African American: 2.3% American Indian: 0.8% Latino/a: 35.1% White: 53.5% (27.2% in poverty)	\$38,523	773	36	28.60%	5.30%

Note: Asian/PI = Asian/Pacific Islander

Table B summarizes ILP services and outcomes for emancipating youth.

Table B
Independent Living Programs for Foster Youth in Nine California Counties

Typical ILP Services	Unique ILP Services
<p>Instructional services generally offered through contracts with community colleges. Services are geared toward the acquisition of skills, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • money management • job readiness & retention skills (e.g., résumé writing, interviewing skills, etc.) • how to obtain housing • health and nutrition • cooking • home maintenance • sexual responsibility • stress management • interpersonal skills <p>Application workshops on how to complete college and financial aid applications</p> <p>Incentive structure so that participants earn rewards (such as gift certificates) for attending ILP services</p> <p>Direct financial assistance to foster youth who have emancipated to purchase school and work-related items, as well as to assist with housing, food, and transportation costs</p> <p>"Exit" meetings that provide youth who are about to emancipate with information on the resources available to them after emancipation</p>	<p>Computer training courses that allow participants to earn a free computer after finishing the course</p> <p>Experiential and role-playing activities that provide hands-on experience performing independent living skills</p> <p>Formal <i>Aftercare</i> and <i>Pre-ILP</i> programs that provide individualized services for youth between the ages of 13 - 16 and 18 and 21.</p> <p>Workforce partnerships with employers to provide internships and job referrals</p> <p>Transitional, apartment-like placements for youth 16 - 18</p> <p>The use of education specialists who collect and maintain foster youths' school records and insure youth are on track to graduate from high school</p> <p>Tours of local 4-year universities</p> <p>SAT preparation classes</p> <p>Celebration events for ILP participants who graduate high school</p>
Impact of the FCIA	Outcomes for Emancipating Foster Youth
<p>Significant increase in funding and funding flexibility</p> <p>Overall increase in the amount of ILP direct services</p> <p>In varying degrees, services are now offered to emancipated FFY up to the age of 21</p> <p>Allows for ILP services to be available to youth as young as 13</p> <p>Direct financial assistance is now offered to FFY for school, work, housing, or food-related costs</p> <p>Allowed for higher education scholarships to be created</p>	<p>30% to 98% of eligible youth are reported to participate in ILP to varying degrees</p> <p>Among ILP participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 37% to 57% graduated high school • 5% to 29% received a GED • 7% to 35% were enrolled in a vocational program • 25% to 100% attended at least one semester of community college • 2% to 30% attended at least one semester of a 4-year university

The ethnographic inquiry included a 30-45 minute semi-structured telephone interview with an ILP coordinator in each of the nine counties in order to gather the following information specific to each county:

- description of the overall child population
- education and economic statistics
- demographic and placement characteristics of older adolescent and emancipating foster youth
- the college-related services and programs available to emancipating youth (See Appendix C for interview guide.)

Summary of Results: Ethnographic Portion of the Study

The ethnographic portion of the study revealed that most ILP services available to youth prior to emancipation focus on instructional services that are geared toward the acquisition of a number of skills including, money management, job readiness and retention skills, how to obtain housing, health, nutrition, and stress management. All selected counties provided ILP services to youth after emancipation; some counties have established formal “aftercare programs” and others extend regular ILP services to the age of 21. Most of the nine counties studied were also assisting youth after emancipation through financial assistance and scholarships for school, and work-related and housing expenses. According to ILP coordinators, various ILP services have been targeted toward educational needs and college preparation. Many counties offered *Foster Youth Services*, a program designed to ensure foster youths’ educational progress and provide help in obtaining their school records. In addition, most ILP services offered financial aid and college application workshops, as well as college

orientations and tours, and the availability of scholarships for college attendance; some counties offer SAT preparation and financial assistance to take the SAT. Some counties offered specialized assistance for youth with learning disabilities. One county in particular, described an innovative educational program that allows foster youth between the ages of 14 and 18 to live in a campus-like setting and attend high school. Such a program could be a model for other counties in the state. Most surveyed counties had collaborations with community colleges to varying degrees, to assist in the delivery of ILP services. Collaborations with the UC/CSU system were less common and no formal collaborations were discussed in relation to private institutions. Results also indicated that although foster parents do receive services, such as parent training, no counties offered services to foster parents that are specifically targeted toward the educational needs of youth in their care.

The impact of the Chafee Bill on ILP services was overwhelmingly described as positive by the ILP coordinators. Since its passage, the funding for ILP services in the selected counties has increased significantly. Also, according to interviews with coordinators, the Chafee Bill has also allowed some counties to implement ILP services for youth under the age of 16 and allowed all surveyed counties to implement services for emancipated foster youth. Finally, the new bill allows counties more flexibility in the use of ILP funds; many counties now provide direct financial assistance for ILP participants.

Section 2: Results by County

Alameda County

Profile

Alameda County's child population is comprised of 33.7% White, 24.6% Latino/a, 22.3% Asian/Pacific Islander, 19.0% African American, and 0.4% Native American children. The median household income was \$50,196 in 2000 and in 1997, 17.6% of children were living in poverty. For the 1999-2000 school year, the overall high school dropout rate was 2.3%, and varied by ethnicity with 4.4% for African American, 1.8% for Asian/Pacific Islander, 3.3% for Latino/a, 2.5% for Native American, and 1.0% for White students.

Overall, 40.3% of high school graduates in Alameda County in 1999-2000 completed UC/CSU requirements with the following variations by ethnicity: 24.5% of African American, 54.9% of Asian/Pacific Islander, 22.9% of Latino/a, 19.4% of Native American, and 44.3% of White students.

There were 4,725 children and youth in Alameda County's foster care system as of January 1, 2002; 15.6% of whom were 16 years of age or older. Foster youth 16 or older in Alameda County in 2001 were placed in various out-of-home placements, including: 29.3% in kin-care, 24.3% in a group home, 13.8% in a family foster agency, 12.9% in a foster home, 12.3% in an institution, 5.8% with a guardian, 0.7% on runaway status, 0.4% in "other" type of placement, 0.3% classified as pre-adopt and 0.1% in a "missing" placement category.

In 2001, CMS/CWS data indicate that 117 youth emancipated from Alameda

County's foster care system; 74.3% had been in non-kin care at time of emancipation. Of those emancipating in 2001, 64% were African American, 21% White, 13% Latino/a and 2% Asian/Other.

Ethnographic Interview With ILP Coordinator

Source of information

- The source of information used for the interview with Alameda County's ILP Coordinator included general knowledge of internal county-level activities, as well as directions from state and federal government.

ILP services available prior to emancipation

- Alameda County offers weekly 1½-hour group classes that are geared toward *emancipation preparation*.
- Participants of emancipation preparation services are divided into classes by their grade in school with 9th and 10th graders in the same ILP classes and 11th and 12th graders each with their own classes, as well as by geographic location with classes offered in both the North and South county.
- Bus and/or BART passes are provided to all participants of ILP emancipation preparation classes.
- Participants also earn incentives for attending ILP classes every week.
- As seniors in high school, ILP participants can sign up for and be accepted into a computer training program. If they successfully complete the six classes, they earn a new computer. Approximately 75 ILP participants a year earn a computer through this program.
- A computer lab with 24 internet accessible computers housed at the ILP County office is also available to ILP participants Monday through Friday every afternoon.
- Approximately 40% of eligible youth participate in ILP services to varying degrees.

ILP services available after emancipation

- Approximately 300 youth reportedly emancipate from the foster care system in Alameda County per year.

- After emancipation, former foster youth have access to job placement and referral services, and listings for available housing.
- Emancipated foster youth may also apply for financial assistance for move-in costs, as well as direct funding for costs related to employment, including work clothing, or tools necessary for employment.
- Emancipated foster youth also have access to a public health nurse who can transport to and assist them with medical appointments.
- ILP services for emancipated foster youth are also geared toward ensuring that former foster youth have their Medi-Cal insurance in place.

The impact of the Chafee Bill on ILP services

- The Chafee Bill has allowed Alameda County to spend ILP funds directly for costs related to housing, as well as direct funding to emancipated foster youth for work-related costs (as mentioned above).
- Emancipating and emancipated youth may apply for \$1,000 in financial assistance for move-in costs. Participants who have found a housing situation and can prove they are capable of paying the rent, may now receive a grant of \$1,000 for move-in costs such as a security deposit, and/or a portion of the first month's rent.
- The Chafee Bill has also increased overall funding and allowed for an overall increase in the level of support that ILP services can provide emancipated foster youth.

Educational outcomes for emancipating foster youth

- Of the youth who emancipate from the foster care system in Alameda County and who are in contact with ILP services to some degree, approximately:
 - 47.5% graduate from high school
 - an unknown percentage earn a GED
 - 50% of high school graduates or those who obtain a GED attend a community college
 - 25% of high school graduates attend a 4-year college

- 10-15% attend a vocational program

ILP services targeted toward educational needs and college preparation

- Alameda County offers special education classes in both the South and North County that provide special support for learning disabled children or those with mild developmental disabilities.
- ILP services attempt to link participants to tutoring services if needed.
- SAT preparation classes are offered to ILP participants every fall. After completion of the SAT preparation class, ILP services then pay for the participant to take the SAT.
- Workshops are available that focus on how to complete financial aid forms and college applications.
- An historic tour of Southern Black Colleges is also available to a few youth in ILP services every year.

Collaborations with post-secondary institutions and services to foster parents

- Alameda County has collaborations with both community colleges and CSU Hayward that allow former foster youth to reside in CSU Hayward dormitories (even those enrolled in a community college and not CSU Hayward). This housing arrangement is less expensive than off-campus housing for emancipated foster youth who are attending a community college, or CSU Hayward, and allows these students two meals a day.
- Collaborations exist between Alameda County and the private institutions that are among the selected Black Colleges that are on the Southern Black College tour.
- ILP participants also benefit from collaborations with EOP programs that assist them in enrolling in EOP.
- Foster parents are offered services that describe the resources and opportunities available through ILP.
- Foster parents are also notified of upcoming ILP events and activities and are offered instruction in assisting youth make the transition to emancipation.
- No services are reportedly offered to foster parents that are designed to specifically link youth in their care to post-secondary education.

Butte County

Profile

Butte County is home to 51,097 children under the age of 18; 75.1% of the child population is White; 13.8% Latino/a, 7.5% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1.8% African American, and 1.7% Native American. The median household income in Butte County in 2000 was \$31,501 and in 1997, 30.9% of the children were living in poverty. The overall high school dropout rate for 1999-2000 was 3.9% and varied by ethnicity with 14.5% for African American, 3.9% for Asian/Pacific Islander, 4.5% for Latino/a; 7.2% for Native American, and 3.2% for White students.

Overall, 30.4% of high school graduates in 1999-2000 completed UC/CSU requirements; with the following variations by ethnicity: 6.5% of African American, 36.1% of Asian/Pacific Islander, 13.4% of Latino/a, 20.0% of Native America, and 32.8% of White students.

There were 701 children and youth in Butte County's foster care system as of January 1, 2002; 13.6% of whom were 16 years of age or older. In 2001, these older youths were placed in various out-of-home placements including: 60.0% in family foster agencies, 10.5% in kin-care, 8.4% in group homes, 7.4% in foster homes, 7.4% with a guardian, 2.1% in transitional living situations, 2.1% classified as pre-adopt, and 2.1% in placements classified as *other*.

In 2001, CMS/CWS data indicate that 17 youth emancipated from the Butte County foster care system; 76.5% of whom were placed in non-kin care at time of emancipation. Of those emancipating, 70.6% were White and the remaining either

Asian/Other, Native American, or Missing (number is masked to protect confidentiality).

Ethnographic Interview with ILP Coordinator

Source of information

- General knowledge of the ILP coordinator and information from Butte County's internal database provided the sources of information for the following results.

ILP services available prior to emancipation

- Butte County offers 2-hour weekly workshops for youth in ILP on topics such as budgeting, money management, team-building, and issues related to employment, as well as providing outreach to youth to link them with other services that are available to them.
- Experiential field trip groups are also offered in an 8-week life skills program that takes youth to places such as a car sales lot, the grocery store, and a property management company. These trips are designed to provide hands-on practice with independent living skills such as buying a car, grocery shopping, or looking for housing.
- Social events are offered to ILP participants where youth from different parts of the county come together to go out to dinner or to another planned social event.
- An incentive program is in place that allows flexibility with funds in order to financially assist ILP participants with needed services or documents, such as paying for driver's training, or work-related expenses, such as work clothes or tools.
- ILP also pays youth to participate in volunteer jobs in the community, so that they may build their résumé and gain work skills.
- ILP participants also typically receive home visits from ILP caseworkers 1-2 times a month.
- Approximately 79% of eligible youth are reported to participate in these ILP services to varying degrees.

ILP Services Available After Emancipation

- Approximately 25 youth reportedly emancipate from foster care in Butte County per year.

