

2008 THP-Plus Institute: **CONFERENCE** From Start-Up to Full Implementation

The goal of the full-day conference is to bring THP-Plus to scale on a statewide basis. Following are the details for the 2008 THP-Plus Institute.

Date:
Thursday, July 17th, 2008 • 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Location:
The California Endowment, Los Angeles
1000 N. Alameda Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Intended Participants:
County THP-Plus representatives,
THP-Plus providers, ILP Coordinators,
and advocates

Registration:
\$50 registration fee. Registration will open on
May 27th at www.thpplus.org

This day long Institute will include informative and relevant workshops on a diverse range of subjects, including the development of THP-Plus rates, techniques that foster the collaboration between counties, providers, and non-profit housing developers, trainings on best practices and new tools such as the Participant Tracking System, and an opportunity to interface directly with young adult panelists.

According to the evaluation of a 2007 participant, "As a result of the Institute I will be communicating with representatives from other counties on lessons learned. The quality of the workshops, the breadth in geography and experience among the attendees, and presence of such thoughtful and articulate young people willing to vocalize first hand their experience in THP-Plus greatly enhanced my understanding of the program. I feel energized and armed with better information to serve my youth!"

For more information, please contact Michele Byrnes at (415) 693-1323.

"THP-PLUS BUDGET" CONTINUED FROM FRONT

- Foster Care, Kin-GAP and AAP: 10% cut for basic care, specialized care, and clothing allowance for the Foster Care, Kin-GAP, and Adoption Assistance programs, with an implementation date of October 1, 2008.
- Reduction in random licensing inspections for licensed facilities: This proposal would cut the random inspection rate from 30 percent to 14 percent, equating to a visit for each facility approximately once every seven years.

The May Budget Revision will now be considered by the Assembly and Senate Budget Committees before final approval by both houses. By law, the Budget Bill must be submitted to the Governor by June 15, but the budget has historically been delayed. Once the final budget is signed by the Governor, CDSS will issue an All County Letter (ACL) notifying counties of their THP-Plus allocation.

The Project will continue to provide budget updates as they become available. For more information, please contact Michele Byrnes at michele@johnburtonfoundation.org.



Welcome to **THP-Plus News**, a quarterly newsletter of the THP-Plus Statewide Implementation Project. The Project is a partnership between the John Burton Foundation, the California Department of Social Services, and the Corporation for Supportive Housing. Our goal is to expand access to THP-Plus, California's only housing program for former foster youth. THP-Plus provides former foster youth with affordable housing and a rich array of supportive services, including job training, educational advocacy, mentoring, and case management.

INSIDE:

- May Budget Revise
- THP-Plus Participant Survey
- California College Pathways Project
- THP-Plus Statewide Implementation Project Update

To submit a question to a practitioner or to comment on the newsletter, e-mail nicole@johnburtonfoundation.org

This is a publication of the John Burton Foundation for Children Without Homes— a non-profit organization based in San Francisco, California dedicated to improving the quality of life for California's homeless children and developing policy solutions to prevent homelessness.

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Expanding Housing Options for Youth In Transition

THP-Plus Budget **BUDGET** Unchanged in May Revise

The Governor's May Revise was released on Wednesday, May 14th. The budget remains unchanged from the Governor's January proposal, and includes \$40.8 million for THP-Plus in the 2008-09 Fiscal Year. This figure represents a \$5 million increase from funding in the current fiscal year. At this increased funding level, an estimated 1,600 former foster youth would be able to participate in THP-Plus annually.

According to Graham Knaus, Senior Fiscal and Policy Analyst at California Welfare Directors Association, "Although the May Revise includes devastating cuts to health and human services programs, we are pleased that the THP-Plus program was untouched. There is a long way to go to get to a final budget, but with continued support from both Democrats and Republicans in the Legislature, the program should remain intact in the final budget."

Some of the budget cuts in child welfare services include:

- Child Welfare Services: \$83.7 million in 2008-09 cut by reducing the allocation to counties for Child Welfare Services, for a total reduction of \$129.6 million when lost federal funding is considered.



