Educational Collaboration on Behalf of Foster Children
2000-present

School Engagement and Youth Who Run Away from Care: The Need for Cross-System Collaboration.
Chapin Hall Working Paper.
Chapin Hall Center for Children.
2007
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In an effort to better understand individual and system factors that may impact the educational experiences and choices of youth in care, this paper presents the voices of a group of youth who ran away from their foster placements and the perspectives of adults who care for or work with these youth. Qualitative data from two earlier studies were re-analyzed in an effort to better understand the complex set of factors or systems—including individual, biological family and foster family experiences, and experiences within the larger child welfare and public education systems—that influence school engagement for youth in care, particularly youth who run away from their placements. Findings reveal missed opportunities in helping support the educational aspirations of a vulnerable group of youth—missed opportunities for foster parents and professionals, for the child welfare and education systems, and most importantly for the youth themselves. The adults need to overcome institutional impediments and secure appropriate support services and educational opportunities for the youth with whom they work. These supports and opportunities, coupled with highly motivated and committed adults, are key factors in increasing the likelihood that foster youth will have positive academic experiences and outcomes. (Author abstract)
http://www.chapinhall.org/article_abstract.aspx?ar=1454
Educational services for children in foster care: common and contrasting perspectives of child welfare and education stakeholders.
2007
*Journal of Public Child Welfare*
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Most literature on the education of foster youth focuses on their individual outcomes and characteristics. A small body of literature documents a lack of collaboration between the child welfare and education systems. This study explores commonalities and differences in perspectives between child welfare and education system stakeholders. It draws on findings from a multi-county exploratory study on educational services for foster youth. The findings in this study identify several systemic barriers including placement instability within the child welfare system, limited financial resources of schools, and poor interagency communication. In addition, differences in the perceptions of school and child welfare agency personnel regarding the needs of foster children in school, problems encountered in enrolling children in school, and the role and motives of each agency in addressing these needs and problems are identified. These differences point to both the challenges involved in improving communications and collaboration between the two systems, as well as the opportunities to improve educational services to children in foster care. (Author abstract)

Court-based Education Efforts for Children in Foster Care: The Experience of the Pima County Juvenile Court (Arizona).
Taitano, Kim.
2007
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Available From:http://www.casey.org

Courts play a unique and necessary role in helping to improve educational outcomes for children and youth in foster care. Leadership provided by the courts in guiding change efforts, in building
and communicating a shared vision for reform, and in marshaling resources is vital to creating and implementing sustained systems change. An example of one jurisdiction exercising this leadership to bring education issues to the forefront is the Pima County Juvenile Court based in Tucson, Arizona. In four years, the county went from simply having an interest in improving educational outcomes for children and youth in foster care to making real improvements in courtroom policy and practice. This document chronicles these education reform efforts and offers some suggestions to other jurisdictions that want to design and implement their own reform initiatives. Specifically, this document: (1) Outlines the need to focus on the education of children and youth in foster care; (2) Provides an overview of the Pima County Juvenile Court; (3) Describes the education reform efforts in Pima County; (4) Discusses the impact of these efforts on court practice; (5) Offers implementation lessons learned and strategies for success; and (6) Identifies next steps and a vision for future reform efforts in Pima County. (Author abstract)

Advocating for the educational needs of children in out-of-home care: training curriculum for child welfare caseworkers and supervisors.
Herrick, Angela J. Ward, Helen D.
Colorado. Dept. of Human Services.
Catherine E. Cutler Institute for Child and Family Policy.
2006
Muskie School-USM P.O. Box 15010 400 Congress Street
Portland, ME 04112-5010
Tel: 800-435-7543 207-780-5810
Fax: 207-780-5817
http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/helpkids/contact.htm
Available From: http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/helpkids/

