

# HEY Statistics: Foster Youth Employment in SF Bay Area

## Best Practices for Serving Former Foster Youth in Employment Programs

### Best Practices to Serve Youth in Employment Programs

#### Best practices identified by a national group of stakeholders:

- Replicate and take to scale existing best practices that have demonstrated success and for which there is strong demand.
- Invest in promising innovations that may become best practices once successful outcomes are documented.
- Strengthen the youth development workforce by increasing professional development opportunities, training, and professional recognition.<sup>7</sup>

#### In 2009, at-risk youth experts from the Bay Area experts identified these best practices:

##### For Employers:

- Provide job coaching and community recognition.
- Gather information about the target populations to provide the best supports.
- Partner with training institutions and service providers.

##### For Training Institutions:

- Incorporate basic skills into industry-specific job training.
- Develop soft skills of staff.
- Create opportunities to earn formal certificates and obtain structured work experience.
- Increase the affordability and accessibility of training opportunities.

##### For Service Providers:

- Support clients in both their employment-related needs as well as their basic needs.
- Introduce different job opportunities and industries to clients.
- Provide ongoing job coaching for individuals who have obtained employment.
- Educate employers about concrete incentives and intangible benefits of hiring from the target populations.<sup>8</sup>

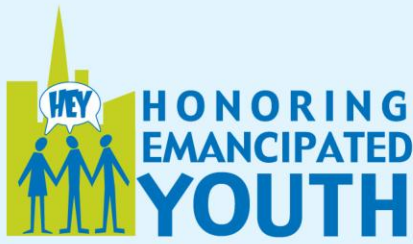
More than 40 states provide employment services to youth, including job readiness training and job-search assistance. Some states also help youth with job placement and ongoing support on the job. One successful program is in Santa Clara County, CA that provides an Emancipated Foster Youth (EFY) Development Program to allow application for 21 eligible job classifications through one on-line application process.<sup>9</sup>

### Employment Services for Foster Youth: Promising Practices and Opportunities for Improvement

San Francisco has some excellent services to help youth find and keep jobs. In order to remain relevant and successful, these programs use evidence based service models. Not only do they serve foster youth using successful methods, but also keep detailed data in order to self improve and inform other programs. The successes of these organizations prove that it is possible to provide education and training to help foster youth find and retain employment. However, the foster care community can only continue to succeed when we share best practices and other data. These HEY Statistics show best practices in serving current and former foster youth, and highlight successful programs in the Bay Area.

### HEY's Partners Have Programs that Successfully Serve Foster Youth

- There are at least 17 organizations that have partnerships with the San Francisco Department of Human Services to provide employment services specifically to current and former foster youth.<sup>1</sup>
- New Door Ventures helps at-risk youth in San Francisco get ready for work and life by providing jobs, job-readiness and a supportive community. About 35% of the youth who are served by their program have had contact with the foster care system.<sup>2</sup>
- San Francisco Conservation Corps offers young adults the opportunity to earn a high school diploma while gaining marketable job skills. In 2008, they served 25 current and former foster care youth.<sup>3</sup>
- MatchBridge and other agencies worked with the Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development to recruit employer participants for the City's Summer Youth Employment Program. The pilot-initiative was funded to provide 450 jobs for San Francisco youth which was fully funded by Federal stimulus money. Agencies that refer foster youth are Jewish Vocational Services, Vietnamese Youth Development Center, Larkin Street Youth Services and others.<sup>4</sup>



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### What are HEY Statistics?

- HEY Statistics offer relevant information for any person interested in foster care, emancipation and transitional age youth in the Bay Area.
- HEY Statistics shows the most current statistics regarding foster youth in the Bay Area in many subject areas. This issue focuses on employment services for foster youth.

### What is HEY?

- Honoring Emancipated Youth (HEY), a community project of United Way of the Bay Area, is dedicated to strengthening and connecting San Francisco's systems of support so that Bay Area youth emancipating, or "aging out" of the foster care system can enjoy a healthy transition to adulthood.
- HEY identifies and raises awareness around challenges affecting local emancipating or emancipated foster youth by bringing together a diversity of voices and experiences, including those of former foster youth, service providers, and other supporters, in finding solutions.

#### HEY's core work includes:

1. **Researching local practices** that affect transition-aged current and former foster youth
2. **Building skills and providing opportunities to share information** for youth and direct service providers through trainings and convenings
3. **Providing an information hub** of issues and challenges affecting local transition-aged current and former foster care youth that helps service providers influence policy and better aide the youth they serve

As a result, supporters of foster youth are linked and informed about the challenges faced by former foster youth and gain access to hard data and expert review of policies and practices so that they can help improve the lives of former foster youth.

- 70% of San Francisco county foster youth participate in San Francisco Human Services Agency's Independent Living Skills Program (ILSP), a program that assists teenage and former foster youth to find housing, jobs and higher education.<sup>5</sup>
- 36% of San Francisco former foster youth utilize one-stop employment centers, also under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Human Services Agency.<sup>5</sup>
- Jewish Vocational Services (JVS) will prepare 25 foster youth with disabilities for jobs in health care industry through the Youth Healthcare Careers Program in 2009.<sup>6</sup>
- The \$787 billion federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, or "stimulus", includes about \$1.2 billion for youth employment and training, 16% of which is allotted to California. San Francisco continues to utilize this money to offer job training and internship programs to youth, foster youth being a target population.<sup>4</sup>

### Works Cited

- <sup>1</sup>Honoring Emancipated Youth, *2008 San Francisco Vocational Resources for Foster and Probation Youth through Partnerships with the Human Services Agency. Lists of employment services:*  
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- <sup>4</sup> Email from Emily Linaman, Executive Director of MatchBridge, July 22, 2009
- <sup>5</sup> State Of California - Health And Human Services Agency California Department Of Social Services Data Systems And Survey Design Bureau Soc 405a (10/05) Page 1 Of 1 Released: March 5, 2009 Independent Living Program (ILP) Annual Statistical Report Federal Fiscal Year October 1 Through September 30  
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- <sup>7</sup> Gardner, Deseree. Youth Aging Out of Foster Care: Identifying Strategies and Best Practices 2007-2008 Presidential Initiative A Publication of the Research Division of NACo's County Services Department , February 2008.
- <sup>8</sup> East Bay Community Foundation. Putting the East Bay to Work: Sustainable Jobs for the Underemployed, October 2009.
- <sup>9</sup> Campaign forYouth, Our Youth, Our Economy, Our Future. A National Investment Strategy for Disconnected Youth, 2006