- Prior to emancipating, ILP participants are typically informed about the Aftercare Program and the services available to them after they emancipate.
- In the Aftercare Program, former foster youth receive assistance on a case-by-case basis with issues such as social security matters, employment searches, issues related to college attendance, and referrals to other services.
- The Aftercare Program also provides financial assistance to former foster youth for needed items including purchasing a bed, having repairs made to a car or bike, and assisting with rent through the Rent Subsidy Program.
- Records are kept on emancipated youth who have some contact with the Aftercare Program. After a youth has emancipated, workers attempt to outreach to them through a 90-day follow-up to link them with the Aftercare Program.
- In 2001, 33 former foster youth participated in the Aftercare Program.

Impact of the Chaffee Bill on ILP services

- The Chaffee Bill has increased funding for more staff hours so that there is an overall increase in direct services.
- Additionally, the Chaffee Bill has allowed for the implementation of the Rent Subsidy Program, which is available to emancipated youth in the Aftercare Program and provides them with grants to pay for move-in costs and other expenses related to housing. Participants of this program are required to work with an Aftercare worker to create a *self-sufficiency plan* that includes ensuring that the participant is attending vocational training, community college, or a 4-year college. Aftercare workers then monitor the participants' progress on their self-sufficiency plan.

Educational outcomes for emancipating youth

- Of the youth who emancipate from Butte County's CWS, approximately:
 - 50% graduate from high school
 - 15% earn a GED
 - 25% of high school graduates or those who obtained a GED attend a community college
 - 6% attend a 4-year college

- 35% attend a vocational program

ILP Services targeted toward educational needs and college preparation

- The Butte County Office of Education has a Foster Youth Services program that focuses largely on obtaining needed educational documents and records for foster youth, as well as assisting with specific issues such as enrolling foster youth in school, processes for suspended youth, and assisting with obtaining a work permit.
- A tour of the local community college is provided to ILP participants. Approximately 10% of youth in ILP participate in the community college tour.
- ILP participants are also encouraged to attend a financial aid registration workshop where they register for financial aid. Approximately 75% of ILP participants attend the financial aid workshop.
- Additionally, during inter-disciplinary team meetings, educational status and progress are regular topics that are discussed for every ILP participant. ILP workers also work individually with youth to set ongoing educational goals, such as obtaining a certain GPA or maintaining progress on their units needed to graduate from high school.

Collaborations with post-secondary education programs and services to foster parents

- The Butte County ILP works with the local community college to provide tours of the college to ILP participants (see above).
- The Aftercare worker typically collaborates with the Employment Opportunity Program (EOP) at CSU Chico on an informal, case-by-case basis for former foster youth who are enrolled there.
- There are no formal collaborations between Butte County and the CSU, UC, or private educational institutions to link former foster youth to post-secondary education.
- There are no specific programs for foster parents that are designed to link foster youth in their care to post-secondary education. Outreach to foster parents occurs so that foster parents are aware of the resources available to their youth through ILP. Trainings offered to foster parents include topics such as parenting skills and life skills.

Fresno County

Profile

Fresno County is home to 263,893 children under the age of 18; 48.5% of the child population are Latino/a, 31.1% are White, 13.8% are Asian/Pacific Islander, 5.7% are African American, and 0.8% are Native American. In 2000, the median household income was \$33,882, and 38.0% of children were living in poverty in 1997. For the 1999-2000 school year the overall high school dropout rate was 3.8% and varied by ethnicity with 5.2% for African American, 2.4% for Asian/Pacific Islanders, 4.7% for Latino/as, 3.9% for Native Americans, and 2.9% for White students.

Overall, 32.3% of high school graduates in Fresno County in 1999-2000 completed UC/CSU requirements with the following variations by ethnicity: 29.8% of African American, 41.2% of Asian/Pacific Islander, 21.2% of Latino/a, 28.6% of Native American, and 41.4% of White students.

There were 3,298 children and youth in Fresno's foster care system as of January 1, 2002; 12.1% of whom were 16 years of age or older. In 2001, these older foster youth were placed in various out-of-home placements, including: 22.0% with guardians, 19.0% in kin-care, 18.5% in foster homes, 13.5% in family foster agencies, 10.0% in group homes, 8.0% in institutions, 3.8% in placements classified as *other*, 3.3% on runaway status, and 2.0% in transitional living situations.

CMS/CWS data for 2001 indicate that 126 youth emancipated from the foster care system in Fresno County; 76.2% of whom were in non-kin care at time of emancipation. Of those emancipating in 2001, 42.9% were Latino/a, 32.5% White,

21.4% African American, and the remaining were either Native American or Asian/Other (number is masked to protect confidentiality).

Ethnographic Interview With ILP Coordinator

Source of information

- The general knowledge of the ILP coordinator served as the source of information for the following results.

ILP services available prior to emancipation

- Fresno County offers living skills courses at the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels. The courses take place in a classroom setting and include topics such as budgeting, money management, employment, and education.
- ILP also has an Employment Specialist who works with youth on job referrals, job training, resumes, interviewing skills, and also provides funds for interview or work clothes.
- Computer training is also offered through ILP. Youth who participate in computer training learn programs such as Word and Excel, and then receive a free printer at the end of the training.
- Teen mothers in ILP are offered an attachment and bonding class.
- Approximately 50% of eligible youth participate in ILP to varying degrees.

ILP services available after emancipation

- Approximately 113 youth reportedly emancipated from the CWS in Fresno County each year.
- After emancipation, former foster youth are referred to the Aftercare program where an Aftercare worker conducts a mini needs assessment and establishes a new independent living plan with them.
- Participants of the Aftercare program are offered monthly or bimonthly individual meetings with their social worker.
- Once in the Aftercare Program, participants are offered monetary assistance for expenses related to housing—including items such as security deposits, as well as

other necessary items such as food, work-related costs such as interview clothes or work uniforms, bus passes for school or work, and assistance related to costs for their own children.

- Aftercare Program participants also have access to employment services through the Employment Specialist, and living skill courses, as well as opportunities to apply for education scholarships.
- Referrals to other community resources are also facilitated through the Aftercare Program, including housing resources such as the Transitional Living Center, a program that offers fully furnished apartments, case management, and on-site monitoring.
- Approximately 50 youth are enrolled in the Aftercare Program.

The impact of the Chafee Bill on ILP services

- The Chafee Bill is described as having a good impact for services in Fresno County. It has increased funding for services and allowed the CWS to be more flexible with how funding is utilized.
- It has also allowed Fresno County to assist eligible participants in paying for housing-related expenses, and assisting teen parents with items for their own children.
- Additionally, the Chafee Bill has created the funding for on-the-job training programs and scholarships for ongoing attendance at school in order to pay for items such as textbooks.
- Overall, the Chafee Bill has increased youth interest in ILP services, which is largely attributed to increased flexibility for the use of funds.

Educational outcomes for emancipating foster youth

- Of the youth who emancipate from the CWS in Fresno County and who are in contact with ILP to some degree, approximately:
 - 40% graduate from high school
 - 10% earn a GED
 - 40% of high school graduates or those who obtain a GED attend a community college

- 15% attend a 4-year college
- 10% attend a vocational program

ILP services targeted toward educational needs and college preparation

- Fresno County typically assists ILP participants with educational needs and college preparation on a case-by-case basis.
- Financial aid workshops for graduating seniors are offered.
- A scholarship program is also offered to participants who are attending a vocational school, community college, or 4-year university. Participants show their proof of enrollment and grades to the CWS and are then eligible to receive the scholarship. For a vocational program or community college, participants are eligible for \$800 for the first time enrollment and \$600 thereafter. If they are enrolled in a 4-year university, they are eligible for \$1,000 for the first time enrollment and \$800 thereafter.
- Approximately 20-30% of eligible youth participate in services targeted toward educational needs or college preparation.

Collaborations with post-secondary education programs and services to foster parents

- Fresno County works with Fresno City College to provide financial aid workshops and orientations to their community college.
- Fresno County also intends to expand its relationship with CSU Fresno and has offered a conference/orientation at CSU Fresno to link former foster youth to that university.
- Collaborations with the Employment Opportunity Program (EOP) also exist—both at the community college and CSU. The CWS works with a specific referral person for foster youth at the EOP offices in order to link participants to EOP at the community college and at the CSU.
- No collaborations exist between Fresno County CWS and the UC or private educational institutions.
- No services were reportedly offered to foster parents that are designed to specifically link youth in their care to post-secondary education.

Los Angeles County

Profile

Los Angeles County is home to 2,925,396 children under the age of 18; 60.1% of the child population are Latino/a, 19.8% White, 10.8% Asian/Pacific Islander, 9.0% African American, and 0.2% Native American. The median household income was \$39,089 in 2000, and 30.5% of children were living in poverty in 1997. The overall high school dropout rate in 1999-2000 was 3.5% and varied by ethnicity with 5.3% for African American, 1.4% for Asian/Pacific Islander, 4.4% for Latino/a, 3.3% for Native American, and 1.7% for White students.

Overall, 36.1% of high school graduates in Los Angeles County in 1999-2000 completed UC/CSU requirements; with the following variations by ethnicity: 28.6% of African American, 59.9% of Asian/Pacific Islander, 25.9% of Latino/a, 29.0% of Native American and 42.7% of White students.

There were 35,063 children and youth in Los Angeles County foster care as of January 1, 2002; 14.8% of whom were 16 years of age or older. In 2001, these older foster youth were placed in various out-of-home placements including: 37.8% in kin-care, 16.8% in family foster agencies, 15.3% in foster homes, 14.7% in group homes, 5.7% with a guardian, 2.6% in placements classified as *other*, 1.9% in transitional living situations, 1.8% in institutions, 1.6% on runaway status, 0.9% in placements classified as *missing*, and 0.8% in placements classified as pre-adopt.

According to CWS/CMS data, in 2001, 1,448 youth emancipated from the Los Angeles County foster care system; 57.3% of whom were in non-kin care at time of

emancipation. Of those emancipating in 2001, 46.5% were African American, 36.0% Latino/a; 15.5% White; 1.5% Asian/Other; and 0.4% Native American.

Ethnographic Interview With ILP Coordinator

Source of information

- General knowledge of an ILP coordinator who has been with ILP since it was initiated in 1988. ILP services available prior to emancipation.
- Los Angeles County is divided into eight geographic regions in the Department of Children and Family Services; each region possesses an Independent Living Program.
- Los Angeles County currently has two overall contracts to provide ILP services; the contract is with *Skills Centers*, community agencies that provide pre- and postemployment preparation and training, including instruction in entry-level skills for résumé building.
- The second ILP contract is with the *Community College Foundation* to provide ILP classes that are offered two nights a week for 5 weeks on topics such as budgeting, how to find a job, housing, opening a bank account, accessing community resources, and obtaining proof of identification. A small parenting segment is offered for teen parents.
- Those who complete the course of ILP classes receive an incentive of \$100.
- High school seniors in ILP services can receive direct financial assistance to cover prom and/or high school graduation expenses.
- ILP participants are offered two high school graduation celebrations: one a formal event and one a less formal entertainment-based activity (e.g., going to an amusement park).
- Approximately 66.7% of eligible youth participate in ILP services to varying degrees.

ILP services available after emancipation

- Approximately 3,000 youth reportedly emancipate from the foster care system per year in Los Angeles County.
- After emancipation, former foster youth have access to direct funding from ILP to

cover costs related to school books, school supplies, clothing, transportation expenses related to school attendance, and school tuition.

- Emancipated foster youth are also allowed direct funding for housing expenses.

The impact of the Chafee Bill on ILP services

- The Chafee Bill has allowed Los Angeles County to provide increased food and housing assistance to ILP participants and increased the age limit for ILP participation to age 21, allowing for a case-by-case decision as to whether a youth will stay in ILP services.
- Los Angeles County now has the flexibility to provide direct financial assistance for school, work, and housing related costs, when needed (as noted in the above section).

Educational outcomes for emancipating foster youth

- Of the youth who emancipate from the foster care system in Los Angeles County and who are in contact with ILP services to some degree, approximately:
 - 37.5% graduate from high school
 - 12.5% earn a GED
 - 100% of high school graduates or those who obtain a GED attend at least one semester of community college
 - 2.4% of high school graduates attend a 4-year college
 - 10% attend a vocational program

ILP services targeted toward educational needs and college preparation

- As noted above, ILP services in Los Angeles County provide direct funding to participants to cover school-related expenses, including both supplies and tuition.
- Workshops on how to complete financial aid applications are provided.
- Tours of local colleges are also provided.

Collaborations with post-secondary institutions and services to foster parent

- The above-mentioned contract with the *Community College Foundation* is a current collaboration between Los Angeles County and community colleges.
- No formal linkages were reported between Los Angeles County and the CSU and UC systems, private institutions, or EOP programs.
- Foster parents are offered parenting skills training.
- No services designed to specifically link youth in their care to post-secondary education were reportedly offered to foster parents.

Monterey County

Profile

Monterey County is home to 124,389 children under the age of 18; 57.6% of the child population are Latino/a, 32.0% White, 5.8% Asian/Pacific Islander, 4.3% African American, and 0.4% Native American. The median household income was \$47,127 in 2000 and in 1997, 24.1% of children were living in poverty. The overall high school dropout rate in 1999-2000 was 2.7% and varied by ethnicity with 3.0% for African American, 1.6% for Asian/Pacific Islander, 3.3% for Latino/a, 1.7% for Native American, and 1.7% for White students.