The Cutler Institute for Child and Family Policy has developed a training curriculum and caseworker manual for the State of Colorado Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) on serving the educational needs of children and youth in the child welfare system. These materials are designed to provide child welfare caseworkers and their supervisors with an understanding of the relevant educational policies, processes, assessments and plans; methods for monitoring outcomes and services; and tools to enable them to advocate for the educational needs of children in the child welfare system. They are derived primarily from what youth in care say about their educational experiences and what the research tells us makes a difference in educational outcomes for this population. The curriculum covers educational needs from birth through age 21 and is currently being adapted for use by educators and foster parents. The Appendix contains a toolkit of checklists such as tips for participating in an IEP meeting and what foster parents can do to promote educational success at home. The curriculum includes the
showing of a DVD of youth in care talking about their experiences in school. Copies of “Speaking Out” are available from Mary Joseph 207-780-5854. This curriculum is part of a larger effort to address the educational needs of these children in Colorado. For more information, contact Art Atwell, Director, Workforce Development Services, Office of Performance Improvement, DHHS 303-866-7172 or Mary Griffin, Foster Care Coordinator, Child Welfare Division, DHHS at 303-866-3546.

http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/helpkids/pubstext/COEducation.doc

Improving educational prospects for youth in foster care: the Education Liaison Model.
Zetlin, Andrea G. Weinberg, Lois A. Shea, Nancy M.
California State University, Los Angeles
2006
Intervention in School and Clinic
41 p. 267-272
Available from: PRO-ED
8700 Shoal Creek Boulevard
Austin, TX 78757-6897
Tel: 800-897-3202
Fax: 800-397-7633
ksyn@proedinc.com
Foster children are an educationally vulnerable population that is over represented in special education. This article describes a collaborative effort among a child welfare agency, a local education agency, and a nonprofit law office to improve the educational outcomes of children in foster care. Program procedures and the role of the education liaison as advocate and problem solver are described, as well as evaluation data and strategies for managing problems associated with multiagency collaboration. (Author abstract)

The Experiences of Foster Children and Youth in Special Education.
Brief Report.
Zetlin, Andrea.
California State University.
2006
Journal of Intellectual & Developmental Disability
31 (3) p. 161-165
Taylor and Francis, Inc.
325 Chestnut St., 8th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19106
Tel: (215) 625-8900
Fax: (215) 625-2940
Available From:http://www.taylorandfrancis.com/
Background: Although a large number of children in foster care in the United States are receiving special education services, little is known about their educational experiences. Method: This
exploratory study used focus group research to look more closely at the complexity of the problems and needs that this population experiences with the special education system. Results: Five major procedural issues, relating to identification and placement in special education and provision of appropriate services, were identified. Conclusion: There is an urgent need to address the complex problems that children in foster care experience with the special education system. Recommendations are presented for closer collaboration between the child welfare and school systems, and for the training of educators, social workers, court personnel, and caregivers in special education rights and services. (Author abstract)

2005
Bridges
p. 1-4
Available from: Association of Administrators of the Intersate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance, Inc.
810 First St. NE, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20002-4267
Tel: 503-643-1023
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atsa@atsa.com
This article highlights the development of the Educational Access Project (EAP) at Northern Illinois University to improve the educational outcomes of foster care children in Illinois. The creation of educational advisors to provide educational technical assistance to foster parents, schools, and caseworkers is discussed, along with the development of the Center for Child Welfare and Education to provide professional assistance and continued education on the educational needs of children in foster care. The role of the Center's Research and Policy Development Unit and the Educational Access Program are also described. Finally, the partnership between the EAP and the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services is explained.

Helping social workers address the educational needs of foster children.
California State University
2005
Child abuse and neglect: the international journal.
29 p. 811-823
Available from: Elsevier
Customer Service Department 6277 Sea Harbor Drive
Orlando, FL 32887-4800
Tel: +1 (877) 839-7126
Objective: The main aim was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Education Initiative, an intervention program in one of the largest urban counties in the US seeking to increase the responsiveness of social workers to the educational needs of foster children. Method: A pre-post test control group design was used. Data from case files and social workers were examined at the start of the project and 18 months later to determine changes in social workers (a) knowledge and practices regarding school programs and services and (b) maintenance of educational records for children on their caseloads. Results: Data were analyzed from approximately 300 case files and over 200 questionnaires completed by social workers. Findings indicated that social workers who received training and had access to an education liaison (1) increased their knowledge about the school system and (2) were more likely to gather current educational data and comment on schooling needs in the case files. On questionnaires measuring knowledge and practices, supervisory social workers showed no gains while case workers increased their levels of knowledge and involvement. Conclusions: Evaluative data from both sources support the effectiveness of this collaborative model between the school and child welfare agency for addressing the educational needs of foster youth. Social workers in the pilot offices knew more and focused more on the school experience of youth on their caseloads than workers in the control offices. They reported more educational information in the case files and solicited current progress reports from the schools. Discrepancies between worker and school reported performance data raise questions as to whether social workers by themselves are the most effective advocates for foster children. (Author abstract)

