TOOLKIT

FOR JIM CASEY YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES INITIATIVE SITES

JIM CASEY
YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES
INITIATIVE

Second Edition

The mission of the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative is to ensure that young people—primarily those between ages 14 and 25—make successful transitions from foster care to adulthood. We do this by working nationally, in states, and in communities to improve policies and practices, promote youth engagement, apply evaluation and research, and develop community partnerships. Our work creates opportunities for young people to achieve positive outcomes in permanence, education, employment, financial capability, housing, physical and mental health, and social capital.

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Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the revised Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative toolkit. The tools in this version will help improve outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood. We have updated the toolkit to incorporate the many lessons we have learned from the professionals, volunteers, and young adults who have worked with the Jim Casey Initiative for more than a decade. If you are familiar with the first toolkit, we hope this revised version will provide a new angle on issues and strategies. And if you are new to our work, welcome aboard. You will be using this toolkit as a practical, step-by-step blueprint to becoming one of the champions who are in the field leading this movement.

Although we have made a great deal of progress, we are still deeply concerned about the future for young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood. Many do not have the essential base for a successful transition to adulthood: a safe and lasting family relationship. Yet despite considerable challenges, the young people whose lives we touch continue to face the obstacles in their path. Using our strategies, they are navigating hurdles to succeed in school, in the workforce, and in their communities.

This toolkit provides a template for building the five core strategies of the Jim Casey Initiative: to engage young people in the decisions that shape their lives; increase their opportunities for economic success; develop partnerships and resources; build public will to improve the systems of support; and do the hard work of measuring, evaluating, and communicating with diverse people and institutions.

With your help, we will work together to utilize the experience and expertise in your communities and states to improve the following outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood: permanent families, education, employment, financial capability, housing, physical and mental health, and social capital.

We believe this toolkit can be an important guide for your work on behalf of young people in your community. Thank you for your continued commitment to making a difference in their lives.

Gary J. Stangler
Executive Director
Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit helps Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative sites implement the core strategies and activities that support young people in making successful transitions from foster care to adulthood. **Part A** provides an overview of the issues affecting these young people and the Jim Casey Initiative's approach to addressing them. **Part B** provides hands-on activities, tools, and resources to help Jim Casey Initiative sites carry out each of our five core strategies:

1. **Youth engagement** – Preparing young people to be meaningfully involved as decision makers and advocates

2. **Partnerships and resources** – Connecting to resources of public and private systems and philanthropy, expanding and deepening community support, and cultivating community champions for young people transitioning from foster care

3. **Research, evaluation, and communications** – Involving key stakeholders in the use of data to drive decisionmaking and communications and to document results

4. **Public will and policy** – Advancing policies and practices that improve outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood

5. **Increased opportunities** – Creating an array of opportunities and helping young people gain entry to them

In each of these sections, you'll find the following:

- **Strategy Overview** – An explanation of the strategy

- **Activities** – An explanation of each major activity needed to carry out the strategy

- **Key Action Items** – These are some of the key actions your site needs to take to plan, implement, sustain, and advance each activity, which can serve as a checklist to track your site's progress. The set of action items for each strategy is not comprehensive, and there will be items that should be added to address the needs of your particular site. However, the Key Action Items are intended to spark your thinking about how to achieve the goals and results that make up the Jim Casey Initiative's Core Strategies Rubric (see page 9) through concrete actions. Beneath the list of Key Action Items, you will find a paragraph providing more detail on each action item.

- **Related Tools and Resources** – At the end of each section, you'll find a list of the tools in **Part C** that are related to this strategy and a list of other resources from the Jim Casey Initiative and other organizations that will be helpful in carrying out the strategy and its activities.

- **Site Examples** – Examples of the real-life experiences of Jim Casey Initiative sites in carrying out the strategy

Part C provides hands-on tools to help you do your work as a Jim Casey Initiative site. While these tools are at the end of the toolkit, they are perhaps its most important component. They are listed at the end of **Part A** and in each section of **Part B** to help you find relevant tools as you carry out the activities.

As you use this toolkit in your work as a Jim Casey Initiative site, remember that the processes and activities required for each core strategy are interconnected, not linear. You may start with one strategy or activity, but **successful implementation will call all strategies into play**. It is essential to consider all strategies as you work to support young people in making successful transitions from foster care to adulthood.

While this toolkit will provide you with useful resources, it does not take the place of direct assistance from your site liaison. Please continue to contact your site liaison for help implementing the Jim Casey Initiative core strategies in your site.

Toolkit for Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative Sites

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PART A
OVERVIEW

OVERVIEW

BACKGROUND

THE JIM CASEY YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES INITIATIVE

The Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative is a national foundation created in 2001. What started as a time-limited demonstration to test a set of strategies has since grown into an ongoing initiative that continues to expand. The Jim Casey Initiative has sites in all regions of the country, rural and urban, red and blue.

Jim Casey Initiative sites are part of a national effort to support young people in making successful transitions from foster care to adulthood. We are working with community partners in the public and private sectors, young people, and policy makers to improve outcomes in permanence, education, employment, financial capability, housing, physical and mental health, and social capital. Systems improvement and youth engagement are our signature efforts, with young people always playing a central and visible role in advocating for changes that have a direct impact on their lives.

THE NEED FOR OUR WORK

Since 1999, more than 230,000 young people across the country have transitioned from foster care without achieving permanent family connections.[1] Each year, approximately 30,000 young people transition from foster care without achieving permanence. The majority of young people leaving foster care on their own have entered foster care after age 13 and tend to stay in care longer than their younger peers, making them more prone to multiple moves, relationship disruptions, and living in congregate care facilities.

In many states, when young people in foster care turn 18, they are no longer part of the foster care system. Many of these young people have not benefited from typical growing-up experiences that teach relational and self-sufficiency skills, nor do they have family and community networks to help them make successful transitions to adulthood. As a result, they face difficult challenges in securing education, employment, safe and stable housing, and physical and mental health care.

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1   Children's Bureau/AFCARS.

Data indicate that young people who are transitioning from foster care without the needed network of support experience very poor outcomes at a much higher rate than their peers in the general population:
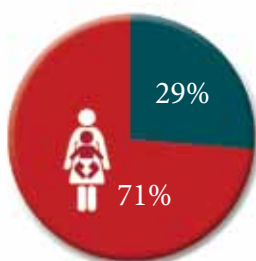
■ More than one in five will become homeless after age 18.[2]

■ Only 58 percent will graduate from high school by age 19 (compared to 87 percent of all 19-year-olds).[3]
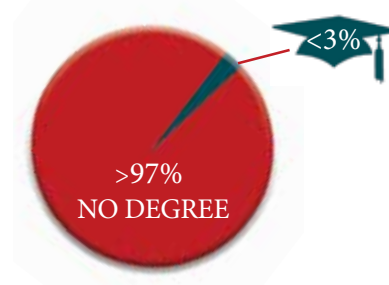

58%   42%
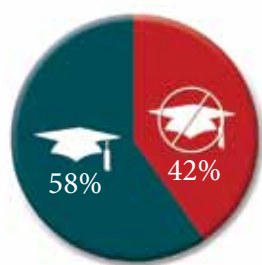
■ 71 percent of young women are pregnant by age 21, facing higher rates of unemployment, criminal conviction, public assistance, and involvement as a parent in the child welfare system.[4]

29%
71%

■ At the age of 24, only half are employed.[5]

50%   50%
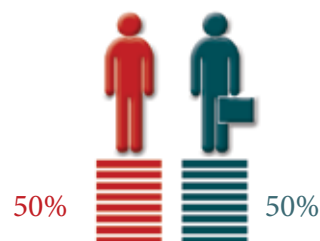
■ Fewer than 3 percent will earn a college degree by age 25 (compared to 28 percent of all 25-year-olds).[6]

<3%
>97%
NO DEGREE

■ One in four will be involved in the justice system within two years of leaving the foster care system.[7]

However, this is a solvable problem. With the right community connections, policies, and strategic investments in place, opportunities for these young people can be greatly improved.

2   Casey Family Programs. (1998). Northwest foster care alumni study. Seattle, WA. p. 37.

3   Courtney, M.E., and Dworsky, A. (2005). Midwest evaluation of the adult functioning of former foster youth: Outcomes at age 19. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall Center for Children. p. 22.

4   Pecora, P.J., Kessler, R.C., Williams, J., O'Brien, K., Downs, A.C., English, D., White, J., Hiripi, E., White, C.R., Wiggins, T., and Holmes, K. (2005). Improving family foster care: Findings from the Northwest foster care alumni study. Seattle, WA: Casey Family Programs. p. 1.

Courtney, M.E., Hook, J.L., and Lee, J.S. (2010). Distinct subgroups of former foster youth during the transition to adulthood: Implications for policy and practice. Chicago: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

5   Pecora, P.J., et al. (see note 4).

6   Pecora, P.J., et al. (see note 4).

7   Courtney, M.E., Dworsky, A., Terao, S., Bost, N., Cusick, G.R., Keller, T., and Havlicek, J. (2005). Midwest evaluation of the adult functioning of former foster youth: Outcomes at age 19. Chicago: Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago. p. 61.

MEETING THE NEED: JIM CASEY INITIATIVE SITES

Work in Jim Casey Initiative sites focuses on a manageable population: it is not millions of young people, but rather it is thousands, and, in some states and communities, *hundreds* who are transitioning from foster care without permanent connections to stable family or community.

By improving the policies that affect these young people—and the strategies for carrying out those policies—sites ensure that young people receive the support they need and experience better outcomes. Numerous states have made crucial policy improvements since becoming Jim Casey Initiative sites, including:

- Connecting young people to permanent, caring relationships through state-of-the-art permanency legislation and policy
- Keeping young people connected to their siblings through policies on sibling rights visitation
- Increasing young people's participation in the court proceedings that decide their future
- Supporting young people by extending foster care from age 18 to 21, giving young people additional time to continue to build life skills as well as supportive family and community relationships
- Accelerating implementation of the Affordable Care Act prior to its adoption and protecting the health of young people transitioning from foster care by extending Medicaid coverage from age 18 to 21
- Helping young people transitioning from foster care get post-secondary education by providing them with tuition waivers

Sites also work directly with young people to improve their outcomes. The Jim Casey Initiative Opportunity Passport™ provides matched savings for young people to purchase life-altering assets such as cars, safe and stable housing, and computers for college.