Overall, 27.8% of high school graduates completed UC/CSU requirements in 1999-2000, with the following variations by ethnicity: 17.5% of African American, 33.7% of Asian/Pacific Islander, 20.7% of Latino/a, 22.2% of Native American, and 36.4% of White students.

There were 329 children and youth in Monterey County's foster care system as of January 1, 2002; 17.0% of whom were 16 years of age or older. In 2001, these older

foster youth were placed in various out-of-home placements including 33.9% in kin-care, 25.0% in foster homes, 21.4% in group homes, 14.3% in family foster agencies, 1.8% with a guardian, and 1.8% in placements categorized as *other*.

According to 2001 CMS/CWS data, 13 youth emancipated from the foster care system in Monterey County; 76.9% of whom were placed in non-kin care at time of emancipation. Additionally, 61.5% of emancipated foster youth in 2001 were Latino/a with the remaining percentage either African American or White (actual number is masked to protect confidentiality).

Ethnographic Interview With ILP Coordinator

Source of information

- Internally generated county reports served as the source of information for the following results.

ILP services available prior to emancipation

- ILP services in Monterey County are divided into age categories:
 - The pre-ILP group: the *Going Places* program serves youth ages 13 - 16 who are expected to remain in foster care past age 16. ILP services in this program cover topics such as work experience, and nutrition and health, with an overall emphasis on building self-esteem and social and interpersonal skills.
 - The core ILP group: core ILP services are provided to youth ages 16 -18 and focus on providing structured education on the importance of staying in school, the acquisition of job readiness skills, money management, and health and nutrition.
- ILP services in Monterey also include an incentive structure to reinforce aspects of each participant's individual transitional program plan. For instance, youth can receive incentives for activities such as participation in ILP classes, graduation from high school, work experience, and volunteer or community service.

- Approximately 30% of eligible youth participate in both pre-ILP and core ILP services.

ILP services available after emancipation

- Approximately 12 youth reportedly emancipate from foster care services in Monterey per year.
- After emancipation, young adults 18 - 21 have access to the *Aftercare Program* that provides services on an as-needed and case-by-case basis.
- Approximately 30% of eligible young adults participate in aftercare ILP services.

The impact of the Chafee Bill on ILP services

- The Chafee Bill allows Monterey County to fund transitional housing services, and to provide the *Aftercare Program* to emancipated foster youth.
- The Chafee Bill also eliminated the lower age requirement and allowed for the implementation of pre-ILP services to youth ages 13 - 16 and increased the total amount of funding available for ILP services.

Educational outcomes for emancipating foster youth

- Of the youth who emancipate from foster care in Monterey County and who are in contact with ILP services to some degree, approximately:
 - 42.9% graduate from high school
 - 28.6% earn a GED
 - 28.6% of high school graduates or those who obtain a GED are enrolled in community college
 - 14.3% are in a 4-year college
 - an unknown percentage are in vocational programs

ILP services targeted toward educational needs and college preparation

- The *Foster Youth Services* program recently began in Monterey County. This program provides a clearinghouse for the foster youths' educational records and is

intended to prevent delays in school enrollment after a placement change. Every new ILP referral is also brought to the attention of Foster Youth Services, who then determine who has the youth's educational rights and begin requesting records from schools.

- ILP classes contain an educational component in which workshops on financial aid and college applications are provided.
- Although not currently offered, Monterey County plans to implement a program in which foster youth who are interested in attending college are matched with a college attending peer who is interested in working with foster youth who will take them on a tour of the college and provide information about college attendance.

Collaborations with post-secondary institutions and services to foster parents

- Monterey County has a contract with a local community college to provide ILP and Aftercare services.
- Collaborations are planned with CSU Monterey Bay and the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) to implement the above-mentioned peer-to-peer college tours.
- Collaborations also exist between Monterey County and local EOP programs that are designed to fast-track eligible foster youth into EOP.
- Currently services to foster parents are provided on a case-by-case basis.

Orange County

Profile

Orange County is home to 822,798 children under the age of 18; 43.3% of the child population are Latino/a, 40.9% White, 13.7% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1.8% African American, and 0.2% Native American. The median household income was \$53,186 in 2000 and in 1997, 17.4% of children were living in poverty. The overall high school dropout rate in 1999-2000 was 2.0% and varied by ethnicity with 2.0% for African American, 0.9% for Asian/Pacific Islander, 3.4% for Latino/a, 2.1% for Native American, and 1.4% for White students.

Overall, 28.0% of high school graduates in completed UC/CSU requirements in 1999-2000; with the following variations by ethnicity: 24.8% of African American, 56.5% of Asian/Pacific Islander, 15.9% of Latino/a, 37.1% of Native American, and 43.9% of White students.

There were 4,061 children and youth in Orange County's foster care system as of January 1, 2002; 12.8% of whom were 16 years of age or older. In 2001, these older youths were placed in various out-of-home placements including: 31.6% in group homes, 22.7% in kin-care, 15.2% in foster homes, 11.9% in family foster agencies, 5.0% in institutions, 4.2% on runaway status, 2.9% in transitional living situations, 2.7% in placements categorized as *other*, 2.5% with a guardian, and 1.2% classified as pre-adopt.

In 2001, CMS/CWS indicated that 190 youth emancipated from the foster care system in Orange County; 80.5% of whom were placed in non-kin care at time of emancipation. Of those emancipating in 2001, 52.6% were White, 36.3% Latino/a, 5.3% African American, and 4.7% Asian/Other.

Ethnographic Interview With ILP Coordinator

Source of information

- Internal county agency records and reports, contract agency records, and reports and the general knowledge of the ILP coordinators served as sources of information for the following results.

ILP services available prior to emancipation

- ILP services in Orange County focus on four general areas: a) education, b) daily living, c) relationships, and d) career.

- ILP classes and activities that focus on the acquisition of independent living skills are offered through Orange County's main ILP contractor: Orangewood Foundation.
- Direct financial assistance is available to ILP participants to cover work-related expenses.
- Youth who are about to emancipate receive an *emancipation kit* with \$400-\$500 worth of incentives and a complete resource list on topics such as obtaining a copy of a high school or GED diploma, scholarship information, and the phone numbers of resources available to emancipated foster youth.
- Approximately 90% of eligible youth reportedly participate in ILP services to varying degrees.

ILP services available after emancipation

- In Orange County, approximately 250 - 300 youth reportedly emancipate from the foster care system per year.
- Orange County has an *Aftercare Program* that provides the same ILP services to emancipated youth as youth who are still in care.
- Youth in foster care who are 17½ years old receive a transitional interview with an Aftercare worker who establishes an individual plan for emancipation.
- Through the *Children's Trust Fund*, emancipated foster youth may receive financial assistance for college tuition (see *ILP services targeted toward educational needs and college preparation* section for more detail).

The impact of the Chafee Bill on ILP services

- The Chafee Bill allowed Orange County to widen the age ranges for ILP eligibility from ages 14 to 21 and doubled available funding for ILP, allowing for an increase in overall ILP services, as well as the provision of ILP services to both the younger and older age ranges.
- It also expanded educational services to ILP participants; specifically all foster youth now have access to an educational liaison who will track participants' educational progress beginning at age 14 (see *ILP services targeted toward educational needs and college preparation* section for more detail).

Educational outcomes for emancipating foster youth

- Of the youth who emancipate from foster care per year in Orange County and who are in contact with ILP services to some degree, approximately:
 - 50% graduate from high school or receive their GED
 - 32% of high school graduates or those who received a GED attend community college
 - 10.9% of high school graduates attend a 4-year college
 - 7.3% attend a vocational program

ILP services targeted toward educational needs and college preparation

- The Children's Trust Fund implemented by the Orangewood Foundation provides \$6,000 - \$7,500 in financial assistance for college and if a student is a college junior upon his or her 21st birthday, the Orangewood Foundation will fund the student up until age 24.
- The Guardian Scholar Program provides funding for former foster children enrolled at CSU Fullerton; these full scholarships allow emancipated foster youth to live in campus dormitories and have full access to cafeteria services over the holiday and summer breaks. Recipients of Guardian Scholar Program must first be accepted to the college before they are eligible for the scholarships.
- Through the Orangewood Foundation, ILP participants have access to an educational specialist who provides assistance with college and financial aid applications.
- Through the Ameri-Corp Mentor Program, foster youth can be assigned a mentor from a local community college who assists them with their educational needs, including their preparation for college.
- Most ILP participants are exposed to the college setting because ILP services are generally offered at college settings.

Collaborations with post-secondary institutions and services to foster parents

- Orange County collaborates with Cypress Community College to offer ILP services on their campus.

- Orange County, through the Orangewood Foundation's Guardian Scholar Program collaborates with CSU Fullerton, Cal Poly Pomona, and UC Irvine.
- Collaborations with private institutions include informal linkages and the use of their facilities.
- The educational specialists who work with youth have informal collaborations with EOP programs to link youth to EOP.
- Services to foster parents include ILP outreach presentations to foster parent conferences and support groups; foster parents also receive newsletters and updates on scholarships and programs available through ILP.
- Currently, no services that are designed to specifically link youth in their care to post-secondary education are offered to foster parents.

Sacramento County

Profile

Sacramento County is home to 343,939 children under the age of 18; 53.7% of the child population is White, 17.9% Latino/a, 14.9% Asian/Pacific Islander, 12.5% African American, and 1.0% Native American. The median household income was \$42,329 in 2000 and in 1997, 27.3% of children were living in poverty. The overall high school dropout rate in 1999-2000 was 4.3% and varied by ethnicity with 6.3% for African American, 3.0% for Asian/Pacific Islander, 5.8% for Latino/a, 6.3% for Native American, and 3.6% for White students.

Overall, 30.4% of high school graduates in Sacramento County completed UC/CSU requirements in 1999-2000; with the following variations by ethnicity: 20.0% of African American, 35.2% of Asian/Pacific Islander, 19.0% of Latino/a, 14.6% of Native American, and of 34.0% of White students.

There were 5,285 children and youth in Sacramento County's foster care system as of January 1, 2002; 11.7% of whom were 16 years of age or older. In 2001, these older youths were placed in various out-of-home placements including: 32.5% in family foster agencies, 24.0% in kin-care, 16.6% in group homes, 10.4% with a guardian, 10.1% in foster homes, 4.4% on runaway status, 1.1% in institutions, 0.8% in placements classified as *other*, and 0.2% in placements classified as pre-adopt.

In 2001, CMS/CWS indicates that 170 youth emancipated from the foster care system in Sacramento County; 75.3% of whom were placed in non-kin care at time of emancipation. Of those emancipating in 2001, 52.9% were White, 28.8% African American, 15.3% Latino/a, and the remaining were Asian/Other, Native American, or *missing* (actual number masked to protect confidentiality).

Ethnographic Interview With ILP Coordinator

Source of information

- The general knowledge of the ILP coordinator served as the source of information for the following results. It should be noted that the following results are incomplete, due to the unavailability of the ILP coordinator.

ILP services available prior to emancipation

- An emancipation support group is provided once a month. The group focuses on topics such as health, stress management, budgeting, and job readiness skills.
- The *Independent City* event in which a mock city is created as an experiential role-playing activity during which participants perform independent living activities such as, obtaining a checkbook, obtaining housing, utilities, and other resources needed for self-sufficiency.
- An exit workshop is held for emancipating youth during which a number of ILP service agencies come together to provide information concerning medical, health, and employment services available to emancipated foster youth.

- An emancipation conference for high-risk youth about to emancipate from foster care is offered, during which a multidisciplinary team with participants such as the youth, caretaker, social worker, mental health professional, probation officer, and educational representative come together to establish a plan for emancipation and inform youth of the resources available to them after emancipation.

ILP services available after emancipation

- In Sacramento County, approximately 300 foster youth reportedly emancipate from the foster care system per year.
- Other information unavailable

The impact of the Chafee Bill on ILP services

- The Chafee Bill has allowed Sacramento County increased flexibility in the provision of direct financial assistance to ILP participants. For instance, direct funding can now be offered for housing-related costs including rent, security deposits, and furniture; as well as food for youth and foster youths' own children; clothing; books for school and payment for vocational training; costs related to work expenses including tools; and costs related to car repairs or drivers' training.
- The Chafee Bill has increased funding for all ILP services.

Educational outcomes for emancipating foster youth

- Information unavailable.

ILP services targeted toward educational needs and college preparation

- Financial aid workshops that focus on providing information on the types of financial assistance available for post-secondary education, as well as instruction on how to complete financial aid applications are provided to ILP participants.
- Representatives from community colleges and universities are also invited to speak to ILP participants about their institutions.
- *Foster Youth Services* is also offered to ILP participants. These services are geared toward obtaining foster youths' educational transcripts, informing youth of educational resources, and providing information about services available to learning-disabled students.

Collaborations with post-secondary institutions and services to foster parents

- Information unavailable.

San Diego County

Profile

San Diego County is home to 832,240 children under the age of 18; 46.0% of the child population are White; 36.6% Latino/a, 9.9% Asian/Pacific Islander, 7.1% African American, and 0.5% Native American. The median household income was \$42,292 in 2000 and in 1997, 22.0% of children were living in poverty. The overall high school dropout rate in 1999-2000 was 2.2% and varied by ethnicity with 4.2% for African American, 1.6% for Asian/Pacific Islander, 3.2% for Latino/a, 2.5% for Native American, and 1.3% for White students.