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SURVEY THP-Plus Participant Survey

To capture the views and experiences of young adults participating in THP-Plus, the John Burton Foundation has been conducting a THP-Plus Participant Survey of all current THP-Plus participants this spring. Young people have been asked to rank the relative importance of different THP-Plus services, to indicate their satisfaction with various program components, and to provide qualitative feedback on how their THP-Plus programs work well and how they can be improved.

Over 400 surveys have been returned already - special thanks to the young people across the state who have participated in the survey, and to the providers who have helped facilitate the process!

Data entry and analysis of the survey results are still ongoing, and will be incorporated into the second THP-Plus Annual Report, for FY 2007-08, to be published this fall. In the meantime, we're pleased to present a "sneak preview" of some of the thoughtful feedback provided by some of the THP-Plus Participant Survey respondents.

Some preliminary comments received through the currently ongoing THP-Plus Participant Survey are shown on the right.

THP-Plus Participant Survey Preview

What parts of your housing program do you think have been particularly helpful?

It gets you started in the right direction, and gives you the opportunity to grow more independent.

- Los Angeles THP-Plus Participant

Having a place to live without a roommate. Having a case manager's support. Getting money back in savings.

- San Francisco THP-Plus Participant

Money management, case management, and someone pushing you in the right direction.

- Sacramento THP-Plus Participant

It has helped me a lot by giving me the time to earn money and helping me learn to pay my rent on time.

- Santa Cruz THP-Plus Participant

My case manager helps me with specific goals that I have.

- Napa THP-Plus Participant

What parts of your housing program do you think could be improved?

Providing longer day care for children.

- Los Angeles THP-Plus Participant

The program should be longer than two years.

- San Francisco THP-Plus Participant

Other comments

Most foster kids need programs like this. It's very important to have these, so that we don't end up living on the streets.

- Los Angeles THP-Plus Participant

This program has been a great support for me—never had a better experience before.

- San Francisco THP-Plus Participant

California College GRANTS Pathways Project

The John Burton Foundation has received a two-year grant from the Stuart Foundation and the Walter S. Johnson Foundation to launch the California College Pathways Project. The goal of the project is to increase the number of foster youth in California who enter higher education and achieve an academic outcome by developing a state-funded program that provides social and financial supports for foster youth in higher education.

The first product of the project will be a website that provides information about all of the campus support programs available for former foster youth in California. The website will also include information about effective practices, recent media about programs providing support for youth in higher education, financial aid information for students, relevant research on foster youth in higher education and templates developed by existing programs.

According to Policy Director Amy Lemley, the goal of the project is to ensure the many college support programs that have been launched with private funding will become part of the system of care for former foster youth. "There have been tremendous efforts around the state to help foster youth make it to college and actually graduate," said Lemley. "Now we need to put in place the financial infrastructure to make sure these programs are available for the long-term for every former foster youth who needs support in higher education."

To prevent duplication, the California College Pathways Project will work closely with the many educational institutions, foundations and nonprofit providers that have worked extensively to increase access to higher education among former foster youth. The project will also collaborate with the newly formed California Child Welfare Council.

For more information about the project, please contact Policy Director Amy Lemley at amy@johnburtonfoundation.org or at 415-693-1322.

UPDATE THP-Plus Statewide Implementation Project Update

The THP-Plus Statewide Implementation Project, a collaboration between the John Burton Foundation, the California Department of Social Services, and the Corporation for Supportive Housing, was originally designed as a two-year project, and will now continue for a third year in 2009. The Project seeks to reduce homelessness among former foster youth by expanding access to THP-Plus through three activities: training and technical assistance; research and evaluation; and advocacy.

According to Michele Byrnes, Project Manager at the John Burton Foundation, a third year will allow the Project to continue its efforts to build the quantity and quality of housing for former foster youth: "In our first year and a half of the Project, THP-Plus capacity has grown six fold, from 167 to more than 800 housing slots. We are looking forward to a third year of working with our partners to continue to grow the program and to share effective practices."



For more information about the Project, please contact Michele Byrnes at michele@johnburtonfoundation.org.