A university program to serve youth in the school setting: the Hunter College Liberty Partnership (Chapter of Child welfare for the twenty-first century: a handbook of practices, policies, and programs.)

Walsh, Elaine M.
2005
Available from: Columbia University Press
Order Department 136 S. Broadway
 Irvington, NY 10533
Tel: 800-944-8648
Fax: 1-800-944-1844 914-591-9201
Available From: http://www.columbia.edu/cu/cup/
This chapter describes the Hunter College Liberty Partnership program (HCLPP), a comprehensive educational and social service program created in 1988 to confront issues that might interfere with the academic success of junior high students who are at risk. In partnership with a bilingual junior high school in East Harlem, HCLPP provides counseling services,
tutoring, mentoring, recreational and enrichment activities, special academic classes, social
activities, and an after-school program to prepare students for either postsecondary education or
employment. The different components of the program are explained, and the challenges the
program faces when working with foster youth are explored. 4 references.

**Advocates for Children’s Project Achieve : a model project providing education advocacy for
children in the child welfare system (including, Screening tools to assist child welfare
professionals in identifying educational issues).**

Advocates for Children (New York, N.Y.)
2005
Available from: Advocates for Children of New York
151 West 30th Street 5th Floor
New York, NY 10001
Tel: 212-947-9779
Available From:[http://www.advocatesforchildren.org](http://www.advocatesforchildren.org)

This report describes the activities and outcomes of Project Achieve, a model program developed
by Advocates for Children of New York (AFC) that provides education advocacy to children in
or at-risk of placement in foster care, and trains parents, foster parents, and foster care agency
staff to identify and address the educational needs of the children in their care. The report begins
by discussing the unique educational needs of children in foster care, the New York City public
school system, and special education services in New York City. Project Achieve is then
described, including its three key strategies: providing individual case assistance and advocacy
to all clients of a child welfare agency who are identified as having unmet education-related
needs; building the capacity of agency service staff, caseworkers and supervisors to help them
identify and solve routine school-related issues; and empowering and educating birth and foster
parents and, where appropriate, young people, to navigate the New York City Department of
Education (DOE), and other agencies providing educational services. Components of the model
include formal screening mechanisms including an early intervention referral protocol,
comprehensive screening tools by age group, and modifications for forms for new admissions
memos, workshops and agency-wide technical assistance, and individual case assistance with
students. The model was first piloted at Louise Wise Services, a private preventive services and
foster care agency in New York City, from the Fall 2002 to the Spring 2004. Project Achieve
handled a total of 134 requests for assistance, and worked with on 222 discrete educational issues
or problems. Project Achieve was successful in resolving school-related problems for 89% of the
students referred for assistance. Furthermore, anecdotal evidence suggests that Project Achieve’s
assistance with regard to educational issues enhanced family stability, expedited family
reunifications, and speeded adoptions. Recommendations for replication of the model are
provided. Appendices include information about the special education process and the project s
training curriculum. Numerous references.

[http://www.advocatesforchildren.org/pubs/ProjectAchievefinal.doc](http://www.advocatesforchildren.org/pubs/ProjectAchievefinal.doc)
Improving Educational Services for Foster Youth Living in Group Homes: An Analysis of Interagency Collaboration.