Overall, 37.1% of high school graduates in San Diego County completed UC/CSU requirements in 1999-2000; with the following variations by ethnicity: 22.4% of African American, 50.4% of Asian/Pacific Islander, 21.2% of Latino/a, 27.6% of Native American, and 44.9% of White students.

There were 6,916 children and youth in San Diego County's foster care system as of January 1, 2002; 9.8% of whom are 16 years of age or older. In 2001, these older youths were placed in various out-of-home placements including: 25.8% in kin-care, 22.5% in group homes, 21.3% in foster homes, 12.7% with a guardian, 7.2% in family foster agencies, 4.3% in institutions, 3.0% on runaway status, 1.9% in transitional living situations, 0.9% in placements classified as *other*, 0.2% in placements classified as pre-adopt, and 0.1% in placements classified as *missing*.

CMS/CWS data for 2001 indicate that 210 youth emancipated from the foster care system in San Diego County; 73.8% of whom were placed in non-kin care at time of discharge. Of those emancipating in 2001, 38.1% were White, 32.9% African American; 24.3% Latino/a, 2.9% Asian/Other, and the remaining were either Native American, or *missing* (actual number masked to protect confidentiality).

Ethnographic Interview With ILP Coordinator

Source of information

- The annual county ILP report for 2000-2001 and the general knowledge of the ILP coordinator serve as sources of information for the following results.

ILP services available prior to emancipation

- San Diego County offers job skill training, resume writing, and job-interview skill training to ILP participants.
- San Diego County also has workforce partnerships with employers such as SeaWorld, that arrange for job referrals for foster youth. Internships for foster youth are also available through the Parks and Recreation Department.
- An *Independent City* event is held once a year at a community college during which a mock city is created with representatives from employers and colleges at booths during which youth practice independent living skills, such as obtaining housing, banking, registering to vote, and other related skills.
- Approximately 98% of eligible youth receive a minimum of an ILP assessment. Level of further participation varies.

ILP services available after emancipation

- In San Diego County, approximately 200 youth reportedly emancipate from the foster care system per year.
- San Diego County operates a scattered site structured transitional housing program for emancipated foster youth.
- Financial assistance for housing costs are also provided to emancipated foster

youth; once a participant obtains housing, ILP will pay the first 4 months of rent, and the young adult then pays on a sliding scale for the rest of the 18-month program.

The impact of the Chafee Bill on ILP services

- The Chafee Bill provided increased overall funding for ILP services in San Diego County.
- Increased flexibility in the use of funds has also resulted from the Chafee Bill; financial assistance is now available for housing, transportation, work-related expenses, vocational training costs, college application fees, job preparation, and educational planning.
- An exit/emancipation conference is now held for high-risk youth about to emancipate from foster care during which family and professionals are invited to participate in the creation of a plan for housing and education after emancipation.

Educational outcomes for emancipating foster youth

- Of youth who emancipate from foster care in San Diego County and who are in contact with ILP services to some degree, approximately:
 - 57% graduate from high school
 - 5% earn a GED
 - 65.3% of high school graduates or those who obtain a GED attend community college
 - 30.0% of high school graduates attend a 4-year college
 - 29.0% attend a vocational program

ILP services targeted toward educational needs and college preparation

- San Diego County has *Foster Youth Services* that brings together a team of representatives from schools, probation, group home staff, and social workers to focus on the educational needs of foster youth. There is a particular focus on tracking down educational records and ensuring that youth are making the necessary educational progress to graduate from high school. These services are targeted toward high school age youth in group homes.
- College application workshops for ILP participants are offered, and ILP services are

aimed toward exposing participants to college options and scholarship information.

- San Diego County has recently opened the *San Pasquel Academy*, a school exclusively for foster youth between the ages of 14 - 18, in which youth live in a campus-like setting and attend high school. This program is a less-restrictive placement setting.

Collaborations with post-secondary institutions and services to foster parents

- San Diego County ILP services regularly collaborate with community colleges to provide ILP services.
- Referrals for foster youth are made to EOP programs.
- A description of ILP services is presented to foster parents during regular foster parent trainings with a focus on encouraging foster parents to send their youth to ILP services.
- Currently no services are offered to foster parents that are designed to specifically link youth in their care to post-secondary education.

Stanislaus County

Profile

Stanislaus County is home to 143,358 children under the age of 18; 53.4% of the child population are White, 35.1% Latino/a, 8.4% Asian/Pacific Islander, 2.3% African American, and 0.8% Native American. The median household income was \$38,523 in 2000, and in 1997, 27.2% of children were living in poverty. The overall high school dropout rate in 1999-2000 was 5.3% and varied by ethnicity with 11.4% for African American, 4.2% for Asian/Pacific Islander, 7.0% for Latino/a, 5.3% for Native American, and 3.9% for White students.

Overall, 28.6% of high school graduates in Stanislaus County completed UC/CSU requirements in 1999-2000; with the following variations by ethnicity: 24.3% of

African American, 45.5% of Asian/Pacific Islander, 15.5% of Latino/a, 20.0% of Native American, and 33.5% of White students.

There were 773 children and youth in Stanislaus County's foster care system as of January 1, 2002; 10.8% of whom are 16 years of age or older. In 2001, these older youths were placed in various out-of-home placements including: 24.7% with guardians, 22.2% in family foster agencies, 21.0% in kin-care, 17.3% in foster homes, 4.9% in group homes, 4.9% on runaway status, 3.7% in transitional living situations, and 1.2% in placements classified as *other*.

According to 2001 data from CMS/CWS, 36 youth emancipated from the foster care system in Stanislaus County; 69.4% of whom were placed in non-kin care at time of emancipation. Of those emancipating in 2001, 50.0% were White, 27.8% Latino/a, 19.4% African American and the remaining were Asian/Other, Native American, or *missing* (actual number masked to protect confidentiality).

Ethnographic Interview With ILP Coordinator

Source of information

- The general knowledge of the ILP coordinator served as the source of information for the following results.

ILP services available prior to emancipation

- ILP instructional classes are offered that cover topics such as money management, food, cooking, home maintenance, sexual responsibility, substance abuse awareness, and skills to obtain housing.
- A computer training camp is offered to approximately 10 youth per year in which participants receive 21 hours of computer training, and upon completion receive a free computer and printer.

- A transitional housing placement program is available for youth between the ages of 16 - 18 in which youth live semi-independently in an apartment-like setting—but are still monitored by a social worker and a family foster agency.
- Approximately 60% of eligible youth participate in ILP services.

ILP services available after emancipation

- In Stanislaus County, approximately 30 to 40 youth reportedly emancipate from the foster care system per year.
- A formal *Aftercare Program* is available in Stanislaus County in which emancipated foster youth are allowed direct funding for items such as groceries, home appliances, a security deposit, first month's rent, and work clothing.
- Employment referrals and job training are available to emancipated foster youth through the Department of Employment.
- Participants of the Aftercare Program are connected with Medi-Cal insurance in order to insure they are covered until age 21.

The impact of the Chafee Bill on ILP services

- The implementation of the Chafee Bill allowed for the formal creation of aftercare services for youth ages 18 - 21, and increased flexibility in funding to assist emancipated foster youth with the above-mentioned items.
- The increased funding associated with the Chafee Bill has also allowed for higher education scholarships.

Educational outcomes for emancipating foster youth

- Of those youth who emancipate from foster care in Stanislaus County and who are in contact with ILP services to some degree, approximately:
 - 50% graduate from high school
 - 20% earn a GED
 - 40% of high school graduates or those who obtain a GED attend community college

- 5% of high school graduates attend a 4-year college
- 20% attend a vocational program

ILP services targeted toward educational needs and college preparation

- Financial aid workshops for college are offered to ILP participants, as well as a college orientation and campus tour in which ILP participants learn about the college and the resources available.
- Scholarships of \$1,000 are available to ILP participants who are enrolled in post-secondary education.

Collaborations with post-secondary institutions and services to foster parents

- Stanislaus County works with local community colleges to provide college-preparation services to ILP participants.
- No formal collaborations between the CSU system and Stanislaus County exist, although representatives from CSU have presented information during ILP classes.
- A referral system exists between ILP and local EOP programs.
- Foster parents are informed of ILP service activities.
- Currently no services are offered to foster parents that are designed to specifically link youth in their care to post-secondary education.

Summary of Ethnographic Results Across the Nine Counties

ILP services available prior to emancipation

- Most ILP services available to youth prior to emancipation focus on instructional services that are geared toward the acquisition of a number of skills including, money management, job readiness and retention skills, how to obtain housing, health, nutrition, and stress management.
- Most ILP services also possess an incentive structure to reinforce attendance at ILP services.
- Innovative services included computer training courses that allow participants to earn a free computer after completing the course and direct funding to assist with school or work-related expenses. Experiential field trip activities and role-playing

exercises are also being used to provide youth with hands-on experience with independent living skills.

- Other promising ILP services being implemented are exit or emancipation conferences in which key people in an emancipating foster youth's life are brought together to establish a post-emancipation plan.

ILP services available after emancipation

- All selected counties provided ILP services to youth after emancipation; some counties have established formal "aftercare programs" and others extend regular ILP services to the age of 21.
- Most counties are also assisting youth after emancipation through financial assistance and scholarships for school and work-related and housing expenses.
- Of particular interest is the finding that most ILP coordinators reported a higher number of emancipating foster youth per year than is reported in CWS/CMS.

The impact of the Chafee Bill on ILP services

- The impact of the Chafee Bill on ILP services was overwhelmingly described as positive; since its passage, the funding for ILP services in the selected counties had increased significantly.
- The Chafee Bill has also allowed some counties to implement ILP services for youth under the age of 16 and allowed all surveyed counties to implement services for emancipated foster youth.
- The Chafee Bill allows counties more flexibility in the use of ILP funds. Many counties now provide direct financial assistance for ILP participants.

Educational outcomes for emancipating foster youth

- Rates of high school graduation varied from 37.5% to 57%
- Rates of GED attainment varied from 5% to 28.6%
- Rates of community college attendance varied from 25.0% to 100.0%
- Rates of attendance at 4-year colleges varied from 2.4% to 30.0%
- Rates of enrollment in a vocational program varied from 7.3% to 35.0%

ILP services targeted toward educational needs and college preparation

- Many counties offered *Foster Youth Services*, a program designed to ensure foster youths' educational progress and provide help in obtaining their school records.
- Most ILP services offered financial aid and college application workshops, as well as college orientations and tours, and the availability of scholarships for college attendance; some counties offer SAT preparation and financial assistance to take the SAT.
- Some counties offered specialized assistance for youth with learning disabilities.
- San Diego County has an innovative educational program that allows foster youth between the ages of 14 -18 to live in a campus-like setting and attend high school.

Collaborations with post-secondary institutions and services to foster parents

- Most surveyed counties had collaborations with community colleges to varying degrees, to assist in the delivery of ILP services.
- Collaborations with the UC/CSU system were less common; Orange County has an innovative program at CSU Fullerton that allows qualified participants to remain in college dormitories on holiday and summer breaks.
- No formal collaborations were discussed in relation to private institutions.
- Most counties had a referral system for EOP programs.
- Although foster parents do receive services, such as parent training, no counties offered services to foster parents that are specifically targeted toward the educational needs of youth in their care.

Questions for Discussion

1. Describe the primary components of the *Chafee Bill*.
2. Compare and contrast two different county ILP services. Based on what you have learned so far about former foster youth, obtain copies of any brochures or written information that might be helpful to students with minimal family support. What might you recommend to increase participation of foster youth in ILP services? What are the areas of training you might recommend for child welfare workers?

3. Visit the Financial Aid Office on the nearest CSU campus and inquire about EOP (Educational Opportunity Program) services that are available to former foster youth. Is there a designated staff person to assist students? Present your findings to the class.

For Presentation

Select one of the nine counties included in the research and present a summary of the services to the class. Be sure to include unique/innovative services in your presentation. In addition, what additional services might be helpful?

MODULE V

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH AND PRACTICE TIPS FOR CHILD WELFARE WORKERS

MODULE V

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

This chapter highlights the conclusions from all three phases of the current research on former foster youth and informs our practice with this population. It is designed to assist child welfare workers improve the quality of care and services provided to foster youth. Main points include the following, which are related to educational achievement:

- *Significant adults* in the lives of foster youth have the potential for incredible impact in providing a positive message about attending college.
- Participation in a challenging curriculum is essential.
- Attending fewer, rather than more schools is a critical element.
- Limiting the number of foster placements so youth have opportunities to link up successfully with role models in the school is essential.

This chapter also includes practice tips and further suggestions for work with emancipating foster youth.

Contents

- Summary of conclusions
- Recommendations
- Useful websites
- Scholarship information

Competencies

Section II: Core Child Welfare Skills

- 2.10 Student understands policy issues and legal requirements affecting child welfare practice, including confidentiality, worker liability, reasonable effort requirements, minimum sufficient level of care, least restrictive environment, permanency planning, establishment of paternity, and knows how to implement these requirements in practice.
- 2.15 Student understands the principles of permanency planning and the negative effects that inconsistent and impermanent living arrangements have on children.
- 2.16 Student understands the importance of the biological parent maintaining contact with the child in placement, of encouraging parents when appropriate to participate in planning, and of regular parent child visitations.
- 2.18 Student works collaboratively with foster families and kin networks, involving them in assessment and planning and supporting them in coping with special stresses and difficulties.