- When young people purchase an asset with the Opportunity Passport™ matched savings, their chances of having a full-time job more than double.
- Research shows that young people who have assets at age 23 have better outcomes in employment, marriage, and health.[8]

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8   Bynner, J. and Paxton, W. (2001). The asset effect. London: Institute for Public Policy Research.

Although the Opportunity Passport™ makes a significant difference for individual young people, it plays an even greater role at the state and community levels. Data from participant surveys reveal that, notwithstanding improvements in outcomes experienced, far too many young people still leave foster care without permanent relationships, education, employment, safe and stable housing, and other basic human needs. These data, which are unavailable elsewhere, are what Jim Casey Initiative sites use to drive the policy and practice improvements that help young people make successful transitions from foster care to adulthood.

OUR LOGIC MODEL

While each site responds to the specific needs and strengths of a particular state or community, the work of all sites is driven by the Jim Casey Initiative Site-Level Logic Model depicted on page 7. As shown in the diagram, Jim Casey Initiative sites:

Engage in a set of activities grouped into **five core strategies** …

1. Youth engagement
2. Partnerships and resources
3. Research, evaluation, and communications
4. Public will and policy
5. Increased opportunities

to **improve policies and practices** so that each young person has …

- A permanent family
- Access to racially equitable services and supports
- A stable education
- Opportunities to achieve economic success
- A place to live
- Access to physical and mental health care
- Opportunities to shape their own future

thereby improving **seven outcomes:**

1. Permanence
2. Education
3. Employment
4. Financial capability
5. Housing
6. Physical and mental health
7. Social capital

SITE-LEVEL LOGIC MODEL

Vision: All young people leaving foster care will make successful transitions to adulthood.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

A set of strategies and activities will help create the conditions that are necessary in a community in order to improve outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT
- Youth Leadership Boards
- Young People as Effective Self-Advocates

PARTNERSHIPS & RESOURCES
- Community Partnership Boards
- Resource Development
- Young People as Partners

RESEARCH, EVALUATION, & COMMUNICATIONS
- Self-Evaluation Team
- Communication with Multiple Audiences
- Young People as Evaluators and Communicators

PUBLIC WILL & POLICY
- Agenda & Approach for Improving Public Policies and Systems
- Young People as Advocates for Improved Systems

INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES
- Opportunity Passport™
- Door Openers
- Young People as Decision Makers for Increased Opportunities

IMPROVED POLICY AND PRACTICE

Improved policy and practice will promote timely permanence and increase opportunities available to young people:

A PERMANENT FAMILY
- A family or committed, caring adult in his or her life when leaving care
- Subsidized legal guardianship and kinship care as options
- Placements in family settings rather than congregate care
- Placements in their communities
- Opportunities for safely re-engaging birth parents or relatives
- Connections to siblings
- Foster care available to age 21 with continued permanency planning

ACCESS TO RACIALLY EQUITABLE SERVICES AND SUPPORTS
- Individualized assessments
- Accessible services
- Data to identify and address racial disproportionality and disparate outcomes

A STABLE EDUCATION
- Continuous schooling upon entering care and while in it
- Tuition waivers for post-secondary education
- Supports for post-secondary education (ETVs, housing, etc.)

OPPORTUNITIES TO ACHIEVE ECONOMIC SUCCESS
- Developmentally appropriate matched savings
- Necessary personal documents (e.g., social security card, birth certificate, government-issued photo ID)
- Early and consistent work experience

A PLACE TO LIVE
- Variety of living options from age 18 to 21
- Priority access to safe housing options

ACCESS TO PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH CARE
- Medicaid to age 21 and beyond
- Comprehensive, coordinated health care when in foster care

OPPORTUNITIES TO SHAPE THEIR OWN FUTURE
- Youth-led case planning, including permanency and transition planning
- Access to competent legal counsel
- Leadership and community involvement opportunities
- Information on how all young people are doing after foster care (NYTD Plus)

IMPROVED YOUTH OUTCOMES

When systems are effectively supporting young people throughout their transition, they will have improved outcomes in the following areas:

PERMANENCE
Young people have adults to rely on for a lifetime and supportive family networks.

EDUCATION
Young people acquire education and training that enable them to obtain and retain steady employment.

EMPLOYMENT
Young people support themselves by obtaining and retaining steady employment.

FINANCIAL CAPABILITY
Young people manage their budgets and achieve their financial goals.

HOUSING
Young people have safe, stable, and affordable housing and have access to transportation for work and school.

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH
Young people have access to insurance and to the appropriate services and supports that meet their physical and mental health needs.

SOCIAL CAPITAL
Young people have, sustain, and capitalize on a diverse network of connections to achieve their life goals.

How do we know the strategies and activities are being implemented?
- A Core Strategies Rubric is used to assess sites' implementation according to a set of cross-site performance measures.
- Participant and site data are collected and reported with the Opportunity Passport™ Data System.

How do we track improvements in policy and practice?
- A Policy Matrix is used to assess sites' improvement according to a set of cross-site goals; communities can set additional priorities. The matrix summarizes relevant state policies and practices and provides a set of indicators to help the state determine how many young people are benefiting.
- The Practice Pathways Tool is used to assess and guide sites' improvement according to model practice components. The tool describes a set of effective practice components for each outcome area, poses a set of questions to assess and guide implementation, and provides measures to assess progress.

How do we track improvement in youth outcomes?
- A series of indicators related to each outcome area is used to measure progress over time. The data are collected directly from young people twice a year via the Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey.

CORE STRATEGIES RUBRIC

Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative sites carry out activities that are essential to implementing the five core strategies. The Core Strategies Rubric on pages 9-19 is a concise tool that will help you plan your work, assess your implementation and progress, identify your technical assistance needs, and report on progress to funders and partners. For each phase of the site's development, the Core Strategies Rubric describes each activity and gives the criteria for assessing the activity's implementation. The Core Strategies Rubric was created based on our experiences with the early demonstration and co-investment sites:

- Atlanta, GA—The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta
- Connecticut (Hartford and Bridgeport)—Connecticut Voices for Children
- Denver, CO—Mile High United Way
- Des Moines, IA—Youth Policy Institute of Iowa
- Jacksonville, FL—Community Partnership for the Protection of Children
- Kansas City, MO—Local Investment Commission
- Maine—University of Southern Maine, Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service
- Michigan (Detroit and 10 counties surrounding Traverse City)—Michigan Department of Human Services
- Nashville, TN—Vanderbilt University Child and Family Policy
- Nebraska—Children and Families Foundation
- Rhode Island—Foster Forward
- San Diego, CA—San Diego Workforce Partnership
- Tampa, Florida—Connected By 25 Initiative with co-funder Eckerd Family Foundation

Core Strategies Rubric

Strategy 1: Youth Engagement

OBJECTIVE:

To prepare young people to be meaningfully involved as decision makers and self-advocates

Activity 1: Youth Leadership Boards

PREPARATION	APPLICATION	REFINEMENT	OPTIMIZATION
The site prepares for the development of a youth leadership board. Essential criteria are:	The site has a formally established youth leadership board. Essential criteria are:	The site has practices in place to support an ongoing youth leadership board. Essential criteria are:	The site has in place a youth leadership board that is a partner in developing and evaluating practices and policies that affect them. The essential criterion is:
■ Recruitment and retention strategies are designed to engage a cross-section of young people in the board.	■ The board has guidelines or bylaws that govern its functioning.	■ A plan is in place for engaging younger members to the board and providing them with training to ensure continuity of leadership as other members move on.	■ The board's work improves policies and practices in public and private agencies.
■ Training that supports new board members in creating the board's agenda, setting benchmarks, and establishing preliminary guidelines is provided.	■ The board members develop important peer relationships and acquire professional skills by working together on tangible projects such as deciding how to spend board funds, making grants, recruiting and training new members, and developing written resources for young people in care.	■ The board is involved in developing and evaluating practices and policies affecting young people in and transitioning from foster care to adulthood.	
■ Sufficient funds are available for board member stipends.			
■ Discretionary funds are available for youth leadership board members to manage and distribute.	■ The board is working with the community partnership board to implement the five core strategies.		
■ Procedures are in place for providing stipends, transportation, and other logistical supports.	■ The board receives public attention for its work and contributions to child welfare and other systems' policy and practice.		
■ Adult staff who will support the youth leadership board and apply the principles of youth-adult partnership have been identified and trained.			

Strategy 1: Youth Engagement (continued)

Activity 2: Young People as Effective Self-Advocates

PREPARATION

Developmentally appropriate self-advocacy training and supports for young people are identified or developed. Essential criteria are:

- Self-advocacy training and supports are available to help young people:
  - understand their strengths and needs;
  - identify personal goals;
  - know their legal rights and responsibilities; and
  - know how best to communicate the above to others.
- Training and supports help the public child welfare agency and other systems act as partners with and support young people as they advocate for themselves.
- Young people are involved in identifying or developing training and supports.

APPLICATION

Young people are receiving training and supports to help them become effective self-advocates. Essential criteria are:

- Self-advocacy training and supports are provided to young people.
- Young people are facilitating and/or co-facilitating self-advocacy training and supports.
- Advocacy strategies utilizing youth-adult partnerships support young people in becoming effective self-advocates are implemented. Resources are available to support self-advocacy training and supports.

REFINEMENT

Young people are involved in the process of making decisions about their own lives. Essential criteria are:

- The public child welfare agency and other systems that serve young people consistently provide opportunities for young people to make decisions about their own lives.
- Self-advocacy training and supports are provided on an ongoing basis to an increasing number of young people.

OPTIMIZATION

Young people are leading the process of making decisions about their own lives. Essential criteria are:

- In multiple public and private agencies, young people are consistently provided developmentally appropriate opportunities to lead the process of making decisions about their own lives.
- Systems have committed funds to providing young people with ongoing self-advocacy training and supports.

Strategy 2: Partnerships and Resources

OBJECTIVE:

To access the resources of public and private systems and philanthropic organizations, expand and deepen community support, and cultivate community champions for young people transitioning from foster care

Activity 1: Community Partnership Boards

PREPARATION

The site engages a diverse cross-section of community members when forming its community partnership board. Essential criteria are:

- Young people transitioning from foster care, key leaders from the child welfare agency, community stakeholders, and potential funders are included.

- Influential public and private partners from the following sectors are included: education, employment, housing, physical and mental health, financial capability, permanence, and social capital.

APPLICATION

The community partnership board is active in implementing the five core strategies. Essential criteria are:

- The community partnership board has guidelines that govern its functioning.