Berrick, Jill Duerr. Ayasse, Robert H.
California Social Work Education Center.
2005
Available from: California Child Welfare Resource Library
California State University, Long Beach, Dept. of Social Work 1250 Bellflower Boulevard
Long Beach, CA 90840-4602
Tel: 562-985-4570
Fax: 562-985-5630
ccwrlwebster@csulb.edu
Available From: http://www.csulb.edu/projects/ccwrl/
The purpose of this curriculum is to provide child welfare workers with some very practical tasks and knowledge to be able to effectively assist the children on their caseload enroll in school. Although much of the focus has been on group home youth who often present the greatest challenge in terms of school enrollment and attendance, the material will be applicable to children in all types of out-of-home placement. Since the enrollment and advocacy process is often a three-way collaboration between the child welfare agency, the school district, and the foster or group home, the curriculum will be broken down to illustrate the various responsibilities of these parties. Chapter I discusses previous and current research on the educational placement of youth in group homes. Chapter II will detail the process by which children without Special Education can be enrolled. Special attention will be paid to the issues presented by high school age youth. Chapter III will focus on the process of placing Special Education students in school and the various legal issues presented that are unique to foster children. Chapter IV will briefly discuss issues surrounding expulsion and educational alternatives and resources for foster children. While all aspects of this information are important for child welfare workers, particularly workers overseeing foster placements, the details of the "Surrogate Parent" assignment process for foster children in Special Education and the timelines of the Special Education process may be overwhelming for students who have not yet been introduced to the Juvenile Courts or been in the role of a child welfare case manager. Although the focus of this curriculum is primarily child welfare workers in the field, this material would be appropriate for group home staff, school social workers, or other school-based support staff. This material may also be of interest to foster parents, and to the school district liaisons newly mandated by AB490 under Section 48853.5 of the Education Code. An accompanying PowerPoint presentation is located at http://www.csulb.edu/projects/ccwrl/Ayasse_PowerPoint.pdf. (Author abstract)
http://www.csulb.edu/projects/ccwrl/Ayasse_module.pdf

Asking the right questions: a judicial checklist to ensure that the educational needs of children and youth in foster care are being addressed.
National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, Permanency Planning for Children Dept. 2005
Available from: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
PO Box 8970
Reno, NV 89507
Tel: (775) 784-6012
Fax: (775) 784-6628
staff@ncfcj.org
Available From: http://www.ncfcj.org/

Studies have shown that education is a significant factor in determining the success of children and youth as they exit the foster care system. Yet research measuring educational, social, and vocational outcomes for children and youth in foster care indicate that the majority of children who enter the protection of child welfare agencies do poorly in school. They are significantly under-represented in post-secondary programs and are over-represented in special education programs. This is not surprising given the instability many young people experience in foster care both in terms of changes in placements and changes in schools. The importance of stability for foster youth was recently demonstrated in a study of more than 1,000 alumni of foster care which found that youth who had one or fewer home placements per year were twice as likely to graduate from high school before leaving care. Concrete, practical interventions are needed to ensure that children and youth who are placed in foster care, or who are living with parents under the supervision of child protective services, will be as successful in school and prepared for the future as their peers. New collaborations among child welfare, educational systems, and juvenile and family courts are also needed to improve educational outcomes for children and youth in foster care. Decisions made by juvenile and family court judges set standards within the community and in the systems connected to the court, the families, and the children. The juvenile court judge, who inquires about the educational needs of children and youth in foster care from the bench, is setting expectations and standards for practice which may have a significant impact on how social workers, educators, and other service providers respond to young people in the future. While the majority of Model Court judges interviewed in a survey conducted by the Permanency Planning for Children Department’s (PPCD) believed that judges play a distinct role in ensuring that the educational needs of youth in care are met, many reported that they had few resources to assist them in exercising this role. Clearly, there is a great need for practical and effective tools to address this issue. This Technical Assistance Brief presents such a tool a field-tested checklist that judges can use to make inquiries about the educational needs of children and youth under their jurisdiction, with the goal of positively impacting their educational outcomes and preparing them for successful adulthood. (Author abstract, modified)