Section III: Social Work Skills and Methods

- 3.5 Student understands the importance of and demonstrates the ability to work with the client in the community, including home, school, etc.
- 3.9 Student uses a variety of methods and strategies to interview and elicit information from children and adolescents that are age appropriate and consistent with social work values and ethics.
- 3.13 Student has knowledge of and understands how to work collaboratively with other disciplines that are routinely involved in child welfare cases.
- 3.24 Student understands the strengths and concerns of diverse community groups and is able to work with community members to enhance services for families and children.

Section V: Workplace Management

- 5.6 Student can effectively use advocacy skills in the organization to enhance service delivery.

- 5.7 Student seeks both client and organizational feedback in practice evaluation and in improving effectiveness of service delivery
- 5.10 Student can develop a strategy to identify new agency and community resources to meet client needs.

MODULE V

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH AND PRACTICE TIPS FOR CHILD WELFARE WORKERS

Conclusions From All Three Phases of the Research

The current study (Merdinger et al., 2002) examined the pathways to educational achievement for former foster youth who were attending college on 1 of 10 campuses in the CSU system. The methods employed included a mailed survey, qualitative in-depth interviews, and an ethnographic study of the nine counties in which the CSU sites were housed.

Following are the combined findings from each of the phases conducted during this study. Four major points emerge:

- There *are* external factors that may enable former foster youth to be educationally successful; the influence of outsiders seems to be critical, as well as a challenging high school curriculum and high school stability.
- Critical role models were teachers and academic counselors. Through relationships made at school, and their own educational successes, school becomes a particularly supportive alternative environment for foster children and youth.
- The code *Significant people did extra* tells us that foster youth rely on a system of care for what a family normally does. The system does not provide that support, individuals do.
- Despite the positive outside marker of college attendance, this achievement is not without cost. Many of our respondents reported that they were struggling with emotions, finances, and academics.

There are implications for social work practice based on this exploratory-descriptive study. Putting together a) the influence of outsiders providing a message about college, b) participation in a challenging curriculum, and c) being in fewer rather

than more schools, the research indicates that multiple placements endanger the opportunity to link up successfully with role models in school, particularly with teachers and academic counselors.

It is also suggested that the education of teachers, counselors, and social workers needs to include more information about attachment theory, family dynamics, and developmental theory, particularly on the subject of how children and youth develop in out-of-home placements. It is also essential for social workers to know more about schools and school systems, the importance of outside influences for creating a pathway to college, the importance of challenging curricula, the importance of educational stability, and the significance of adult role models in the lives of foster children.

Finally, many of the respondents, when offering open-ended comments about how the system could help more foster youth attend college, discussed the need for children and youth to be loved, not treated impersonally, to have close relationships with adults, to be treated like normal, not *special* people. The extras, the love, the closeness, the being treated normally, all these would be *ordinary* events, handled by competent family members, if the respondents had lived in a healthy family, located in a healthy community. These young women and men in the study did not have that healthy family; they relied on a system of care for supplying those needs. It is important to heed the voice of one of the respondents who said:

I wanted to break the cycle. I want to be the last one. I have wanted to make sure that from here on out that the world is completely different. That my kids will get

involved in things in school. That they will play sports. And I will go to their teen things. Normal. A normal life. People don't realize how different, what being normal is. If you grow up in it, it's like no big deal. But just have that consistency. That was a big goal....But if I could have anything in life, I wanted to break the chain...I wanted it to be different for anybody that came after me.

Some Practice Tips and What You Can Do

There are a number of practice projects that come directly from the research.

- The low response rate of the sample is a direct result of the difficulty of reaching former foster youth on CSU campuses.

RECOMMENDATION: Lobby the CSU Chancellor's Office and the State Legislature to include a question on the CSU application regarding the applicant's status as a foster youth or emancipated youth. This recommendation applies to the UC system and private institutions as well.

- Make college more affordable for foster youth and former foster youth to allow for greater opportunities for this very educationally disadvantaged population group.

RECOMMENDATION: Develop lobbying efforts to make California a fee waiver state for foster youth and former foster youth. Work towards identifying more scholarship opportunities and creating more scholarship programs (e.g., the Guardian Scholars Program at CSU Fullerton).

- Educate foster youth and foster families about college opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION: Provide outreach from your University to foster youth in all settings (foster family, kincare, group homes, and other out-of-home placement settings) and include providers in education sessions.

- Educate foster youth about how to finance a college education.

RECOMMENDATION: Learn about the FAFSA and EOP application forms. Review with foster youth the importance of correctly completing these forms in order to apply for and receive financial aid.

- Demonstrate that a college education is attainable.

RECOMMENDATION: Identify former foster youth who are attending college. Ask former foster youth in college to participate in discussion groups with youth currently in foster care to emphasize the importance of continued education, to share stories about applying to college and to discuss working toward obtaining a college degree. Bring foster youth to college campuses, arrange for campus tours, a visit to the financial aid office and the EOP office. Introduce youth to staff in these offices who are aware of the special needs of foster youth in college.

Useful Websites

Foster Youth and Public Child Welfare

<http://calswec.berkeley.edu>

California Social Work Education Center
Lists Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Program curriculum competencies and program information.

<http://www.csulb.edu/projects/ccwrl>

California Child Welfare Resource Library
A division of CalSWEC, this Library offers a wide variety of resources on foster youth as well as hundreds of other child welfare topics.

<http://www.nrcys.ou.edu>

University of Oklahoma
See the online library (under *Resources*) that has interesting articles focusing on youth. This site also discusses Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999.

<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov>

Legislative Counsel, State of California
Click on section *California Law*, then click on Education Code Sections 89340-89347, the Education Outreach and Assistance Act for Emancipated Foster Youth.

<http://nasw.ca.org>

National Association of Social Workers, CA chapter
Links to child welfare issues.

<http://www.nyu.edu/socialwork/wwwrsw>

World Wide Web Resources for Social Workers

<http://www.cwla.org>

Child Welfare League of America
See program section for interesting links.

<http://www.childrensdefense.org>

Children's Defense Fund
Good site for links and data.

<http://www.nicwa.org>

National Indian Child Welfare Association
Another good site for resources and links focusing on child welfare.

Scholarship Information

<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>

Free Application for Federal Student Aid

<http://www.orphan.org/programs>

Orphan Foundation Scholarships

<http://www.sdfoundation.org/scholarships/daddy.shtml>

San Diego Scholarship

<http://www.fullerton.edu/guardianscholars>

Guardian Scholars Program at CSU Fullerton

http://www.calib.com/cbexpress/articles.cfm?article_id=116

States with Tuition Waivers for Foster Youth

<http://www.nrcys.ou.edu/TuitionWaivers/USMAP.htm>

Tracking the status of states and tuition waivers

<http://www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov/College.html>

Fee Waiver for California Community Colleges for Foster Youth information and quick information about Financial Aid, in general

Questions and Exercises

1. Visit one of the websites included in this chapter, provide an overview, and make a presentation to the class. What did you learn about foster youth from this site?
2. Think about a time when you received assistance from someone and it was a positive experience. What was it like? How did you feel? What impact did it have on you?
3. Think about a time when you received assistance from someone and it was a negative experience. What was it like? How did you feel? What impact did it have on you?
4. Think about a time when you were offered assistance but it was not appreciated or accepted. Why do you think this was the case?
5. Reflecting on conclusions from the research and your own training and experiences, get into groups and develop a list of practice tips for child welfare social workers and other professionals (foster parents, ILP Coordinators, attorneys, etc.) to share with the class.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Merdinger, J. M., Hines, A. M., Lemon, K., Wyatt, P., Tweed, M. (2002). *Pathways to college: Understanding the psychosocial and system-related factors that contribute to college enrollment and attendance among emancipated foster youth: An empirically-based curriculum*. Berkeley: University of California at Berkeley, California Social Work Education Center.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barth, R. (1990). On their own: The experiences of youth after foster care. *Child and Adolescent Social Work*, 7(5), 419-440.
- Blome, W. (1997). What happens to foster kids: Educational experiences of a random sample of foster care youth and a matched group of non-foster care youth. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 14(1), 41-53.
- Burawoy, M., Burton, A., Ferguson, A., Fox, K., Gamson, J., Gartrell, N., et al. (1991). *Ethnography unbound*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- California Social Work Education Center. (2003). *CalSWEC curriculum competencies for public child welfare*. Retrieved August 13, 2003, from http://calswec.berkeley.edu/CalSWEC/Curric_Comps_2.html
- Children NOW. (2001). *California report card 2001: Factors for school success*. Retrieved August 13, 2003, from <http://www.childrennow.org/california/rc-2001/reportcard.pdf>
- Cicchetti, D., Toth, S., & Rogosch, F. (2000). The development of psychological wellness in maltreated children. In D. Cicchetti, J. Rappaport, I. Sander, & R. Weissberg (Eds.). *The promotion of wellness in children and adolescents* (pp. 395-426). Washington, DC: CWLA Press.
- Collins, M. E. (2001). Transition to adulthood for vulnerable youths: A review of research and implications for policy. *Social Service Review*, 75, 271-291.
- Colton, M., Health A., & Aldgate, J. (1995). Factors which influence the educational attainment of children in foster care. *Community Alternatives* 7(1), 15-36.
- Cook, R. (1991). *A national evaluation of Title IV-E foster care independent living programs for youth, Phase 1, Final report*. Rockville, MD: Westat.
- Courtney, M., & Piliavin, I. (1995). *The Wisconsin study of youth aging out of care*. Retrieved November 18, 1997, from <http://polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/socwork/foster/fcreport.html>
- Courtney, M., & Piliavin, I. (1998). *Foster youth transitions to adulthood: Outcomes 12 to 18 months after leaving out-of-home care*. Retrieved August 23, 2003, from <http://researchforum.org/cfm/report.cfm?id=325>

- Courtney, M., Piliavin, I., Grogan-Kaylor, A., & Nesmith, A. (2001). Foster youth transitions to adulthood: A longitudinal view of youth leaving care. *Child Welfare*, 6, 686-717.
- Festinger, T. (1983). *No one ever asked us: A postscript to foster care*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Grand Jury Orange County, CA. (2000). *Orange County is no Camelot for emancipated youth*. Retrieved August 13, 2003, from <http://occourts.org/grndjury/gjreports.asp>
- Hines, A. M., Merdinger, J., & Wyatt, P. (2002). *Pathways to success among former foster youth attending college: Resilience and young adult development*. Manuscript submitted for publication.
- Jackson, S., & Martin, P. (1998). Surviving the care system: Education and resilience. *Journal of Adolescence*, 21(5), 569-583.
- Jones, M., & Moses, B. (1984). *West Virginia's former foster children: Their experiences in care and their lives as young adults*. New York: Child Welfare League of America.
- Kipp, S. M., III, Price, D., & Wohlford, J. (2002). Unequal opportunity: Disparities in college access among the 50 states. *Lumina Foundation for Education New Agenda Series*, 4(3). Indianapolis, IN: Lumina Foundation for Education.
- Kowaleski-Jones, L. (2000). Staying out of trouble: Community resources and problem behavior among high-risk adolescents. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62(2), 449-464.
- Levine, A., & Nidiffer, J. (1996). *Beating the odds: How the poor get to college*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Lynch, M., & Cicchetti, D. (1992). Maltreated children's reports of relatedness to their teachers. *New Directions for Child Development*, 57, 81-107.
- Masten, A., Hubbard, J., Gest, S., Tellegen, A., Garmezy, N. & Ramirez, M. (1999). Competence in the context of adversity: Pathways to resilience and maladaptation from childhood to late adolescence. *Development and Psychopathology*, 11, 143-169.
- McCormick, R., & Zoellner, T. (2000, December 19.). Bay area residents most educated. *San Francisco Chronicle*, pp. A23-A24.

- McMillen, C., & Tucker, J. (1999). The status of older adolescents at exit from out-of-home care. *Child Welfare*, 78(3), 339-360.
- Mech, E. (1994). Foster youth in transition: Research perspectives on preparation for independent living. *Child Welfare*, 73(5), 603-623.
- Mech, E., & Fung, C. (1999). Placement restrictiveness and educational achievement among emancipated foster youth. *Research on Social Work Practice* 9(2), 213-228.
- Minoff, J. (2002, June). Supporting youth transitioning from foster care. *NASW California News*, p. 6.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (1998). *Condition of education 1998*. Retrieved August 23, 2003, from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs98/98013.pdf>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2000). *Condition of education 2000*. Retrieved August 23, 2003, from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2000/200006.pdf>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2001). *Condition of education 2001*. Retrieved August 23, 2003, from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2001/2001072.pdf>
- National Foster Care Awareness Project. (2000). *Frequently asked questions about the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 and the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Needell, B., Webster, D., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Armijo, M., Lee, S., Brookhart, A., et al. (2002). *Child welfare services reports for California*. Retrieved July 20, 2002, from <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/>
- Nevada KIDS COUNT. (2001). *Transitions from care: The status and outcomes of youth who have aged out of the foster care system in Clark County, Nevada. Issue Brief II*. Retrieved August 23, 2003, from http://kidscount.unlv.edu/2001/transition_fostercare.pdf
- Piliavin, I., Sosin, M., Westerfelt, A., & Matsueda, R. (1993). The duration of homeless careers: An exploratory study. *Social Service Review*, 67(4), 576-598.
- Romo, H., & Falbo, T. (1996). *Latino high school graduation: Defying the odds*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Strage, A. (1999). Social and academic integration and college success: Similarities and differences as a function of ethnicity and family educational background. *College*

Student Journal, 33(2), 198-208.