- Working with the youth leadership board, the community partnership board sets board agendas, benchmarks, and policy and practice goals.

- The board uses the self-evaluation process to refine and improve implementation of the five core strategies.

REFINEMENT

The community partnership board includes leaders of the public and private sector who understand the needs of young people transitioning from foster care. Essential criteria are:

- The board works to improve policy and practice within state and local systems.

- Public and private partners have begun to integrate some aspects of the five core strategies into their ongoing work.

OPTIMIZATION

Community partnership board leaders have embedded the core strategies into philanthropic, private, and public systems. Essential criteria are:

- The five core strategies are aligned with and integrated into the work of the child welfare agency and the education, labor, housing, and physical and mental health departments.

- Private partners support the five core strategies and use them to improve outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care.

Strategy 2: Partnerships and Resources (continued)

Activity 2: Resource Development

PREPARATION

The site identifies resources for implementing core strategies within its geographic area. Essential criteria are:

- The community partnership board is comprised of members that can help garner both private and public resources.
- Funding to support the first three years of implementation is obtained, including, but not limited to, funding for:
  - youth leadership board stipends;
  - discretionary funding for youth leadership board to manage and distribute;
  - matched funds;
  - financial education; and
  - staff positions that are crucial in implementing and supporting the core strategies.

APPLICATION

The site leverages additional resources in the community to support young people in and transitioning from foster care. Essential criteria are:

- The community board and youth leadership board identify gaps in services and supports and begin seeking resources to fill them.
- Sustainability planning with key decision makers, including young people, has begun.
- Funding is secured for ongoing youth engagement activities such as training, financial and other supports, and discretionary funds for the youth leadership board.

REFINEMENT

The site expands the reach of the core strategies and finds resources to fill gaps in services and support. Essential criteria are:

- A sustainability plan is being implemented by key decision makers and young people.
- Resources are identified to fill service gaps and to expand supports to the majority of young people in the site's geographic area.

OPTIMIZATION

The site has secured diverse and sufficient public and private resources for expanding and sustaining the core strategies for all young people within its geographic area.

Strategy 2: Partnerships and Resources   (continued)

Activity 3: Engaging Young People as Partners

PREPARATION

The site acknowledges and accepts the principles and values of the youth-adult partnership. Essential criteria are:

- Training and supports are identified or developed.
- Young people are prepared and supported by a designated adult partner to make meaningful contributions to meetings.
- Young people and adults are working together to establish the community partnership board and begin to review data, and to identify policy and practice goals for young people transitioning from foster care.

APPLICATION

The site incorporates the principles of youth-adult partnership into its operations. Essential criteria are:

- Youth-adult partnership training and supports are provided to adults and young people.
- Guidelines are established for working together that will lead to effective youth-adult partnerships.
- Work plans are developed jointly by young people and adults.
- Community partnership board meetings occur at times when young people can attend.
- Community partnership board policies and practices ensure that young people have defined roles and are involved in making decisions.

REFINEMENT

Young people are in leadership positions on the site's community partnership board and its partner organizations. Essential criteria are:

- Board policies and practices place young people in leadership roles that help guide all aspects of the work.
- The principles of youth-adult partnerships have begun to be accepted by key public and private partners, as evidenced by young people's leadership roles within their organizations.

OPTIMIZATION

The site successfully embeds youth-adult partnerships in its partner organizations and agencies. The essential criterion is:

- The child welfare agency and other public and private partners have adopted the principles and values of youth-adult partnership, as evidenced by young people's leadership roles in guiding and directing all services to young people transitioning from foster care.

Strategy 3: Research, Evaluation, and Communications

OBJECTIVE:

To involve key stakeholders in using data to drive decisionmaking and communications and in documenting results

Activity 1: Self-Evaluation Team[9]

PREPARATION	APPLICATION	REFINEMENT	OPTIMIZATION
The site has a commitment from key stakeholders to support and participate in ongoing self-evaluation activities. Essential criteria are:	The site is reliably using local and Jim Casey Initiative data collection tools, and stakeholders are reviewing progress toward benchmarks. Essential criteria are:	The site has engaged key stakeholders in ongoing evaluation of implementation and outcome data from multiple sources and regularly uses data to drive decisionmaking. Essential criteria are:	The site is using data routinely to drive decisionmaking with respect to all of the core strategies. Essential criteria are:

- Young people and the child welfare agency are involved in establishing the self-evaluation team.[9]
- The self-evaluation plan is developed and includes strategies for data collection, maintenance, and analysis; data collection tools, resources needed, and established roles of stakeholders are identified.
- Key staff are trained in using Jim Casey Initiative supported data collection tools such as Opportunity Passport™ Data System and Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey and the expectations for their use. Partners are familiar with these tools.
- Benchmarks are established for recruiting, retaining, and supporting Opportunity Passport™ participants.
- An Environmental Scan to understand the conditions in the community that need to be addressed by the strategies and activities completed; and to establish priorities for implementation.
- Resources are secured to support ongoing self-evaluation work.

APPLICATION

- Data are regularly updated and "cleaned" in the Opportunity Passport™ Data System
- Practices and procedures are in place to achieve a response rate of at least 75 percent on the semiannual OPPS.
- Local and Jim Casey Initiative data collection tools are being used as needed.
- Policy Matrix is completed and used to determine baseline for policies and to begin to set benchmarks.
- The Practice Pathway Tool (PPT) is completed to identify local areas of priority for practice improvement. Baselines are established for youth outcomes.
- Opportunity Passport™ recruitment, retention, and support benchmarks are being achieved and refined as needed.
- Benchmarks are established for:
  - policy goals;
  - communications goals;
  - Opportunity Passport™ asset purchases and savings;
  - door opener development and use; and
  - resource leverage.
- Analysis of data is occurring on a regular basis, is being shared and discussed with stakeholders, including young people and is being used to drive decisionmaking.
- Data are being used to begin sustainability planning.

REFINEMENT

- Practices and procedures are in place to achieve a response rate of at least 80 percent on the semiannual OPPS.
- Stakeholders, including the youth leadership board and community partnership board, are examining and updating local data collection tools and benchmarks as needed.
- The child welfare agency and other stakeholders are using data to inform improvements in policy and practice.
- Youth and systems data are being shared broadly, in and outside of the site team.
- Resources are available to support ongoing self-evaluation.
- Data are being used to guide the implementation of the sustainability plan.

OPTIMIZATION

- Youth and systems data are regularly reviewed to gauge improvements in policy and practice.
- Progress is documented with respect to all youth and systems outcomes.
- Best practices and lessons learned are being communicated broadly.
- Data are being used to support and focus efforts to make the site's work sustainable.
- Resources for ongoing self-evaluation have been integrated into the operations of the public and private partners.

9 The self-evaluation effort may not always be defined as a "team" locally, but the work must fulfill the purpose and functions outlined in this guide.

Strategy 3: Research, Evaluation, and Communications (continued)

Activity 2: Communication with Multiple Audiences

PREPARATION

The site has formulated its key messages and identified primary internal and external audiences. Essential criteria are:

- Measurable communications goals and action steps are set.
- Mechanisms for disseminating information have been explored.

APPLICATION

The site has regular communication mechanisms among internal audiences, and external communications begin. Essential criteria are:

- Regular, identifiable communication occurs among community partners, for example, via e-mail updates, newsletters, and presentations.
- As self-evaluation data are available, they are incorporated into communications to external audiences and are used to refine communications goals.
- The site has set benchmarks to measure progress toward its communications goals.

REFINEMENT

The site is assessing and documenting progress toward communications goals. Essential criteria are:

- Regular, identifiable communications occur to internal and external audiences.
- Communications goals and action steps have been updated as needed.
- Achievement of or progress toward communications goals can be documented.

OPTIMIZATION

The site has consistent communications activities for multiple audiences that are aligned with all five core strategies. Essential criteria are:

- Communications goals are regularly refined as needed and consistently reach multiple audiences.
- Achievement of or progress toward communications goals can be documented and helps support work in all core strategies.

Activity 3: Young People as Evaluators and Communicators

PREPARATION

The site has established meaningful roles for young people in self-evaluation and communications. Essential criteria are:

- Young people have been identified, and are supported, to participate in self-evaluation and communications activities.
- Young people have input into developing communications goals and the self-evaluation plan.
- Supports for young people are in place to ensure that their involvement is meaningful and that they are appropriately compensated for their time and contributions. Training and supports are identified or developed to ensure young people can participate.

APPLICATION

The site has engaged young people in self-evaluation and communications activities. Essential criteria are:

- Young people contribute to analysis and interpretation of data in partnership with adults.
- Young people are trained and supported in telling their own stories (strategic sharing).
- Young people are trained and supported in making presentations on behalf of young people in and transitioning from foster care.

REFINEMENT

The site regularly recruits and supports new young people to partner with adults in self-evaluation and communications activities. Essential criteria are:

- Young people incorporate data in advocacy for policy and practice improvements.
- Young people take leadership roles in communications efforts: for example, in developing advocacy documents and websites.

OPTIMIZATION

The site has ongoing opportunities for young people to be involved in evaluation and communications activities and provides high-level training and support to ensure that these experiences are positive and meaningful. Essential criteria are:

- Young people have local, state-level and, in some cases, national opportunities to act as spokespeople on foster care issues.
- Young people are helping to lead communications efforts.

Strategy 4: Public Will and Policy

OBJECTIVE:

To advance policy and practice that improve outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care

Activity 1: Agenda & Approach for Improving Public Policies & Systems

PREPARATION

The site develops baseline data in key policy areas. The essential criteria are:

- An Environmental Scan is completed.
- Young people are engaged in identifying policy and practice issues for advocacy efforts.

APPLICATION

The site analyzes policy and practice issues and engages in strategic advocacy efforts. Essential criteria are:

- A Policy Matrix is completed.
- Practice Pathways Tool is completed.
- Annual policy and practice goals are developed with related advocacy strategies and benchmarks.
- Relationships are developed with child welfare agency staff, elected officials, community stakeholders, and key decision makers in multiple institutions and disciplines.
- Advocacy efforts engage young people and multiple partners.
- Quantitative and qualitative data gathered through the self-evaluation process are used to develop and promote the policy and practice improvements
- The site's advocacy efforts extend to monitoring effective implementation of targeted policy and practice improvements.