Making the case: the need for education advocates for disabled children in foster care.
(Chapter 10 of Representing children, families, and agencies in child welfare, juvenile justice, custody, and adoption proceedings.)
Kim, Nellis Y.
2004
Publication Information: Chapter 10 of Representing children, families, and agencies in child welfare, juvenile justice, custody, and adoption proceedings. Denver, CO: National Association of Counsel for Children
Available from: National Association of Counsel for Children
1825 Marion Street, Suite 242
Denver, CO 80218
Tel: 888-828-NACC 303-864-5320
Fax: 303-864-5351
advocate@NACCchildlaw.org
Available From: http://naccchildlaw.org
This chapter discusses the need to ensure foster children with disabilities are receiving special education services. The Education Advocacy Project (EAP) in the Juvenile Rights Division of The Legal Aid Society in New York City is profiled. EAP’s activities are described and include: direct client advocacy for foster children with disabilities between the ages of birth and 21, training of caseworkers, judges, attorneys, and foster parents, and facilitation of collaboration between the child welfare system, the early intervention system, and the public education system. Case examples are provided to illustrate the need for educational advocacy for foster children with disabilities. 11 references.

Foster children and education: how you can create a positive educational experience for the foster child / a publication of the Vera Institute of Justice.
Vera Institute of Justice.
2004
Available from: Vera Institute of Justice
233 Broadway, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10279
Tel: (212) 334-1300
Fax: (212) 941-9407
Available From: http://www.vera.org
When it comes to succeeding in school, foster children face unique challenges and obstacles that have them lagging behind their peers. This kit, designed for child welfare professionals, foster parents, birthparents, judges, and school staff, lays out those challenges and offers some simple, inexpensive lessons and tools that can enhance the educational experience of children in foster care. The lessons including how to facilitate school registration and how to increase adult attendance at parent/teacher conferences can be adapted for use in any community. They are drawn from the experience of Safe and Smart, a joint project of the Vera Institute and the New York City Administration for Children's Services that placed caseworkers in schools to support foster children. Appendices in English and Spanish include checklists, questions to ask at parent-
teacher conferences, and sample letters and school release forms. (Author abstract modified)

Improving Education Outcomes for Children in Foster Care: Intervention by an Education Liaison.
California State University.
2004
Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk (JESPAR)
9 (4) p. 421-429
Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
10 Industrial Avenue
Mahwah, NJ 07430-2262
Tel: 201-258-2200
Fax: 201-236-0072
Available From:http://www.leaonline.com/
Children in foster care represent one of the most vulnerable, academically at risk populations in the United States. Aside from lower standardized achievement test scores, higher grade retention numbers, and a greater dropout rate than non-foster youth, between 30% to 50% of children in foster care are placed in special education programs, generally related to either a learning disability or an emotional disturbance. This study investigated the effectiveness on school performance of an education liaison from the school system who worked with social workers to resolve educational barriers to learning and achieving. Advocacy by the education liaison led to positive results in terms of school performance of foster youth. Recommendations are made for better addressing the educational needs of children in foster care. (Author abstract)

American Institutes for Research. California. Dept. of Education.
2003
Available from: California Dept. of Education
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
Tel: 916-319-0800
Fax: 916-319-0100
http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/di/cd/writeform.asp
Available From:http://www.cde.ca.gov/
In October 2001, the California Department of Education (CDE) issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) inviting eligible bidders to submit proposals to conduct a study regarding policies, procedures, and practices affecting the education of children residing in licensed children's institutions (group homes) throughout California. The purpose of the study is to provide specific
recommendations to the CDE, the Governor, the Department of Finance, and the Legislature. The study will examine policies, procedures, and practices related to, for example, educational and residential placement, records and information transfer, interagency and inter-jurisdictional relationships, and fiscal arrangements. (Author abstract)

http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fr/se/index.asp
http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fr/se/documents/grouphomes.pdf