Strage, A. (2000). Predictors of college adjustment and success: Similarities and differences among Southeast-Asian-American, Hispanic and White students. *Education*, 120(4), 731-740.

Strauss, A. (1987). *Qualitative analysis for social scientists*. Cambridge, England: University of Cambridge Press.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (Eds.). (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

U.S. Department of Education. (2000). *Getting ready pays off*. Retrieved August 23, 2003, from <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/News/collegeweek/collegeweekpdf.pdf>

Vartanian, T., & Gleason, P. (1999). Do neighborhood conditions affect high school dropout and college graduation rates? *The Journal of Socio-Economics*, 28, 21-41.

Wedeven, T., Pecora, P., Hurwitz, M., Howell, R., & Newell, D. (1997). Examining the perceptions of alumni of long-term family foster care: A follow-up study. *Community Alternatives*, 9(1), 88-105.

Zimmerman, R. (1982). *Foster care in retrospect*. New Orleans, LA: Tulane University Press.

Merdinger, J. M., Hines, A. M., Lemon, K., Wyatt, P., Tweed, M. (2002). *Pathways to college: Understanding the psychosocial and system-related factors that contribute to college enrollment and attendance among emancipated foster youth: An empirically-based curriculum*. Berkeley: University of California at Berkeley, California Social Work Education Center.

APPENDIXES AND SURVEYS

APPENDIXES AND SURVEYS

Sample/Survey

The non-probability, purposive sample of former foster youth in college was drawn from 10 targeted California State University (CSU) sites. In order to capture the breadth and diversity of California's student and foster care population, the sites were selected to represent specific characteristics including: location (northern, southern, and central), population mix (rural and urban), number of foster youth in the corresponding county, and size of the university population.

Based on sampling methods used in our pilot study, we accessed students through the Financial Aid records at each campus site. As in the pilot study, we identified students from a yes response to question number 58 on the 2000-2001 FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) form (for more information about FAFSA go to <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>) and from official documentation in their records. Question number 58 is the following: "Answer Yes if (1) you are currently a ward of the court or were a ward of the court until age 18, or (2) both of your parents are dead and you don't have an adoptive parent or legal guardian." If possible, Financial Aid office staff verified that only those students who had official documentation of their status as wards of the court would be included in the sample (Because this practice is inconsistent from campus-to-campus, a Yes answer to item #58 was the accepted criteria).

After obtaining Human Subjects Review Committee permission from each

campus, a mailed survey was sent to selected students. Two weeks after the initial mailed survey, non-respondents received a reminder follow-up postcard. Two weeks after receiving the postcard reminder, a second survey was mailed to each of the non-responders. A \$10 gift certificate to Barnes & Noble Bookstore was mailed to each respondent who returned a postcard with a name and address. A total of 808 surveys were mailed out. Three rounds of mailing to each of the 10 sites produced a sample size of 189, representing a 23.4 % response rate.

Sample/In-depth Interviews

Non-probability, purposive sampling methods were employed for the in-depth interview portion of the study. Respondents from the larger sample (N = 189) were asked to volunteer for in-depth interviews on their experiences in the educational and foster care systems. A final subsample of 27 was recruited for the in-depth interview portion of the study.

Sample/Ethnographic Study

The sample was comprised of ILP coordinators in each of the surveyed counties (N = 9). The addresses and phone numbers for the ILP coordinators were obtained through a California directory of Social Service Agencies programs. A description of the study, an invitation to participate in the ethnographic interview, and a copy of the semi-structured interview were mailed and faxed to ILP coordinators. All nine ILP coordinators agreed to participate in the ethnographic interview, although one interview was not completed due to the unavailability of the study participant.

Instrumentation/Survey

For the survey portion of the study, we used a Self-Administered Questionnaire (SAQ) that we developed and tested in our pilot study. The SAQ is comprised of measures that have been used in other studies on emancipated foster youth as well as measures that we developed for the purposes of our pilot study. Areas covered include: educational history; employment history and financial support; health status; social support; history of homelessness, substance abuse, and criminal activity; history in the foster care system; skills training; personal adjustment and current life satisfaction (see Appendix A).

Instrumentation/In-depth Interviews

An interview guide, also developed and tested during our pilot study, was designed to collect information on specific dimensions of the respondent's life including: early family life experiences, primary and secondary education, foster care experiences, costs and benefits attached to high level of achievement, and future goals--both personal and professional (see Appendix B).

Instrumentation/Ethnographic Study

A semi-structured interview guide was designed to collect information related to the services and supports available to emancipating and emancipated foster youth in each county (see Appendix C).

Analysis/Survey Data

Quantitative data resulting from surveys were analyzed using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics were utilized to provide information on the characteristics of the

overall sample and the qualitative sub-sample in the following areas: demographics; educational history; current educational experiences; resources including financial support, social support and health status; problems including mental health, substance abuse and delinquency; history in out-of-home care and preparation for independent living; and overall life satisfaction and hopefulness for the future.

Analysis/In-depth Interviews

Data for the qualitative in-depth interview portion of the study were analyzed using both traditional grounded theory method in which theories inductively emerge from empirical data (Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) and the extended case method (Burawoy, 1991). In the extended case method, existing theories are deductively assessed and refined by comparing them with the inductive findings first generated from ethnographic research. Interview data were organized and coded using Atlas Ti, a qualitative analysis software package.

Before coding the data, one primary researcher and one research assistant listed themes which emerged from the data both during the interviews and through subsequent readings of the transcripts pertaining to external systems, role models, and internal characteristics related to college enrollment and retention. These themes were used as initial codes. Two researchers coded each transcript separately. After coding all 27 interviews on the first two questions, codes were compared and consensus was reached. This process often resulted in the developing of new codes or the combining of existing codes. This process was repeated until all of the questions were coded and no new codes emerged. The categories resulting from the coding were the following:

external systems, role models, and internal characteristics.

Analysis/Ethnographic Study

Ethnographic interview data were analyzed using qualitative analysis methods with particular attention to specific variables, including the types of ILP services available both prior to and after emancipation, the impact of the Chafee Bill on ILP services, educational outcomes for emancipating foster youth, ILP services that are targeted toward educational needs and college preparation, collaborations with post-secondary institutions, and services offered to foster parents.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY ON FORMER FOSTER YOUTH IN THE CSU SYSTEM

Code # _____

SURVEY ON FORMER FOSTER YOUTH IN THE CSU SYSTEM

Campus where you are completing this survey:

Chico	Hayward	Monterey Bay	San Diego
Fresno	Long Beach	Northridge	San Marcos
Fullerton	Los Angeles	Sacramento	Stanislaus

A. Were you in the foster care system or in out-of-home care (living with a relative, living in a foster home, group home, or other out-of-home placement) until the age of 18 or until you were emancipated?

YES NO

B. What was the date you emancipated and how old were you?

Date: _____

Age: _____

C. What was the total length of time you spent in the foster care system or in out-of-home care?

Years: _____

Months: _____

IF YOU MARKED 'NO' TO ITEM A ABOVE, DO NOT CONTINUE WITH THIS SURVEY. PLEASE RETURN THE SURVEY IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

Please answer the following questions about yourself.

1. Gender:
____ Male
____ Female

2. Age: _____
Date of birth:
Month _____
Day _____
Year _____

3a. Ethnicity: (Mark only one)

____ African American	____ Other Latino/a
____ American Indian/Alaskan	____ Pacific Islander
____ Asian (specify _____)	____ White/Caucasian
____ Filipino	____ Other
____ Mexican American/Chicano	

3b. Do you consider yourself to be multiethnic?

____ Yes ____ No

3c. When you were growing up, did you usually speak a language other than English?

____ Yes ____ No

4. Which of the following best describes your current relationship status? Are you

____ Married and living with your spouse
____ Living with someone as a couple
____ Married and not living with your spouse
____ Legally separated
____ Divorced
____ Widowed
____ Never married/single

5a. Have you ever given birth to or fathered any children?

___ Yes ___ No

5b. If yes, how many?

5c. Do your children live with you?

___ Yes ___ No

6. What is your religious preference?

___ Protestant
___ Catholic
___ Jewish
___ Muslim
___ Something else (specify _____)
___ Do not have a religious preference

7. How important is religion in your life?

___ Very important
___ Somewhat important
___ Not really important
___ Not at all important

Your Educational History

8. During the time you were in foster care or out-of-home placement, how many different schools did you attend?

Number of Elementary schools: _____

Number of Middle schools: _____

Number of High schools: _____

9. What was the highest level of regular schooling that you completed at the time you left or emancipated from foster care?

___ less than high school (1-8 years)
___ some high school 9-11 years
___ GED (General Education Diploma)
___ completed high school
___ some college

10. Which of the following were part of your high school experience? (Mark all that apply)

___ college preparation classes
___ extra curricular activities (e.g., sports, clubs, music, drama, other organizations)
___ advising about college
___ information about financial aid
___ special education classes
___ tutoring
___ other (specify _____)

11. Which of the following were the most important for you in deciding to go to college? (Mark all that apply)

___ college preparation classes
___ extra curricular activities
___ extra curricular activities (e.g., sports, clubs, music, drama, other organizations)
___ advising about college
___ information about financial aid
___ special education classes
___ tutoring
___ other (specify _____)

12. How many years did it take you to complete high school (grades 9 - 12) or to complete your GED?

_____ years

13. How old were you when you graduated from high school or completed your GED?

_____ years

14. What was your overall grade point average in high school?

_____ GPA

15. If you did not attend college immediately after completing high school, what did you do between high school and college?

16. How old were you when you began college for the first time?

_____ years

17a. Did you attend any colleges or universities before coming to this university?

_____ Yes _____ No

17b. If yes, did you attend:

- _____ a community college
- _____ a private college/university
- _____ another CSU campus
- _____ a UC campus
- _____ other (specify _____)

18. Class level:

- _____ Freshman
- _____ Sophomore
- _____ Junior
- _____ Senior
- _____ Graduate Student

19. Are you a transfer student to this university?

_____ Yes _____ No

20a. What term and year did you first enroll at this campus?

___ Fall ___ Winter ___ Spring ___ Summer

Year _____

20b. Number of semesters/quarters at this university:

_____ semesters/quarters

21a. Do you live on campus?

- _____ Yes, go to #22
- _____ No

21b. If no, what is your current living situation?

- _____ rented room
- _____ rented apartment
- _____ rented house/trailer
- _____ own house/trailer
- _____ live parents/relatives
- _____ other (specify _____)

21c. How long have you lived off campus?

_____ months

22. Current/Proposed major:

- _____ Business
- _____ Education
- _____ Engineering/Computer Sciences
- _____ Health Professions
- _____ Humanities/Arts
- _____ Life Sciences
- _____ Physical Sciences
- _____ Social Sciences
- _____ Social Work
- _____ Other (specify _____)

BA/BS/Baccalaureate	Master's	Doctorate
---------------------	----------	-----------

BA/BS/Baccalaureate	Master's	Doctorate
---------------------	----------	-----------

GPA

- A. Campus housing
- B. Recreation programs and/or activities
- C. Student union activities
- D. Campus child care
- E. Bookstore
- F. Student health services
- G. Psychological counseling
- H. Financial aid services
- I. Food services
- J. Intercollegiate athletic programs
- K. Career advising provided by faculty
- L. Career Center services
- M. Cultural activities
- N. Associated Students programs and activities
- O. Fraternities and sororities
- P. New Student Orientation
- Q. Educational equity programs
(e.g., EOP, Summer Bridge)
- R. Services to students with disabilities
- S. Student clubs and organizations
- T. Admissions services
- U. Records or registration services
- V. Adult re-entry services
- W. Testing services (e.g., EPT, ELM,
upper division writing requirement)
- X. Library collection
- Y. Library services
- Z. Laboratory facilities
- AA. Computing resources
- BB. Learning assistance/tutoring
- CC. Parking

- A. Pre-college advising from my high school.
- B. Pre-transfer advising from my community college
- C. The university advising center or general studies office
- D. Advising centers in my major department of school/college
- E. Faculty in my major department
- F. Administrative or program staff (e.g., EOP, Adult Re-Entry, Services to Students with Disabilities, Financial Aid Office)
- G. Campus catalog/class schedule and other department or school publications
- H. University orientation course
- I. Fellow students

27. Please indicate other services you need that were not included on the above list.

28. What are the *major barriers* you have faced in trying to obtain the services at your university you need most? (Mark all that apply.)

- ☐ lack of time
- ☐ transportation problems
- ☐ language difficulties
- ☐ didn't know where to get services
- ☐ didn't know how to get services
- ☐ other (specify _____)
- ☐ there were no barriers to getting the services I needed

29. In your opinion, what are the *most important kinds of services* that can be used for university students who emancipated from the Child Welfare System prior to attending college?