REFINEMENT

The site uses data to measure progress toward policy and practice goals and to develop new goals. Essential criteria are:

- The Policy Matrix is updated and used to monitor progress toward benchmarks and refine benchmarks as needed.
- Policy and practice improvement agendas are established that are increasingly in-depth and ambitious and focus on broad system improvements .
- The agenda includes local, county and state policy and practice issues.
- Young people, site leaders, partners, and key decision makers, are sought out for input and advice on issues affecting young people transitioning from foster care.

OPTIMIZATION

The site has transformed how young people in and transitioning from foster care are engaged, perceived, and treated, as evidenced by the presence of developmentally appropriate practices, procedures, and policies across disciplines and departments. Essential criteria are:

- Policy and practice decisions are not made without input from young people.
- Issues affecting young people are continuously monitored and reassessed to ensure that outcomes are improving.
- Written protocols such as memoranda of understanding and letters of agreement are in place among agencies to ensure coordinated and holistic approaches.
- Policies are more effective due to improvement in supporting practices and ongoing feedback from young people.

Strategy 4: Public Will and Policy   (continued)

Activity 2: Young People as Advocates for Improved Systems

PREPARATION

The site solicits early and consistent input from young people in developing the policy and practice improvement agenda. Essential criteria are:

- Young people are identified and supported as partners in the agenda development process.
- Training and supports are identified or developed to help young people become effective advocates.

APPLICATION

The site develops practices, protocols, and mechanisms that ensure meaningful input from young people is consistently provided and considered on policy issues. Essential criteria are:

- Young people are recruited, trained, and retained as advocates.
- The site's advocacy strategies involve adults and young people working together.
- Young people are partners in the development of policy and practice goals and related messages.
- Within the child welfare system, young people serve on boards and committees that make decisions about young people in and formerly in foster care.
- Resources, including financial supports, are available to support young people serving as advocates.

REFINEMENT

The site evaluates and refines practices, protocols, and mechanisms for bringing youth voices to bear in public policy. Essential criteria are:

- Young people are recruited for leadership opportunities in a broad and ongoing fashion.
- Adults are trained to support and partner with young people on an ongoing basis.
- Resources, including financial supports, are available to support increasingly more young people as advocates.
- Young people understand and use data in their advocacy efforts.
- The public child welfare agency and other systems that serve young people recognize the value of their input and routinely invite them to serve on committees, make presentations, and comment on practices and policies affecting them.

OPTIMIZATION

The site makes no policy decision affecting young people without their involvement. Essential criteria are:

- In all public and private systems, young people are recognized as experts on issues related to young people transitioning from foster care and are influential in making decisions.
- Youth advocacy training and support is widely acknowledged as a necessary resource for improving systems.
- Systems have committed financial resources, including financial supports, to provide ongoing training and support.

Strategy 5: Increased Opportunities

OBJECTIVE:

To create an array of opportunities and help young people gain access to them

Activity 1: Opportunity Passport™

PREPARATION

The site prepares to deliver the Opportunity Passport™. Essential criteria are:

- Matched funds are secured.
- Strategies for recruiting, retaining, and supporting Opportunity Passport™ participants are determined and related benchmarks are set.
- Banking support is secured with the banking partner to provide Opportunity Passport™ participants with personal bank accounts.
- A written plan is completed for financial education and asset-specific training, which includes such items as customizing the curriculum, identifying trainers, and setting a preliminary schedule.

APPLICATION

The site enrolls young people in the Opportunity Passport™ and provides them with needed support. Essential criteria are:

- Benchmarks for enrollment are being achieved and refined as needed.
- Benchmarks for asset purchase and savings are established.
- Matched funds are secured to expand enrollment to an increasing number of young people.
- Financial education and asset-specific training are delivered on a regular basis and are continually assessed and refined.
- Data are consistently updated and cleaned in the Opportunity Passport™ Data System.
- Young people are provided with ongoing support with regard to their bank accounts, such as help with setting savings goals and maintaining bank account.
- Banking partners are available to provide Opportunity Passport™ participants with personal bank accounts in a supportive environment.

REFINEMENT

The site increases the capacity of the Opportunity Passport™ and the efficiency of administering it. Essential criteria are:

- The Opportunity Passport™ is offered to more young people in the site's geographic area, and matched funds are secured for the expansion.
- Barriers to participation are identified and addressed: for example, participation is not restricted based on placement type or special needs.
- Policies and procedures are refined or adapted as needed to address changing conditions and new issues.
- Banking partners are available to work with young people transitioning from care to refine the services and supports that they provide to them.

OPTIMIZATION

The site has embedded the Opportunity Passport™ in the ongoing delivery of services and supports. Essential criteria are:

- Reliable long-term funding is secured for:
  - matched funds for expansion;
  - replenishing matched funds on an ongoing basis; and
  - support and infrastructure.
- Participants represent the demographics of the overall population of young people in transition within the site's geographic area.
- The banking partner has adopted principles and values that support young people transitioning from care.

Strategy 5: Increased Opportunities   (continued)

Activity 2: Door Openers

PREPARATION

The site generates ideas and assigns responsibility for creation of door openers in all outcome areas (permanence, education, employment, financial capability, housing, health—physical and mental, and social capital.). Essential criteria are:

- Young people and the community partnership board participate in identifying areas in which door openers will be created by reviewing the Environmental Scan, which identifies existing resources and gaps.
- The infrastructure for door openers is created, including methods to communicate to young people about accessing door openers.
- A process for determining whether door openers are effective and are being used by young people is developed.

APPLICATION

The site creates accessible door openers in all outcome areas and monitors their use. Essential criteria are:

- The youth leadership board and community partnership board are involved in creating door openers in all outcome areas.
- Communications vehicles are used to inform young people about door openers.
- Benchmarks are set and progress is monitored to ensure that the door openers are effective and are being used by young people.

REFINEMENT

The site increases the number of door openers and the number of young people accessing door openers in each outcome area. Essential criteria are:

- Multiple, effective door openers are available in each outcome area, and they are being used by young people.
- Door opener benchmarks are refined as needed, and benchmarks are consistently being achieved.

OPTIMIZATION

The site offers a wide range of door openers in all outcome areas and ensures access for all young people in its geographic area. The essential criterion is:

- Multiple, effective door openers are consistently available and used in each outcome area.

Activity 3: Young People as Decision Makers for Increased Opportunities

PREPARATION

The site engages young people in implementing and developing the Opportunity Passport™ and door openers. Essential criteria are:

- Young people are involved in setting policies and procedures for the Opportunity Passport™.
- Young people are supported in using the Environmental Scan to identify gaps in services and supports.
- Young people are helping to set up door openers.

APPLICATION

The site engages young people in implementing the Opportunity Passport™ and door openers. Essential criteria are:

- Young people receive financial education and are helping to conduct the training.
- Young people are involved in identifying and monitoring door openers to ensure that they are being accessed by and meeting the needs of young people.
- Young people are helping to develop the communications activities related to the Opportunity Passport™ and door openers.

REFINEMENT

The site engages young people in leading the efforts to expand the reach of the Opportunity Passport™ and ensure that door openers are available in all outcome areas. Essential criteria are:

- Young people are actively engaged in recruiting Opportunity Passport™ participants.
- Young people are leaders in the development and assessment of door openers in all outcome areas.

OPTIMIZATION

The site fully engages young people in all decisions concerning the Opportunity Passport™ and door openers, including expanding the reach of these opportunities to all young people in the site's geographic area.

OUTCOMES

Each of the seven outcome areas is described in more detail on the following pages. The experiences of Jim Casey Initiative sites have shown that all of these outcomes areas are interconnected. Interventions intended to improve one outcome frequently affect others. And while goals for improving different outcomes often are pursued concurrently, permanence comes to the forefront as a primary focus, because it can facilitate success in all other outcome areas. Likewise, ensuring that a young person has the needed social capital—in his or her family, school, community, and peer network—has an impact on all outcomes.

While the ultimate goal is better outcomes for young people, youth-serving systems are key partners that must conduct business differently in order to bring about these improvements. Therefore, Jim Casey Initiative sites measure their success using indicators not just of youth outcomes, but of the systems improvements that affect these outcomes. These indicators are shown on the Site-Level Logic Model on page 7. Sites work to improve the way youth-serving systems work by implementing the Policy and Practice Recommendations on pages 21-22. Young people were key participants in creating these recommendations, which are based on the improvement agendas of Jim Casey Initiative sites. Sites also use the Jim Casey Initiative Practice Pathways Tool to develop practice components and measurements related to each outcome area.

1. PERMANENCE

All young people, including those who are transitioning out of foster care, need strong, stable, and supportive family relationships that promote a sense of identity, belonging, and normalcy. Young people typically do best when they are part of a family that provides physical and emotional security that meets their unique developmental needs. However, achieving timely permanence with young people transitioning from foster care continues to be a challenge for child welfare agencies. While the overall numbers of children in care are decreasing, agencies around the country have typically not seen an increase in the rate of achieving permanence for older young people.

Permanency plans for young people transitioning from foster care need to be youth-driven and have realistic, achievable components that support each young person's preparation for adulthood. In addition to legal permanence, reforms must address relationships with birth parents and siblings; stability of school placement; and maintaining a stable, sustainable connection to a young person's community and peers.

This approach to comprehensive casework relies on family and youth engagement; strengths-based approaches; youth-driven team planning and decisionmaking; and the use of relevant, structured, and functional assessments. Results from this type of practice have dispelled long-standing and destructive myths that young people and young adults do not want families, cannot be safely reunified with families facing serious challenges, and are not adoptable.

Policy and Practice Recommendations

To make a successful transition to adulthood by age 25, every young person requires a permanent family that provides an enduring source of emotional support; services and supports that are racially and ethnically equitable; a stable education that includes post-secondary opportunities; opportunities to achieve economic success; a place to live that is safe, stable, and affordable; access to comprehensive, coordinated health and mental health care; and opportunities to shape their own future.

To ensure that all young people in foster care make successful transitions, the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative recommends the following policies.

To connect young people with permanent families, policy makers should:

- Mandate that all young people leaving foster care are discharged to a family, legal guardian, adoptive parent, or permanently committed, caring adult.
- Provide subsidized legal guardianship and kinship care as options.
- Ensure that young people in foster care are placed with families, reducing reliance on congregate care.
- Provide placements that permit young people to remain in their neighborhoods and communities.
- Provide opportunities for young people to safely re-engage with birth parents or relatives.
- Place siblings together (unless safety is an issue) or facilitate sibling visitation.*
- Extend foster care to age 21, along with continued permanency planning.*

To provide access to services and supports that are racially equitable, policy makers should:

- Utilize individualized assessments that are free of bias and provided by culturally competent staff.
- Ensure that services are equally accessible to all young people in foster care, regardless of their race or ethnicity.
- Collect and analyze data to identify and address racial disproportionality and disparate outcomes for young people of color.