Child welfare and school readiness-- making the link for vulnerable children.
State Early Childhood Policy Technical Assistance Network.
2003
Publication Information: Des Moines, IA : State Early Childhood Policy Technical Assistance Network.
Available from: State Early Childhood Policy Technical Assistance Network
218 6th Avenue 1021 Fleming Building
Des Moines, IA  50309
Tel: 515-280-9027
Fax: 515-244-8997
info@cfpciowa.org
Available From: http://www.finebynine.org
Sponsoring Organization: Ford Foundation Kauffman Foundation Packard Foundation
This resource brief is designed to strengthen the connections between child welfare and other early childhood services in State and national efforts to promote and enhance optimal child development. Part 1 provides a brief overview of the development of school readiness policy at the federal and State level, including the passage of the Educate America Act and the No Child Left Behind Act. It draws upon evidence from brain research, child development, and child welfare to show the need to address developmental issues of children in the child welfare system. Part 2 then describes the roles that the child welfare system can play in better addressing the educational and developmental needs of young children in their systems, such as addressing school readiness in the investigation or assessment of child abuse, while monitoring children and families and providing in-home services, during placement, and in adoption. The need for partnerships with a variety of stakeholders is stressed, and examples of successful efforts to establish these early childhood initiatives are provided. Recommendations are included for starting to establish these links. The role of judicial leadership in helping States and communities ensure optimal child development is also addressed. Part 3 includes additional examples of promising approaches for establishing collaborative child welfare systems. An appendix includes a guide for judges, advocates, and child welfare professionals for ensuring the healthy development of foster children. 49 references. (Author abstract modified)

http://www.finebynine.org/pdf/CWSR.pdf
Interagency agreement between the school board of Broward County, Florida, and the Department of Children and Families, District 10, evaluation report, 2002-03.

Stewart, Denise. Green, Monica.
Publication Information: Fort Lauderdale, FL : School Board of Broward County, Florida : Florida Dept. of Children and Families, District 10.
Available from: School Board of Broward County, Florida
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Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301
Tel: 754-321-2600
Fax: 754-321-2701
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Available From: http://www.browardschools.com

The School Board of Broward County (SBBC), Florida, and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) District 10, signed the fourth Interagency Agreement on June 18, 2002 to improve educational services to children in the foster care system of Broward County. This Agreement was designed to improve the sharing of information between the SBBC and the DCF regarding these children. This report is the third evaluation of the Agreement and describes the extent to which the SBBC and the DCF complied with selected Agreement requirements. Prior evaluations of the agreement have led to procedural changes that have bolstered educational opportunities for foster care students in Broward County. In addition, a recent Foster Care Information Brief (Eastwood & Clement, January 2003) has described the characteristics of foster care students for the 2002-03 school year. The present evaluation findings revealed that the SBBC and the DCF made progress on the implementation of the procedural requirements specified in the Agreement. Inspection of progress on 22 items selected from the Agreement indicated that the level of progress varied across items. Four recommendations were tendered to address those areas where less progress was evident and to further the implementation of future Interagency Agreements. The recommendations focused on improving communication through the extended use of electronic transfer of information, enhanced training opportunities, and improved tracking of the needs of exceptional student education foster care students. (Author abstract)
http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/dropoutprevention/DCFInteragencyEval.pdf

Advocating to Resolve Educational Problems of Children in Foster Care.
Zetlin, A. Weinberg, L. Tunick, R.
California State Univ., Los Angeles. Charter Coll. of Education.
2002
APSAC Advisor
14 11-14
Publication Information: American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children, Chicago, IL.
Available from: American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children
A large child welfare agency in California established an initiative to improve educational outcomes for youth in foster care. Two educational specialists from the local school district were co-located within the child welfare agency to facilitate enrollment in programs and services offered by the school system. The specialists collaborated with agency social workers and provided training on educational problems and school resources. The specialists handled 225 cases referred by social workers during the first year of the program. The cases involved special education issues, clarification of the role of the agency worker and the educational specialists, school procedures, problems with attendance and discipline, requests for resources such as tutoring and mental health services, and court orders. Twelve action strategies were utilized by the educational specialists to respond to these problems, including contacting appropriate school personnel, visiting the child's home or school, disseminating relevant information to social workers, attending meetings, and reviewing educational plans and school reports. In addition, the specialists helped agency workers write letters to the school about services, provided advice about school procedures, and evaluated educational options for the youth. Half of the cases required one or two actions to resolve problems, while one-third needed 3-10 actions by the educational specialists. The remainder of the cases required more than 10 actions or referral to an external advocacy organization. 12 references and 2 tables.