30. What might prevent you from completing your education? (Mark all that apply.)

- ☐ lack of interest
- ☐ financial problems
- ☐ transportation problems
- ☐ the need to work full-time
- ☐ health reasons
- ☐ personal reasons (family obligations, personal problems, etc.)
- ☐ other (specify _____)
- ☐ there are no obstacles that will prevent me from completing my education

31a. Have you ever withdrawn/taken a leave of absence/dropped out from this university?

☐ Yes ☐ No

31b. If yes, how long were you away?

_____ months

32a. Are you currently thinking of withdrawing/taking a leave of absence from the University?

☐ Yes ☐ No

32b. If yes, what are the reasons?

33. How well would you say the foster care system prepared you for college?

- ☐ Not well at all
- ☐ Fairly well
- ☐ Extremely well

34. How pleased are you with your overall experience on this CSU campus?

- ☐ Not pleased
- ☐ Somewhat pleased
- ☐ Very pleased

Your Employment History/Financial Support

35a. Did you have a job(s) while you were in foster care?

_____ Yes _____ No

35b. If yes, what were they?

36. Did you have a job(s) immediately after you were discharged from foster care?

_____ Yes _____ No

37. Have you had a job(s) since then?

_____ Yes _____ No

38. If there were times when you were without employment, how did you survive?

39. How are you currently supporting yourself? (Mark all that apply.)

- _____ employment
- _____ financial aid
- _____ scholarship
- _____ financial help from family members
- _____ financial help from friends outside your family
- _____ money set aside for you while you were in foster care
- _____ public assistance (SSI, CalWORKS, TANF)
- _____ money from other sources (specify _____)

40a. If you are currently employed, what is your work situation?

- _____ on-campus work
- _____ off-campus work
- _____ both on-campus and off-campus work

40b. If you are employed, how many hours a week do you work on your job(s)?

_____ hours

41. How would you describe your financial situation?

- _____ good
- _____ fair
- _____ poor

42. Compared to others your age, would you describe your financial situation as:

- _____ better
- _____ about the same
- _____ worse

Health Status

43. Compared to others your age, would you say your present health is:

- _____ excellent
- _____ very good
- _____ fair
- _____ poor

44. Are you currently covered by any health insurance, such as:

- _____ Medical
- _____ Medicare
- _____ private health insurance which you carry or is carried for you
- _____ any other kind of insurance (specify _____)
- _____ no insurance

45. If you do not have health insurance, how do you feel about that?

- ☐ very concerned
- ☐ somewhat concerned
- ☐ not concerned
- ☐ not applicable

46. Since you were discharged from foster care, have you always been able to get medical care?

- ☐ yes, always able
- ☐ no, sometimes unable
- ☐ didn't need medical care

47b. If yes, did you receive: (Mark all that apply.)

- ☐ inpatient services
- ☐ outpatient services
- ☐ therapy or counseling
- ☐ other (specify _____)

47a. Since you were discharged from foster care, have you ever received mental health services?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No—(if no, go to item #48)

Alcohol/Drug Use

48. Have you ever had alcohol to drink?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No (If no, go to item #54)

49. Thinking back to the last year you were in foster care, how often did you have a drink?

- ☐ times drank daily
- ☐ times drank weekly
- ☐ times drank monthly

50. How many days within the past month did you have a drink?

_____ days

51. As a result of your drinking in the past month did you ever:

- ☐ experience blackouts
- ☐ get into fights
- ☐ get a ticket for drunk driving
- ☐ get arrested for disorderly conduct
- ☐ miss school or work

52. Would you say you have a problem with drinking?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No—(if no, go to item #54)

53a. During the time you were in foster care or out-of-home placement, did you ever receive alcohol treatment services?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

53b. Since being discharged from foster care or out-of-home placement, have you ever received alcohol treatment services?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

54. Have you ever used illegal drugs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No—(If no, go to item #60)

55. Thinking back to the last year you were in foster care, how often did you use illegal drugs?

- ☐ times daily
- ☐ times weekly
- ☐ times monthly

56. How many days within the past month did you use drugs?

_____ days

57. As a result of your drug use during the past month did you ever:

_____ get into fights
_____ get arrested for disorderly conduct
_____ miss school or work

58. Would you say you have a problem with drug use?

_____ Yes
_____ No—(If no, go to item #60)

59a. During the time you were in foster care or out-of-home placement, did you ever receive drug treatment services?

_____ Yes _____ No

59b. Since being discharged from foster care or out-of-home placement have you ever received drug treatment services?

_____ Yes _____ No

Yes No

60. Have you ever done something illegal to get money?

61. Were you ever arrested while in foster care or in another out-of-home placement?

62. Did you reside in Juvenile Hall at any time before leaving foster care or out-of-home care?

63. Since you were discharged from foster care or out-of-home placement, have you had any problem with the law?

64. Did the incident involve alcohol?

65. Did the incident involve drugs?

66. Were you arrested?

Social Support

67a. Suppose you had to borrow \$200 for a few weeks because of an emergency. Do you have someone you could ask?

_____ Yes _____ No

67b. What is that person's relationship to you?

_____ family member
_____ member of foster family
_____ friend
_____ neighbor
_____ mentor
_____ teacher or other school staff
_____ coach
_____ counselor or therapist
_____ social worker
_____ other (specify _____)

68a. Suppose you had a problem and were feeling depressed or confused about what to do. Would you ask for help or advice?

_____ Yes _____ No

68b. If yes, who would that person be?

_____ family member
_____ member of foster family
_____ friend
_____ neighbor
_____ mentor
_____ teacher or other school staff
_____ coach
_____ counselor or therapist
_____ social worker
_____ other (specify _____)

- | | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> |
|---|------------|-----------|
| 69. Do any of your current friends include people you knew when you were in foster care or out-of-home placement? | ___ | ___ |
| 70. Do you still maintain contact with any of your foster/group home/kincare) parents? | ___ | ___ |
| 71. Do you maintain contact with your biological family members? | ___ | ___ |
| 72. Do you maintain contact with any of your past caseworkers or counselors? | ___ | ___ |

73a. Have you ever been without a place to sleep?
 ___ No ___ Yes---How many nights? _____

73b. If yes, what were the circumstances?

74a. How many people would you say you currently feel close to? _____

74b. How important would you say these relationships are to you?
 _____ extremely important
 _____ moderately important
 _____ not at all important

History in Foster Care or Other Out-of-Home Placement

75. How old were you when you were first placed in out-of-home care (i.e., non-relative or relative foster care, group home, residential home)?

76. How many placements did you have?

77. Please indicate all the placements you have had and the age(s) you were when you were in that placement.

<u>Placement</u>	<u>Age(s)</u>	<u>Duration (months or years)</u>
Non-relative foster home	_____	_____
Residential home	_____	_____
Apartment	_____	_____
Relative foster home	_____	_____
Transitional living home	_____	_____
Friend's house	_____	_____
Group home	_____	_____
Boarding house	_____	_____
Shelter	_____	_____
Other (specify)_____	_____	_____

78. Did you ever run away from any placement?
 ___ Yes ___ No—(If no, skip to #80)

79. How many times did you run away?

80. What do you think were the reasons you were placed in foster care or out-of-home care?

Skills Training

81a. Were you enrolled in an Independent Living Skills (ILS) Program? ____ Yes ____ No

81b. If yes, where? County _____ State _____

81c. How long? _____

81d. What was most helpful about the ILS Program?

81e. What could the program have helped you with that you didn't get?

82. While you were in foster care or out-of-home placement were you taught how to...

	Yes	No
a. budget your money	___	___
b. open a bank account	___	___
c. balance a checkbook	___	___
d. obtain a credit card	___	___
e. buy a car	___	___
f. get car insurance	___	___
g. get health insurance	___	___
h. get health care	___	___
i. prepare meals	___	___
j. choose nutritionally good food	___	___
k. find a job	___	___
l. find opportunities for training and education	___	___
m. find a place to live	___	___
n. do housekeeping	___	___
o. shop	___	___
p. obtain legal assistance	___	___
q. locate community resources (i.e., post office, hospital, counseling services)	___	___
r. make decisions about birth control	___	___
s. make friends	___	___
t. set and achieve goals	___	___
u. tell other people how you feel	___	___
v. ask people for help	___	___
w. express your opinion	___	___
x. make decisions	___	___
y. get access to your medical records	___	___
z. find out about ways to pay for college	___	___

83. Did you learn these things mainly from (mark only one):

- ☐ attending an Independent Living Skills (ILS) Program
☐ your foster or group home parents
☐ attending a teen conference or weekend retreat
☐ Some other place or person (specify _____)

84. Overall, how satisfied do you feel with the services and assistance you received prior to emancipating from the foster care system?

- ☐ very unsatisfied
☐ satisfied
☐ very satisfied

85. Overall, how prepared did you feel for independent living when you emancipated from the foster care system?

- ☐ Not well prepared ☐ Somewhat prepared ☐ Well prepared

86. The following are some questions about how you see yourself and your life. Please read each statement and indicate your level of agreement or disagreement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. I feel good about myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. I don't have enough control over the direction my life is taking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. In my life good luck is more important than hard work for success	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. I feel I am a person of worth; the equal of other people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. I am able to do things as well as most other people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Every time I try to get ahead someone or something stops me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. My plans hardly ever work out, so planning only makes me unhappy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. I try to accept my position in life, rather than try to change things	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. I certainly feel useless at times	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. I have a big influence over the things that happen to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. At times I think I'm no good at all	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. When I make plans, I am almost certain I can make them work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. I feel I do not have much to be proud of	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o. What happens to me is my own doing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
p. I feel that I have a number of good qualities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
q. Chance and luck are very important for what happens in my life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
r. I wish I could have more respect for myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
s. All in all, I pretty much feel that I am a failure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

87. The following are some statements about how you see yourself in relation to others. Please read each statement and indicate your level of agreement or disagreement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. I am generous with my friends	___	___	___	___
b. I quickly get over and recover from being startled	___	___	___	___
c. I enjoy dealing with new and unusual situations	___	___	___	___
d. I usually succeed in making a favorable impression on people	___	___	___	___
e. I enjoy trying new foods I have not tried before	___	___	___	___
f. I am regarded as a very energetic person	___	___	___	___
g. I like to take different paths to familiar places	___	___	___	___
h. I am more curious than most people	___	___	___	___
i. Most of the people I meet are likeable	___	___	___	___
j. I usually think carefully about something before acting	___	___	___	___
k. I like to do new and different things	___	___	___	___
l. My daily life is full of things that keep me interested	___	___	___	___
m. I would be willing to describe myself as a pretty strong personality	___	___	___	___
n. I get over my anger at someone reasonably quickly	___	___	___	___

88. Following is a list of the ways you might have felt or behaved during the past week. Mark your response to each.

<u>On how many days during the past week did you:</u>	<u>Number of days in past week</u>
a. feel bothered by things that don't usually bother you	_____
b. not feel like eating: your appetite was poor	_____
c. feel that you could not shake off the blues even with help from your family and friends	_____
d. feel that you were just as good as other people	_____
e. have trouble keeping your mind on what you were doing	_____
f. feel depressed	_____
g. feel that everything you did was an effort	_____
h. feel hopeful about the future	_____
i. feel your life has been a failure	_____
j. feel fearful	_____
k. sleep restlessly	_____
l. feel happy	_____
m. talk less than usual	_____
n. feel lonely	_____
o. feel people were unfriendly	_____
p. enjoy life	_____
q. have crying spells	_____
r. feel sad	_____
s. feel that people disliked you	_____
t. feel you could not get along	_____

89. Please read the following items and indicate whether you experience each.

	Frequently	Sometimes	Not Often	Not at All
a. I get very frightened or panic feelings for apparently no reason at all	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. I am restless and can't keep still	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. I feel anxious when I go out of the house on my own	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. I am more irritable than usual	_____	_____	_____	_____
e. I get sensations of <i>butterflies</i> in my stomach or chest	_____	_____	_____	_____
f. I get dizzy attacks or feel unsteady	_____	_____	_____	_____
g. I feel scared or frightened	_____	_____	_____	_____
h. I feel tense or wound up	_____	_____	_____	_____

90. How much are you distressed by:

	Not at All	A Little Bit	Moderately	Quite a Bit	Extremely
a. feeling that most people cannot be trusted	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. feeling lonely even when you are with people	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. feeling that people are unfriendly or dislike you	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. never feeling close to another person	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
e. feeling that people will take advantage of you if you let them	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
f. your feelings being easily hurt	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
g. feeling very self-conscious with others	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

91. Overall, how happy are you with life these days? Would you say you are:

- _____ Very happy
 _____ Somewhat happy
 _____ Not very happy

92. What are your plans for the next five years for:

- a. Education
- b. Employment and Career
- c. Marriage/Family
- d. Housing

93. Overall, how hopeful would you say you feel about the future? Would you say you are:

- _____ Very hopeful
- _____ Somewhat hopeful
- _____ Not very hopeful

94. Is there something else that you would like to tell us?

Thank you so much for your participation in the first part of the study. Your answers will be important in helping other students who have been in foster care or the child welfare system.