To provide stable education and post-secondary opportunities, policy makers should:

- Ensure that young people remain in the school in which they are enrolled when possible, and ensure prompt transfer of records if a school change is required.*
- Provide tuition waivers to public or private colleges (or post-secondary schools) to young people formerly in foster care to age 25.
- Provide other supports for post-secondary education (such as books, computers, school supplies, tuition payment, Education and Training Vouchers, and housing).

* These items are included in the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008.

To create opportunities for economic success, policy makers should:

- Provide matched savings accounts—also known as individual development accounts (IDAs)—to all young people currently or formerly in foster care, with developmentally appropriate financial literacy training.
- Ensure that all young people transitioning from foster care receive necessary personal documents (social security card, certified birth certificate or green card, and government-issue photo ID).
- Provide early and consistent work experience with priority access to workforce programs, developmentally appropriate training, and ongoing support.

To provide safe, affordable housing, policy makers should:

- Offer a variety of living arrangements for young people ages 18-21, including remaining with foster parents, kinship/guardianship placements, and independent living—and allow young people to return to foster care or a supervised living setting at any time up to age 21.
- Provide priority access to safe housing options for young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood.

To ensure access to physical and mental health care, policy makers should:

- Extend Medicaid to young people up to age 21, and ensure coordination of Medicaid beyond age 21 for young people who meet adult requirements.
- Ensure that health care services are comprehensive and coordinated when young people are in foster care* and that plans are in place to continue health care coverage when they exit care.

To enable young people to shape their own futures, policy makers should:

- Require that young people lead the development of their case planning, including permanency and transition planning.*
- Provide access to competent legal counsel.
- Provide leadership and community involvement opportunities for young people.
- Implement the National Youth in Transition Database to find out from young people how they are doing after leaving foster care so that policy and practice can be improved.

* These items are included in the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008.

Authentic youth engagement has been defined as "involving young people in the creation of their own destinies" and "genuinely involving young people in case planning and encouraging them to advocate for themselves." In its most basic application, it modifies family-centered practices to emphasize that young people should be at the center of their planning and decisionmaking processes, together with the adults who know and care about them.

2. EDUCATION

Young people in foster care frequently experience a host of risk factors associated with poor academic achievement. It is not uncommon for young people in foster care to experience multiple placements and, as a result, multiple changes in school, overuse of in-house schools, overly restrictive special education placements, and unacceptably high rates of suspensions and expulsions. These circumstances require young people to make difficult adjustments to new curricula, to function in different physical environments and school cultures, to advocate for the timely transfer of their school records, and to monitor records so that appropriate credits are awarded for work they have completed. If this is not handled effectively, it can lead to poor grades, lower retention rates, disaffection with the education system, dropping out, and vitiated goals for college matriculation and graduation. These risk factors can also prevent young people from developing the social capital they need in their schools and with their peers.

It is critical to help young people achieve stability in their educational placements so they can acquire the education and training they need to obtain and retain employment. Moreover, young people need ongoing support and coaching beyond matriculation in a post-secondary institution so they can successfully complete their degree or certification. Young people pursuing higher education and training need help with basic necessities, like a place to stay during the holidays and when dormitories close, and they also need the ongoing relational supports that promote cognitive, emotional, and social development through graduation and early employment. Secondary and post-secondary schools offer more than classroom learning: They also provide opportunities for young people to gain social capital by developing strong networks with peers, teachers, and coaches.

3. EMPLOYMENT

Young people need opportunities to experience and ultimately select employment and career paths. The foster care experience should not impede a smooth transition into the workforce. Early and frequent employment experience has a positive effect on occupational development and long-term employability.

Rewarding employment can contribute to social capital needs and is a protective factor for

young people and their communities. Young people who are gainfully employed are less likely to experience premature parenthood or engage in delinquent or criminal acts.

Young people may benefit from good job training programs, but supported employment services and ongoing supports have been shown to be especially valuable.

4. FINANCIAL CAPABILITY

All young people need the opportunity to manage a budget and set financial goals. Research suggests that children who are given the opportunity to learn about money from their parents have a deeper understanding of financial responsibility. Young people in foster care often do not have the chance to practice using money, do not have positive experiences with mainstream banking institutions and savings, and do not have opportunities to build assets. Assets and savings are shown to have positive effects on young people's educational aspirations and personal worth. It is important that young people have early and consistent opportunities to participate in mainstream banking and savings, and that they are encouraged to identify financial goals that will increase their asset accumulation.

Credit scores, positive or negative, affect what people can buy, where they live, and even the types of jobs they can get. Young people in foster care are more likely to be victims of identity theft and fraud, and so they are more likely to transition out of care with a negative credit score through no fault of their own. Federal legislation passed in 2011 requires child welfare agencies to obtain credit reports on young people age 16 and older, assist young people in interpreting their credit reports, and resolve any inconsistencies. Positive credit is an important commodity, and young people need support in understanding, obtaining, and maintaining positive credit to help them achieve their financial goals.

Financial education delivered by informed professionals provides basic information to help young people understand financial institutions, credit, asset development and maintenance, and money management. Financial education can include a financial coach: a trained professional who assists young people in developing a financial plan for their future. Financial education and/or a financial coaching relationship can help young people create realistic budgets based on their existing financial obligations and needs and plan for their long-term wants and goals. Young people should have access to financial supports that will help them prepare for a secure financial future and to be financially capable.

5. HOUSING

Too many young people who are in and transitioning from the foster care system experience unstable living situations. This is a particular concern for young people who leave care without supportive, permanent family connections. The lack of affordable housing in

some areas can be further complicated when young people have not developed skills to live on their own, have financial or credit challenges, or simply cannot sign leases or utilities because they have no credit history or have not reached the age of majority.

Young people in foster care typically do better when they live with families, notably families that will be there for them on a permanent basis. In addition to the obvious advantage of having a place to stay through adolescence, families provide a housing safety net for young people who venture off to college or work. Young people from intact families often leave home to "make it on their own" more than once, knowing there is a safe place to stay while making the transition to a more stable living arrangement. Congregate care settings do not provide this option, because beds are filled once a young person leaves the facility. For this reason, family-based settings are the best option while work is carried out with a young person to secure a permanent family. A young person who leaves foster care without a permanent family must often resort to "couch surfing" with peers and acquaintances who themselves may be in unsafe situations, using emergency shelters, or sleeping in cars or on the streets.

Young people leaving care should have housing options to consider that match their employment and educational circumstances, while also accommodating their related transportation needs.

6. PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

Young people in foster care, like all young people, need access to high quality and readily available health care. Compared with children from similar socioeconomic backgrounds, young people in foster care have higher rates of serious emotional and behavioral problems, chronic physical disabilities, birth defects, and developmental delays.

Quality physical and mental health care is necessary to address prevention as well as developmentally specific health concerns associated with adolescence and the added exposure to trauma and ambiguous loss often associated with foster care circumstances. Health care must address physical and behavioral health, including mental health; substance abuse; matters related to particular disabilities; and gender-specific and gender-sensitive needs. Young people who are "mature minors" need to have their health care privacy rights respected and be involved as primary decision makers about their health care.

A primary barrier to accessing health care for young people is lack of health insurance. The federal Medicaid program covers most young people in foster care, but it is not available to young adults who age out of care in states that have not exercised the Medicaid option to extend coverage beyond age 18. Not only is it important to extend Medicaid coverage, but it is also important to provide young adults with support to ensure they remain enrolled and know how to use the services. Beginning in 2014, the federal Affordable Care Act will address

the need for Medicaid coverage to age 26 for young people who have aged out of foster care.

7. SOCIAL CAPITAL

Young people who were in foster care during their adolescent years can face significant challenges in meeting developmental milestones that affect their success as employees, students, and parents. Most young people have the benefit of nurturing families to support them as they learn skills for successful adult living. Research in adolescent brain development shows this iterative process allows young people to learn from both successes and failures. However, a developmentally appropriate and naturally occurring family and community context for developing social relationships may be missing or compromised for many young people in foster care. Without supports, the iterative learning process is absent, leaving young people to prematurely test unrefined skills and suffer poor outcomes as a result. Adolescent brain development research shows that there is a period of emerging adulthood, between the late teens and the late 20s—beyond the age at which most young people transition from foster care—when the ability to live interdependently is more likely to be achieved with a network of supportive relationships and connections in the community.

Young people need skills to attain important connections and the opportunity to use them. These skills include the ability to establish and trust relationships, including romantic relationships; education and employment skills relevant to the evolving labor force in increasingly global markets; and the ability to contribute to the well-being of others through leadership and service in their communities. Belonging to organizations, engaging in activities of interest, and participating in civic engagements are necessary opportunities for young people to build and sustain a network of relationships that will support them.

CORE STRATEGIES

Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative sites engage in five core strategies to create the conditions necessary to improve systems and outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood. **Part B** of this toolkit provides hands-on activities, tools, and resources to help Jim Casey Initiative sites carry out each of these strategies. In addition, the reasoning behind each strategy is explained in more depth on the following pages.

Because engaging young people and creating effective partnerships between young people and adults are critical to improving results, each strategy includes an activity specifically designed to authentically engage youth and young adults. The experiences of Jim Casey Initiative sites show that young people and adults produce the most powerful improvements in practice and policy when they are adequately supported and genuinely engaged in making decisions about the direction of the work.

Each site has a unique sequence for implementing the core strategies depending on the site's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. According to site leaders, Jim Casey Initiative sites are most successful in responding to opportunities and addressing challenges and environmental circumstances when all five core strategies are used together.

1. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Preparing young people to be meaningfully involved as decision makers and advocates

Youth engagement is essential to leveraging improvements in the child welfare, education, and workforce systems, as well as other formal and informal systems with which young people in transition interact. In order to create better outcomes, young people need to be engaged in planning for their own futures as well as advocating for improved policy and practice. The Jim Casey Initiative regards youth engagement as a top priority in helping young people develop the skills and leadership abilities they need.