**Improving educational outcomes for youth in care: a national collaboration.**
2002
Publication Information: CWLA Press, Washington, DC ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center
Available from: Child Welfare League of America
2345 Crystal Drive, Suite 250
Arlington, VA 22202
Tel: 703-412-2400
Fax: 703-412-2401
order@cwla.org
Available From: http://www.cwla.org/
Sponsoring Organization: Casey Family Programs National Center for Resource Family Support
Published as part of the Improving Educational Outcomes for Youth in Care project, this monograph summarizes research findings about the academic achievement of youth in the custody of the child welfare system and the role of education in successful transitions to independence. The report highlights the significant number of children in care who repeat...
grades, score below grade level in reading and math, and drop out of school. Risk factors for educational problems are identified, including changes in placement, teacher attitudes, school policies, and the relationship between the child welfare agency and the school system. Studies also have found that poor educational achievement can lead to low paying jobs, homelessness, and lack of medical care. Youth in care suggest that placement stability, a safe and stable school environment, and interagency coordination would improve their educational experience and opportunities. They also desire greater involvement in decision making and support from teachers and adults. Child welfare agencies, schools, and the judicial system should promote school stability and provide training for professionals in the educational needs of foster youth. Numerous references.

Toolkit for change : a guide to starting an education advocacy project in your state: creating a community of education advocates for children who are out of the home.
Casey Family Programs. TeamChild Advocacy for Youth. 2002
Learning disabilities and frequent moves between foster homes place foster children at risk for low educational achievement and negative life outcomes. An education advocate is necessary to work with the school system to identify a child’s needs and ensure that he receives appropriate services. This toolkit explains how to establish a state education advocacy program that mobilizes the efforts of parents, foster parents, caseworkers, social workers, group home workers, and other youth professionals. The manual includes a description of the education advocacy project developed by TeamChild and Casey Family Programs in Washington State. The project has three major components: an informational brochure to increase awareness of educational rights; training for advocates; and a reference guide that provides information about state education law and advocacy techniques. Advocacy organizers who are considering planning their own project are advised to recruit stakeholders to participate in program design and implementation. Effective partnerships are based on communication, shared responsibility, avoidance of territorial disputes, and inclusion of a variety of perspectives. The toolkit reviews tips for setting goals, funding, and evaluating activities. Sample materials also are presented.

The Dependency Court Recovery Project: Education Committee report.
Dependency Policy Group. Education Committee. 2001
Publication Information: San Diego, CA: Dependency Policy Group
Available from: San Diego County Superior Court
Juvenile Court 2851 Meadowlark Drive
San Diego, CA 92123
Tel: 858-694-4601
Available From: http://www.sandiego.courts.ca.gov/superior/about/office.html#JuvCourt
To improve the state of education for foster youth in San Diego, an Education Committee was appointed by the Dependency Policy Group, a joint initiative of the Juvenile Court of San Diego County and the County of San Diego. The 20-member Education Committee is comprised of a multi-disciplinary/multi-agency group of professionals dedicated to improving educational services to foster youth. The committee met intermittently between June 2000 and October 2001 in an effort to identify the educational needs of foster children and make recommendations for addressing those needs. This report addresses the dependency process and begins by reviewing the positive findings the committee found indicating the increased recognition of the plight of foster children. Following the introduction, the report is divided into four sections that discuss primary issues and recommendations in the following areas: roles, responsibility, and accountability; change of placement impacts; data/information system improvement; and improved interagency coordination and collaboration. Each of the sections starts with an explanation of the present condition of the targeted area, then describes the key issues that need to be addressed to improve educational services, and finally, offers recommendations. Extensive appendices provide committee statements fact sheets, and flow charts.

Altshuler, S. J.
2000
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Few mechanisms currently exist to support successful collaboration between public schools and child welfare. One unfortunate consequence is that the children being served by both systems often receive inadequate services from either system. Focus groups were held with 24 caseworkers, educators, and students to learn how the two systems can work together more collaboratively. This article reports on the barriers and successful practices which were identified by the participants that affect the educational functioning of students living in foster care. The author concludes with the participants’ recommendations for future practices and policies to improve collaborative efforts between the public schools and child welfare systems. (Author abstract)