To receive your \$10 incentive to Barnes & Noble Bookstore for completing this survey, please complete the attached postcard with your name and address. If you are interested in participating in Part II of the study, please complete the final two items on the attached postcard, your telephone number and times you can be reached at that number. Please return the postcard separately from the survey. We will call to set up a meeting time on your campus. The interview should take about an hour to complete. We will offer you an incentive of \$20 to Barnes & Noble Bookstore for your participation.

In Part II of this study, we are interested in talking with students, in greater depth, about their experiences transitioning from foster care and out-of-home placement to college. Former foster youth who attend college are a small group: many fewer former foster youth enroll in higher education than those who have not been in the system.

Because so little is known about this successful group of young men and women who attend college and were formerly in foster care and out-of-home placement, we would like to contact you for a follow-up interview. Your participation could help us to gather needed information to help children and youth currently in the foster care system as they prepare to be emancipated and need to plan for further education and work. For further information you can call Dr. Alice Hines at (408) 924-5847 or Dr. Joan Merdinger at (408) 924-5827.

APPENDIX B

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE

- a. When did you leave the foster care/child welfare system? _____ (month)
_____ (year)
- b. Did you emancipate from the foster care system? (Were you part of the system until you reached the age of 18?) ____ yes ____ no
- c. What was the total length of time you spent in the foster care system or in out-of-home care? _____ (years) _____ (months)

1. Introduction

- 1a. Can you begin by telling us a little bit about your experiences as a college student?

Probes:

- How long have you been at SJSU?
- What is your major or intended major?
- What is your general feeling about being at SJSU?

2. Paths to SJSU

- 2a. Can you tell us about your educational experiences before going to college?

Probes:

- Tell us about elementary school and junior high school.
- What about your high school experiences?
- Can you tell us about any college prep courses, extra curricular activities, special ed, advising, transfers, problems with tracking school records...

- 2b. How did you make the decision to go to college?

- 2c. When you were in out-of-home placement were there adults who helped you with your schoolwork and/or provided you with encouragement while you were in school?

- 2d. Did anyone provide you with technical or emotional assistance during the college application process?

- 2e. Have you ever dropped out or thought of dropping out of college?

- 2f. If so, what prevented you from doing that?

- 2g. How are you supporting yourself at SJSU?

3. Early life experiences

3a. Can you tell us about what your life was like when you were a young child?

Probes:

- Tell us about the family that raised you.
- What about experiences in school and experiences with friends?
- What was your life like before you entered foster care or out-of-home placement?

4. System-related questions

4a. Can you begin by telling us when you first went into foster care or another out-of-home placement and what your experiences in the child welfare system were?

Probes:

- How old were you when you first entered foster care, group home, etc.?
- Why do you think you were placed in out-of-home care?
- How many placements have you had?
- What kinds of settings have you been placed in?
- How long did you spend in each type of placement?
- What was the reason for each type of placement?
- When did you leave the foster care system?
- Did you ever run away while in foster care?
- Have you ever been in the juvenile justice system/mental health facility?

4b. Looking back, what would you say was the best thing that happened to you while you were in foster care or another out-of-home placement?

4c. What was the low point of your time spent in out-of-home care?

4d. During the time that you were living in out-of-home care, what were your attitudes about the system. What were the overall positive and negative aspects of the system?

5. Questions related to external resources - social support and relationships

5a. During the time that you spent in out-of-home care, what did you do when things were difficult? How did you handle the difficult times?

Probe:

- Can you tell us about a difficult time and how you handled it?

- 5b. During the time you were in out-of-home placement, were there certain people who were particularly important to you? Can you name those people? (first names only)

For each of those people you named,

- can you tell us what age you were when you knew them?
- how long you knew them?
- what their relationship to you was (e.g., relative foster parent, non-relative foster parent, relative, mentor, social worker, teacher)?

- 5c. What would you say are the characteristics of those relationships that you just spoke about that were particularly helpful to you?

Probes:

- What would you say it was about those particular people that made them helpful to you?

- 5d. While you were in out-of-home placement, did you have contact with your birth relatives?

- Can you talk more about that?

- 5e. What other types of supports were helpful to you?

- in the schools
- communities where you lived
- clubs and organizations that you belonged to
- churches or other religious organizations

6. Internal Resources

- 6a. During the time you spent in out-of-home care, what characteristics within you helped you handle the difficult times?

- 6b. What do you consider to be your strong points?

- Would you say this was always true?

- 6c. Do you remember things that people said about you during that time?
- 6d. How would you have described yourself during that time?
- 7. Suggestions regarding the System and SJSU
 - 7a. What suggestions do you have for the Child Welfare/Foster Care system in general?
 - 7b. What suggestions do you have for the Child Welfare/Foster Care system that would help more youth go on to college?
 - 7c. What suggestions do you have for youth in the Child Welfare/Foster Care system in general?
 - 7d. What suggestions do you have for youth in the Child Welfare/Foster Care system that would help them go on to college?
 - 7e. What suggestions do you have for colleges, and SJSU in particular, which would help them better serve youth who have been in out-of-home care?
- 8. Satisfaction with current life situation
 - 8a. How do you feel about the way things are going right now?
 - 8b. Can you talk about the *costs and benefits* related to your having been able to overcome difficult events in your life?
 - Probe:
 - Has there been a downside to your being able to overcome difficult events in your life?
- 9. Future plans and hopes
 - 9a. Can you tell us about you hopes and plans for the future, as they relate to
 - education
 - career
 - relationships and family
 - lifestyle
 - other?
 - 9b. How do you see yourself 5 years from now?
 - 10 years?

10. Concluding Questions

10a. What do you think were the factors/events that set you on a path to college, when others in your same situation didn't or couldn't do this?

10b. Is there anything more you would like to tell us?

APPENDIX C

**SERVICES FOR EMANCIPATING FOSTER YOUTH IN
SANTA CLARA COUNTY
PILOT STUDY KEY INFORMANT QUESTIONNAIRE**

Services for Emancipating Foster Youth in Santa Clara County Pilot Study Key Informant Questionnaire

Thank you for agreeing to participate in an interview that is part of a pilot study about former foster youth who are attending college in the CSU system. Drs. Alice Hines and Joan Merdinger will be using your answers to finalize questions for counties that have participating CSU campuses.

I would now like to review with you the Informed Consent form. After you have signed the informed consent form, we are ready to begin. When we start, I will turn on the tape recorder to record your answers.

1. What is the number of youth emancipating from the system in Santa Clara County per year?
2. How has the Chaffee Bill for emancipating youth had an impact on emancipating youth in this county?
3. Are records kept on youth after they reach 18?
4. What happens to youth who emancipate from the child welfare system in this county?
 - a. What percent graduate from high school?
 - b. What percent earn a GED?
 - c. What percent continue on to community college?
 - d. What percent continue onto a 4-year college?
 - e. What percent continue on to a vocational program?
5. What programs are available for emancipating youth in your county?
6. What percentages of eligible youth participate in these programs?
7. Are there any specific programs targeted to the educational needs of youth in foster care?
8. What percentages of eligible youth participate in these programs?
9. What about college-prep programs? What percentages of eligible youth participate in these programs?

10. Is your county currently collaborating with higher education programs to provide services that link foster youth to college? Community College? CSUs? UCs? Private institutions? EOP programs?
11. Does your agency provide services to foster parents that inform, support, or encourage foster youth to attend post-secondary education? Does your agency provide services to foster parents that help them to link youth in their care with resources (financial aid office, college counselors, TRIO programs) that provide support for post-secondary education?

After asking the above questions, ask the following three questions:

1. Please give us feedback on these questions.
2. Please give us suggestions for additional questions.
3. If we wanted to find out about education services/college guidance for youth emancipating from foster care in California counties, to whom would we talk?

APPENDIX D

CSU MEMO FROM OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL

California State University
MEMORANDUM

Office of General Counsel

To: Allison Jones
Assistant Vice Chancellor
Academic Affairs—Access and Retention

Date: March 21, 2000

From: Monique Shay
University Counsel

Phone: (562) 951-4479

Subject: SJSU Emancipated Foster Youth Research Project:
Our File No. L00-0328

You have asked that our office review the proposal entitled, *Pathways to College: Understanding the Psychosocial and System-Related Factors that Contribute to College Enrollment and Attendance among Emancipated Foster Youth*, and advise about Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) issues implicated by the proposal. It is our conclusion that this research will not violate FERPA, as long as the researchers comply with certain restrictions (discussed herein) on the use of information derived from student files.

The proposal explains that it will follow up on a pilot program conducted during academic year 1998-99 at San Jose State University (“SJSU”), and will broaden that program by expanding beyond SJSU to include ten CSU campuses and the county in which each is located. The pilot program was conducted in two steps: (1) first, questionnaires were mailed to students who self-identified themselves on financial aid forms as having been in the foster care system, and (2) respondents who indicated a willingness to participate in an interview were interviewed and asked further questions. The program outlined in the proposal would take two years, and would follow the same steps as the pilot program, in that it would first send out a questionnaire to current students and then would follow up with interviews of five students from each campus.

Once again, students will be identified via information they gave on their financial aid form. A further step will be taken which was not used in the pilot program of asking financial aid officers at each campus and the CO to confirm that there is “official documentation” in the students’ file that they had been wards of the court, and only those students with that official documentation will be contacted. A third facet of the study, as outlined in the proposal, is to review services offered in each county by reviewing data from the various county welfare offices and interviewing various county employees and service providers.

FERPA, as well as the Information Practices ACT (“IPA”), a California Law relating to records and privacy which applies to the CSU, grant a right of privacy in the information contained in the student’s files which will be shared by the CSU with the faculty members and graduate student

who will conduct this study¹; however, there are exceptions in both laws which allow this disclosure.

FERPA allows for disclosure to “state and local educational authorities...in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal or State supported education programs,” as well as to “organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, educational agencies or institutions to...improve education.” (34 C.F.R. Section 99.31(a)(3)(iii), 99.35; 34 C.F.R. Section 99.31(a)(6)(I)(C)). Whether the faculty conducting the study are viewed as the CSU, or as a group acting on CSU’s behalf, their purpose is to improve education for students who are emancipated foster youth. A state law, the Higher Education Outreach and Assistance Act for Emancipated Foster Youth (the “Act”) enacted in 1996, requires the CSU to

Expand the access and retention programs of the university to include...(1) outreach services to foster youth to encourage their enrollment in a state university...[and] (2) technical assistance to foster youth to assist those prospective students in completing admission applications and financial aid applications. (Education Code Section 89340, et seq.; Education Code Section 89341(b)).

In addition, the Act directs the trustees to perform certain services “to assist emancipated foster youth,” including “[providing] technical assistance and advice to campuses on ways in which to improve the delivery of services for foster youth.” Education Code Section 89342(b)). The study clearly seeks to improve education for emancipated foster youth by finding out what services are offered to them before they turn 18, and, once they “emancipate” and transition to the university, inquiring what hardships they have overcome and continue to face, in an effort, as the Act requires, to “improve the delivery of services to emancipated foster youth.” (Education Code Section 89342(b)).

Where disclosure of student information is made under the exceptions noted above, FERPA requires that the individual identities of students be protected (i.e., not disclosed further than the researchers) and that “the information [be] destroyed when no longer needed for the purpose for which the study was conducted.” (34 C.F.R. Section 99.31(6)(ii); 34 C.F.R. Section 99.35(b)(1-2)). Accordingly, the researchers conducting the study should not disclose to anyone other than themselves the identifies of CSU students who emancipated from the foster care system, and should destroy their lists of names so identifying these students once the study is completed. Similarly to FERPA, the IPA has exceptions allowing disclosure for research purposes, and the protections required by FERPA will allow the researchers to comply with the IPA. (See, Civil Code Sections 1778.24(h), 1778.24(t)).

¹ The interviews are voluntary, and therefore consent to release the information gathered through that process will be dependent upon the understanding set out at the beginning of the interview (for example, that the student either consents to be identified, or that a pseudonym will be used in future reports of the results).

Where disclosure of student information is made under the exceptions noted above, FERPA requires that the individual identities of students be protected (i.e., not disclosed further than the researchers) and that “the information [be] destroyed when no longer needed for the purpose for which the study was conducted.” (34 C.F.R. Section 99.31(6)(ii); 34 C.F.R. Section 99.35(b)(1-2)). Accordingly, the researchers conducting the study should not disclose to anyone other than themselves the identifies of CSU students who emancipated from the foster care system, and should destroy their lists of names so identifying these students once the study is completed. Similarly to FERPA, the IPA has exceptions allowing disclosure for research purposes, and the protections required by FERPA will allow the researchers to comply with the IPA. (See, Civil Code Sections 1798.24(h), 1798.24(t)).

This is an exciting and laudable project, working toward the goal, expressed in the Act, of helping emancipated foster youth, “who do not have parents to rely upon for support and guidance [and who] suffer unique disadvantages compared to other students.” (Education Code Section 89341(a)(4)). I hope this memo addresses your concerns. Please contact me with any further questions you may have.

cc: Christine Helwick

(Note: This is a reproduction of the original memo.)

APPENDIX E

OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH ON FORMER FOSTER YOUTH

(The PowerPoint presentation is available in a separate document.)