Two activities contribute to this strategy:

- Youth leadership boards
- Young people as effective self-advocates

Youth leadership boards are the primary means of engaging young people in community efforts. Through their participation in youth leadership boards, and in their collaboration with the community partnership board, young people are empowered to become better advocates for systems improvement and designers of their own futures. With a unified purpose and shared strategic priorities, these boards attempt to improve access to resources and opportunities for all young people in and transitioning from foster care to adulthood. Members are engaged in many ways, including developing written materials and videos to

tell their stories; recruiting participants; hosting conferences, convenings, and summits; sponsoring sibling events; maintaining connections with other young people in transition; and participating in meetings with child welfare and other system representatives, policy makers, and elected officials. The youth leadership boards also provide vital input to community partnership boards about improvements they identify as essential. Through these experiences, youth leadership board members are not only moving toward improving systems, but are also experiencing personal growth, developing important peer relationships, and acquiring professional skills.

All young people should be full partners in planning and making decisions about their lives. Young people who are in and transitioning from foster care need a wide range of opportunities to prepare for and engage in advocacy for themselves, others, and systems improvement. Securing educational experiences, training, and support is only part of the preparation; it is equally important for these young people to have opportunities to use their new skills. They can do this when they are supported in taking leadership in their own well-being, including their team planning and decisionmaking meetings, forums for systems improvement, and tracking and evaluating the implementation of the local Jim Casey Initiative.

Youth engagement offers young people meaningful opportunities to take responsibility and leadership roles while working in partnership with caring adults who value, respect, and share power with them. Although many aspects of the Jim Casey Initiative's work have evolved over time, the importance of engaging young people to improve systems and their own futures has remained paramount.

2. PARTNERSHIPS AND RESOURCES

Connecting to resources of public and private systems and philanthropy, expanding and deepening community support, and cultivating community champions for young people transitioning from care

The Jim Casey Initiative seeks to transform the way communities view young people in foster care to ensure that communities understand that young people age out into the community and neighborhood, and to make a commitment to helping those young people successfully transition to adult life. The entire community must be involved in helping create opportunities for young people leaving foster care, including authentic youth engagement in developing solutions. It is also critical to sustain the commitments made to young people in communities. These sustained commitments help young people develop the safe, trusting, and enduring relationships with individuals and institutions that mark a transition to a successful adult life. Three activities contribute to this strategy:

- Community partnership boards
- Resource development
- Engaging young people as partners

A community partnership board brings together key local decision makers and young people who take responsibility for developing, implementing, assessing, and improving strategies to ensure a successful transition to adulthood. The board's aspirations are to broaden the perspectives of the community and young people, and to engage those who will support successful transitions, including the private sector; faith-based and community-based organizations; child welfare, education, and workforce development agencies; local and state governments; and other relevant partners.

Experiences of those in the field suggest ways to achieve successful partnerships, including collective impact[10] and networking models, which are based on a shared vision; long-term investment of resources and capacity; cross-sector engagement of public and private organizations, community members, and young people; deliberate alignment of strategies and use of data to adapt those strategies; effective leadership; and dedicated capacity and structure.[11] It is important to take the time to develop relationships, create processes to work together, and have transparent communication among partners.[12] Using data to demonstrate progress is also an effective way to keep partners at the table.

In order to expand and sustain your efforts, it is crucial that you leverage resources. Resource development focuses on expanding the type and amount of resources available for addressing key gaps in services, supports, and opportunities for reaching more young people in your target area. Through a sustainability planning process, you will build the capacity to ensure that sufficient fiscal and non-fiscal resources are in place to fulfill your commitments.

If young people are to be full partners in guiding and supporting your overall work, they must be full members of your community partnership board, and participate in decisionmaking, identifying priorities, and developing solutions. This means paying careful attention to building authentic youth–adult partnerships and ensuring both young people and adults participating in the board develop the skills and knowledge they need to put such partnerships into action. In addition to providing training and support for youth–adult partnerships, it is crucial to establish clear roles for young people, guidelines for working together, and clear expectations for young people and adult participants. Taking these steps helps avoid token participation by young people and ensures the community partnership board is held accountable for developing authentic and effective partnerships.

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10 Stanford Innovation Review.

11 Community solutions for opportunity youth. (June 2012).White House Council for Community Solutions.

12 Bynner, J. and Paxton, W. (2001). The asset effect. London: Institute for Public Policy Research.

3. RESEARCH, EVALUATION, AND COMMUNICATIONS

Involving key stakeholders in the use of data to drive decisionmaking and communications and to document results

Your implementation of the core strategies is expected to lead to improved outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood and for the systems that serve these young people. Research and evaluation enable you and your partners to measure your implementation, make course corrections, and assess outcomes. Research and evaluation enable you to describe the results of your work. To make improvements in policy and practice, you need to communicate these results to a range of audiences, including practitioners, policy makers, the media, and the general public. Three activities contribute to this strategy:

- Self-evaluation team
- Communication with multiple audiences
- Young people as evaluators and communicators

Using the tools and technical assistance provided by the Jim Casey Initiative or developed locally, your self-evaluation team tracks your progress by obtaining sound and timely information on implementation and outcomes and makes this information available for use in local decisionmaking. The self-evaluation team involves key stakeholder groups in the community, including young people. Through this self-evaluation approach, local evaluation is wholly integrated with an ongoing planning and implementation process.

The Jim Casey Initiative seeks to increase public awareness of the challenges faced by young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood and to highlight the resilience they exhibit to overcome these challenges. Using data to communicate is key to conveying your message. Data document the hardships faced by young people in the areas of permanence, education, employment, housing, physical and mental health care, and supportive personal and community relationships. It is essential, therefore, that you develop a comprehensive communications plan that challenges the community and state to take responsibility for this population and to create access and opportunities that assist young people in moving from foster care to self-sufficiency.

Creating authentic ways for the voices and experiences of young people to inform the self-evaluation is important. Moreover, providing young people with the skills, knowledge, and support to strategically share their stories and be effective communicators is genuinely empowering. Participating in the self-evaluation team is a great way for young people to become fully grounded in all aspects of the work. This participation gives young people an opportunity to understand the data and to bring the data to life by explaining what the data mean and how they apply to what the young people know. In addition, young people are very valuable advocates among their peers because they play a meaningful role in data collection.

4. PUBLIC WILL AND POLICY

Advancing policies and practices that improve outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care

Advocating for state and county child welfare systems to be flexible and responsive to the needs of young people transitioning from foster care is critical to the mission of the Jim Casey Initiative and its partners. Systems improvement is a critically important way to expand opportunities and ensure the well-being of young people. Using data to understand the current environment, setting clear and measurable goals for influencing policy and practice, and forming partnerships with an array of stakeholders are all essential to success. Two activities contribute to this strategy:

- Agenda and approach for improving public policies and systems
- Young people as advocates for improved systems

It is critical to establish a clear systems-improvement agenda that documents the ways in which public systems can be more effective in meeting the needs of young people transitioning from foster care. Young people need to be at the forefront of shaping this agenda and supported in forming productive partnerships with adults toward that end. Engaging young people in shaping advocacy agendas helps ensure that the recommended changes in policies and systems result in more responsive and effective practices, services, and opportunities. Furthermore, by being advocates, young people gain valuable new skills and knowledge that help them in their personal and professional lives.

5. INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES

Creating an array of opportunities and helping young people gain entry to them

Savings and assets are key ingredients to success in society. Young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood often do not have the typical developmental experience of learning how to manage money and may leave care without even the basic financial and asset-development skills that enable people to achieve economic success. Young people in foster care need opportunities to learn financial capability; be connected to and obtain experience with the mainstream banking system; to save money for education, housing, health care, a vehicle that gets them to work and school; establish good credit; and obtain other assets. Furthermore, these young people need opportunities—"door openers"— that help them achieve their personal goals. Three activities contribute to this strategy:

- Opportunity Passport™
- Door openers
- Young people as decision makers for increased opportunities

Opportunity Passport™ is a package of resources that helps young people to make successful transitions to adulthood. This package includes the following:

- Matched savings
- Bank account
- Financial education

The above-described approach is ready to be broadened and sustained in communities and states beyond the Jim Casey Initiative's sites. Toward that end, the Jim Casey Initiative is developing relationships with new sites where local investors are interested in supporting the implementation of the approach. This approach can be likened to a community development tool. It provides a tangible activity around which the public and private sectors can coalesce to begin learning about and supporting young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood.

SUMMARY

Helping young people make successful transitions from foster care to adulthood is an important responsibility for all communities and states. Your work as a Jim Casey Initiative site has helped the larger effort gain traction in local, state, and federal arenas. What was once a bold vision—that increased opportunities, permanent connections, and community involvement could predict better outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood—is becoming reality. We hope this toolkit is helpful to you in realizing that vision, and that you will make use of other available tools and assistance by contacting your site liaison.

Tools

The following tools in **Part C** are related to this overview:

- Annual Plan Template
- Brand Style Guide
- Communications Plan Template
- Communications Planning Webinar
- Core Strategies Rubric Tool
- Environmental Scan
- *Guide to Self-Evaluation* Overview
- *Keys to Your Financial Future* Overview
- Opportunity Passport™ Data System Overview
- Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey
- Policy and Practice Recommendations
- Policy Matrix
- Practice Pathways Tool Overview
- Site-Level Logic Model
- Technical Assistance Overview

Trainings

The following trainings are available from the Jim Casey Initiative:

- Increased Opportunities and the Opportunity Passport™ Training
- *Keys to Your Financial Future* Train-the-Trainer Webinar
- Opportunity Passport™ Data System Tutorial
- Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey Training
- Self-Evaluation Training
- Youth-Adult Partnership Training
- Youth as Leaders and Advocates Training

Additional Resources

Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative Website—www.JimCaseyYouth.org

Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008:
H.R. 6893/P.L. 110-351

Peer Learning Discussion List

KEY PUBLICATIONS FROM THE JIM CASEY YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES INITIATIVE

The Adolescent Brain: New Research and its Implications for Young People Transitioning from Foster Care. By Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2011.

Assessing Leverage: Lessons from the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative. By Cornerstone Consulting Group. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2008.

Chafee Plus Ten: A Vision for the Next Decade. By Madelyn Freundlich. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2010.

Cost Avoidance: Bolstering the Economic Case for Investing In Youth Aging Out of Foster Care. By Cutler Consulting. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2009.

The Opportunity Passport™: Building Assets for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care: Findings from the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2009.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

A Call to Action: An Integrated Approach to Youth Permanency and Preparation to Adulthood. By Lauren L. Frey, Sarah B. Greenblatt, and Jim Brown. Casey Family Services (New Haven, CT). 2005.

Extending Foster Care to Age 21: Weighing the Costs to Government Against the Benefits to Youth. By Clark M. Peters, Amy Dworsky, Mark E. Courtney, Harold Pollack. Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago (Chicago, IL). 2009.

Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act: Frequently Asked Questions on the Provisions Designed to Impact Youth and Young Adults. National Foster Care Coalition (Washington, DC). 2009.

Frequently Asked Questions on the Provisions Designed to Impact Youth and Young Adults. National Foster Care Coalition (Washington, DC). 2009.

Medicaid Access for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care. By Sonali Patel and Martha A. Roherty. American Public Human Services Association (Washington, DC). 2007.

Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth: Outcomes at Age 26. By Mark E. Courtney, Amy Dworsky, Adam Brown, Colleen Cary, Kara Love and Vanessa Vorhies. Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago (Chicago, IL). 2011.

National Youth in Transition Database—Instructional Guidebook and Architectural Blueprint (Executive Summary). By Amy Dworsky and Christina Crayton. American Public Services Association (Washington, DC) and Chapin Hall at University of Chicago for State Foster Care and Adoption Data (Chicago, IL). 2009.

A Reason, a Season, or a Lifetime: Relational Permanence Among Young Adults with Foster Care Backgrounds. By Gina Miranda Samuels. Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago (Chicago, IL). 2008.

Supporting Youth in Transition to Adulthood: Lessons Learned from Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice. By David Altschuler, Gary Stangler, Kent Berkley, and Leonard Burton. Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (Washington, DC). 2009.

The Teen Years Explained: A Guide to Healthy Adolescent Development. By Clea McNeely and Jayne Blanchard. Center for Adolescent Health at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (Baltimore, MD). 2009.

Time for Reform: Aging Out and On Their Own. The Pew Charitable Trusts (Philadelphia, PA). 2007.

The Transition to Adulthood: How States Can Support Older Youth in Foster Care. By NGA Center for Best Practices. National Governors Association (Washington, DC). 2010.

When Should the State Cease Parenting? Evidence from the Midwest Study. By Mark E. Courtney, Amy Dworsky, and Harold Pollack. Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago (Chicago, IL). 2007.

PART B
STRATEGIES

Strategy 1:
Youth Engagement

OBJECTIVE

To prepare young people to be meaningfully involved as decision makers and self-advocates

BACKGROUND

Youth engagement has been defined as "involving young people in the creation of their own destinies" and "authentically involving them in case planning and encouraging them to advocate for themselves."[13] Youth engagement offers young people meaningful opportunities to take responsibility and leadership while working in partnership with caring adults who value, respect, and share power with them.[14] There is an emerging knowledge base about the benefits of authentically engaging young people in ongoing planning and decisionmaking, and about the effects of working in partnerships and self-advocacy on positive youth development and overall systems outcomes. The importance of involving young people in this work may seem obvious, but authentic engagement is complex and requires a fundamental shift in thinking. It goes beyond token participation and requires real partnership between adults and young people. The Jim Casey Initiative does not endorse one particular model of youth engagement, but values engagement strategies that are authentic, developmentally appropriate, and supported by formal youth-adult partnerships.

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13   Shirk, M. and Stangler, G. (2004). On their own: What happens to kids when they age out of the foster care system. Boulder, CO: Westview Press. p. 260.

14   Freundlich, M. (2010). Chafee plus ten: A vision of the next decade. St. Louis, MO: Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative.

Activity 1:
Youth Leadership Boards

Youth leadership boards are the primary means of engaging young people in systems and community efforts. Board members gain direct access to key planning and decisionmaking forums and become empowered to advocate for systems improvement and design their own futures. With a unified purpose and shared strategic priorities, youth leadership boards improve access to resources and opportunities for all young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood.

> **KEY ACTION ITEMS**
> - ■ Recruit, train, and support a cross-section of young people.
> - ■ Designate, train, and support adults.
> - ■ Develop and implement guidelines or bylaws.
> - ■ Develop and implement a work plan.
> - ■ Collaborate with community partnership board.

RECRUIT, TRAIN, AND SUPPORT A CROSS-SECTION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Develop recruitment messages and strategies that will inspire young people to be a part of the youth leadership board. Recruitment efforts must reach diverse groups such as young people (including young parents) of different ages, genders, sexual orientation, and from different racial and cultural backgrounds. Review demographic data to ensure that the youth leadership board composition is representative of the site's foster care population, and that it includes young people who are Opportunity Passport™ participants and young people who serve on the community partnership board. Develop and carry out strategies to maintain a representative demographic over time as the population of young people in foster care changes. Pay particular attention to developing numerous leaders and contributors to ensure that the site does not rely too heavily upon just a few young leaders. Train all members in leadership, advocacy, strategic planning, how to allocate grants, and communications so they can contribute meaningfully to the group. Provide ongoing support to new and existing members to ensure all members feel safe, respected, valued for what they can learn and contribute, and meaningfully engaged in the youth leadership board. Provide transportation, food, drinks, and time for social interaction among youth leadership board members and adult supporters.

DESIGNATE, TRAIN, AND SUPPORT ADULTS

Seek out a staff person who values the input of young people, is able to establish a respectful rapport with them, and can engage them as full partners while maintaining healthy

boundaries. Educate adult supporters about youth-adult partnerships, the core principles of positive youth development, and research on trauma and adolescent brain development. Adults working with young people who have experienced trauma may find that they, too, need support to understand and cope with secondary trauma they may experience. It is also likely that there may be young people who are struggling in particular outcome areas during discussions about the outcome areas. Provide adult supporters with core social work skills training related to respect, active listening, promoting self-determination, and collaborative problem solving to ensure they are able to identify when a young person may need additional community support outside of the youth leadership board. Adult supporters also need information and resources to help them respectfully work with and support the young people on the youth leadership board.

DEVELOP AND UTILIZE GUIDELINES OR BYLAWS

While some guidelines are already established, such as the requirement for youth leadership board members to be between ages 14 and 26 and to have been in foster care at some point during this time, there are many site-specific items that must be defined in formal, written guidelines or bylaws. Together with young people, establish guidelines around stipends for young people, recruitment and training procedures, operating procedures, allocation of discretionary grant funds, collaboration with the community partnership board, and performance evaluation and improvement. Allow youth leadership board members to drive this process, with encouragement from adults, and support them in being the primary communicators of the guidelines or bylaws to new members. Review the formal document once or twice throughout the year to ensure it stays updated and is being used.

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A WORK PLAN

Support and guide young people as you work together to develop and implement a plan to build authentic youth-adult partnerships, improve policies and practices of public child welfare systems and other systems that serve young people, and support the core strategies. Embed within the work plan activities that will integrate the work of all five core strategies; secure ongoing funding for youth stipends, grant making, and support member participation in meetings and committees/workgroups; ensure consistent logistical support; provide ongoing training for young people in leadership, advocacy, strategic planning, and resource allocation; ensure partnerships with the community partnership board and the self-evaluation team; and provide ongoing opportunities for board members to lead and facilitate the array of board activities. Examples of activities facilitated by the

MICHIGAN

BASETEAM's 50 members promote board leadership and sustainability

Serving several counties near Saginaw Bay, Michigan, the youth leadership board BASETEAM has grown to 50 members. To allow this many members to actively participate in meetings, BASETEAM divided into subgroups, like "young parents," based on groups identified by Dr. Mark Courtney and Jim Casey Initiative publications. BASETEAM's members recognize the critical need to plan for the board's sustainability. They volunteered to contribute $5 of their youth board participation stipends to cover the cost of becoming a nonprofit corporation, and enabled the board to successfully apply for grants from local foundations and corporations. These, among other strategies, have given BASETEAM a reputation for growing strong leaders who mentor younger officers and maintain a vibrant board.

youth leadership board members and their peers are recruiting participants; developing written materials; hosting conferences, convenings, and summits; sponsoring sibling events; maintaining connections with other young people in transition; participating in site self-evaluation processes and sustainability planning; developing a policy agenda; and participating in meetings with child welfare representatives and other policy makers.

The communications component of the work plan should address internal communication of the board; recruitment for new board members; communication with the community

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MAINE

Young people's process secures Creative Opportunities Grants

In Maine, the Creative Opportunities Grant program has helped youth leadership board members learn and facilitate the grant-making process. Grants ranging from $1,200 to $2,000 have provided more than $27,000. The funds were used to support developing a work-readiness curriculum for central Maine; offering adventure-based educational tours for young people in foster care; delivering two full-day youth development trainings; building a traditional Native American sweat lodge; contributing to three sibling reunion events; and creating an online tool to assist young people in preparing for and contributing to their family team meetings, among other activities. Young people have developed a meaningful application process, learning how important sustainability planning and accountability are for new and continuing programs.

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partnership board and self-evaluation team; and external communications with other young people in foster care, the public child welfare agency, other youth-serving systems, key leaders in each of the outcome areas, and local and state media. Focus messages about the youth leadership board's work to the various audiences in order to raise community awareness and increase the influence of the youth leadership board. Train young people and adult supporters in effective communication and strategic sharing. Support young people in being the primary communicators of their board with both internal and external audiences, creating as many opportunities as possible to help young people become effective communicators within and outside of the youth leadership board.

COLLABORATE WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Ensure that at least two members of the youth leadership board are active members of the community partnership board. Train members of the community partnership board on authentic youth engagement and youth-adult partnerships to create a strong foundation for the work to ensue between the two boards. Coordinate with the community partnership board to develop, operate, and assess the community's plan for implementing the five core strategies. Create opportunities for youth leadership board members to co-facilitate community partnership board meetings and activities. Allow opportunities for youth leadership and community partnership board members to develop relationships with one another. Help young people develop productive working relationships with community stakeholders that further the youth leadership board's agenda as well as individual connections to help build youth leadership board members' ongoing networks of social capital.

Activity 2:
Young People as Effective Self-Advocates

All young people in foster care—whether they are board members or not—should be full partners and leaders who understand their rights and responsibilities in making decisions that affect their lives. In addition to providing opportunities and supports for young people to advocate for reforms that will have an impact on all young people transitioning from care, sites need to provide consistent education, training, and support to young people in foster care to build their knowledge and skills so they can become effective self-advocates as they transition to adulthood. Involving young people in decisionmaking helps give them a sense of control over their own lives.

KEY ACTION ITEMS

- ■ Provide ongoing self-advocacy training and supports for and with young people.
- ■ Allow young people to make decisions.
- ■ Secure committed resources for self-advocacy training and supports.

HAWAI'I

E Makua Ana Circles center on young people

In Hawai'i, EPIC 'Ohana, Inc. offers E Makua Ana (Becoming an Adult) Youth Circles. In this culturally sensitive, strengths-based approach, a young person helps create the Circle, choosing who will attend, what food will be served, and how the meeting will start and end. In this meeting, organized to help a young person plan for the future, facilitators follow a format, but the young person chooses a plan of action and backup plans. Adult supporters agree to actions they need to take to help the young person, and a timeline. Follow-up Circles are usually held before, during, and after the young person's transition from foster care. "No dream is too far fetched," says Laurie Tochiki, director of EPIC. "We just help the youth understand what it will take to make that dream a reality and the help they can have along the way."

PROVIDE ONGOING SELF-ADVOCACY TRAINING AND SUPPORTS FOR AND WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Provide consistent education, training, and support to young people in care to build their knowledge and skills as effective advocates for themselves. Identify or broker the development of training that will help young people to understand their strengths and needs, to identify personal goals, to know their legal rights and responsibilities, and to know how to best communicate with others. Ensure that self-advocacy training is focused on board activities and personal activities of individual young people, particularly young people's participation in their individual case planning team meetings. Allow young people with training interests to facilitate the trainings provided to other young people. Together with young people, consistently evaluate training and supports to ensure they remain relevant and continue to meet the diverse needs of all young people.

ALLOW YOUNG PEOPLE TO MAKE DECISIONS

Seek out and create opportunities for young people to be engaged in decisionmaking on issues that affect their lives. Educate multiple systems on the importance of young people's self-advocacy skills, and provide training to engaged systems about supporting young people

Dream Team model guides youth-driven transition planning

The Iowa Dream Team model empowers young people transitioning from foster care to take control of their lives and dreams. Supportive adults and peers create teams to help young people make connections to resources, education, employment, health care, housing, and supportive personal and community relationships. A few guiding principles make Dream Teams successful. The teams are voluntary, and focused on and driven by young people. Young people are respected, supported, and empowered. Gatherings are honest places for free exchange of ideas, and gatherings are confidential. Standards for Dream Teams incorporating these principles are now included in the standards for Family Team Decision Making in Iowa, which will guide youth-driven transition planning statewide.

in making decisions about their own lives. Support young people in decisionmaking around the youth leadership and community partnership board goals, priorities, and activities. Help young people advocate in a variety of contexts, including the foster care system, schools, their communities, and their own lives. Provide support and guidance to youth leadership board members who are engaged in decisionmaking processes that do not result in the outcomes they desired.

SECURE RESOURCES FOR SELF-ADVOCACY TRAINING AND SUPPORTS

In partnership with young people, seek potential sources of funding for self-advocacy training and supports. Allow young people to assist with outreach to potential funding sources, and support young people in telling potential funders why self-advocacy training is critical to young people in foster care. Help young people communicate successes in self-advocacy to broaden awareness about the need for such training and support. Create a plan for securing committed funds for this activity to ensure its sustainability over time. Provide opportunities for young people to meet with public and private agency leaders to help the systems improve their policies and practices to support authentic youth engagement in case planning.

Tools

The following tool in **Part C** is related to this strategy:

- Core Strategies Rubric Tool

Trainings

The following Jim Casey Initiative trainings are related to this strategy:

- Youth as Leaders and Advocates Training
  - Self-Advocacy Training
  - Strategic Sharing Training
- Youth-Adult Partnership Training

Additional Resources

Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative Website - www.JimCaseyYouth.org

2008 Positive Youth Development Toolkit. By The University of Oklahoma's Runaway and Homeless Youth Training and Technical Assistance Centers and National Child Welfare Resource Center for Youth Development. National Resource Center for Youth Services (Tulsa, OK). 2008.

Authentic Youth Engagement: Youth-Adult Partnerships, Issue Brief #3. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2011.

Being Y-AP Savvy: A Primer on Creating & Sustaining Youth-Adult Partnerships. By Shepherd Zeldin and Jessica Collura. ACT For Youth Center of Excellence (Ithaca, NY). 2010.

Building Effective Youth Councils: A Practical Guide to Engaging Youth in Policy Making. By Shanetta Martin, Karen Pittman, Thaddeus Ferber, and Ada McMahon. The Forum for Youth Investment (Washington, DC). 2007.

Core Principles for Engaging Young People in Community Change. By Karen Pittman, Shanetta Martin, and Anderson Williams. The Forum for Youth Investment and Oasis/Community IMPACT (Washington, DC). 2007.

Engaging Youth in Community Decision Making. Center for the Study of Social Policy (Washington, DC). 2007.

Equal Voice Youth Empowerment Toolkit. By Active Voice (San Francisco, CA) and Marguerite Casey Foundation (Seattle, WA). 2012.

Meeting the Needs of Ontario Youth. By Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement. Ontario Trillium Foundation (Toronto, Ontario). 2006.

Member Outreach from the Youth Leadership Toolkit. National Resource Center for Youth Development (Tulsa, OK). 2011.

The Power of Youth and Adult Partnerships and Change Pathways for Youth Work.
Search Institute (Minneapolis, MN). 2005.

*Public Speaking: A Guide on How to Help Youth Prepare for Speaking Engagements
from the Youth Leadership Toolkit.* National Resource Center for Youth Development (Tulsa,
OK). 2011.

Social Capital: Building Quality Networks for Young People in Foster Care, Issue Brief #2. Jim
Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2011.

Understanding the State of Knowledge of Youth Engagement Financing and Sustainability. By
Aracelis Gray and Cheryl D. Hayes. The Finance Project (Washington, DC). 2008.

Youth Engagement from the Youth Leadership Toolkit. National Resource Center for Youth
Development (Tulsa, OK). 2011.

Youth Involvement in Systems of Care: A Guide to Empowerment. By Marlene Matarese, Lorrin
McGinnis, and Martha Mora. Technical Assistance Partnership (Washington, DC). 2005.

Youth-Adult Partnerships in Community Decision Making. By Shepherd Zeldin, Julie Petrokubi,
and Carole MacNeil. National 4-H Council (Chevy Chase, MD). 2007.

Youth-Adult Partnerships in Public Action: Principles, Organizational Culture and Outcomes. By
Shepherd Zeldin, Julie Petrokubi, and Linda Camino. The Forum for Youth Investment
(Washington, DC). 2008.

YOUTH ADVOCACY DOCUMENTS

voice: Discussing Issues and Concerns of Michigan Foster Youth. 2006.

voice 2: Discussing Issues and Concerns of Michigan Foster Youth. Lansing, MI: Michigan Youth
Opportunities Initiative, 2008.

voice 3: Discussing Issues and Concerns of Michigan Youth in Foster Care. 2011.

EmpowerMEnt: Hearing the "Me" in the Voices of Georgia's Foster Youth. Atlanta, GA:
Metropolitan Atlanta Youth Opportunities Initiative, 2007.

L.I.F.E.—Listen. Inform. Future. Empower. Des Moines, IA: Moving On Up! Passport to
Independence Youth Leadership Board, Youth Connections Council, and elevate™, 2007.

LEAP For A Better Tomorrow. San Diego, CA: San Diego Leadership Empowers All
Possibilities, 2008.

Strategy 2:
Partnerships and Resources

OBJECTIVE

To access the resources of public and private systems and philanthropic organizations, expand and deepen community support, and cultivate community champions for young people transitioning from foster care

BACKGROUND

Improving outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood requires concerted action by a variety of community partners. These partners can leverage the public and private resources needed to create the range of opportunities young people need to succeed. Complex systems improvement requires strong community partnerships and financing strategies. Effective partnerships share common characteristics, and a small but emerging body of research suggests that high-capacity community partnerships are correlated with a community's ability to improve results for children, youth, and families.[15] Building partnerships and resources will enhance the community's capacity to improve outcomes.

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15 Center for the Study of Social Policy. (2006). Working together to improve results: Reviewing the effectiveness of community decision-making entities. Washington, DC.

Longhi, D., and Porter, L. (2009). Community networks: Building community capacity, reducing rates of child and family problems. Olympia, WA: Washington State Family Policy Council.

Activity 1:
Community Partnership Boards

Community partnership boards (which some sites call networks, groups, or collaboratives) help guide the development of sites to help them implement the five core strategies. Members should play a significant role in resource development and planning for sustainability. They should support youth-engagement work, participate in the self-evaluation process, contribute to an advocacy agenda, and help create more effective opportunities for young people. This work requires cross-sector coordination and a collective commitment to improving community conditions, practices, and system policies to promote better outcomes for young people. The community partnership board should include representatives from the public child welfare agency; community stakeholders in the public and private sectors who are influential in key areas such as permanence, education, housing, health and mental health, employment, and financial education and banking; and young people. Private funders supporting the site's work may also have an important role in serving on the board and in recruiting key community stakeholders.

Unlike a governing board, the community partnership board is more like a community collaborative or network whose role is to increase community awareness and engagement in improving outcomes for young people.

KEY ACTION ITEMS

- ■ Recruit, train, and support a cross-section of community members.
- ■ Develop and implement guidelines or bylaws.
- ■ Develop and implement a work plan.
- ■ Track progress and make adjustments.
- ■ Authentically partner with the youth leadership board.

RECRUIT, TRAIN, AND SUPPORT A CROSS-SECTION OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Use the Environmental Scan (which includes a list of key leaders) and the social capital network of the planning team to help identify potential community partnership board members. Scan existing boards in the site and look for areas of overlap and opportunities for collaboration. Ensure that the representative of the public child welfare agency who will be an active member of the board has knowledge of the unique needs of older young people in foster care, has expertise in the local foster care and related systems, and is in a position to influence policy and practice within the public child welfare agency. Recruit members who will be most representative of the community, being sure to specifically target key community stakeholders in the public and private sectors who are knowledgeable

and influential in areas including permanence, education, employment, housing, health and mental health, and financial education and banking. Recognize that some members may serve part time due to their focus on a specific content area, and accordingly build in opportunities for content-specific membership. Include at least two members of the youth leadership board and young people who have been in foster care. Provide board members with the training and support they need in the areas of collaborative leadership, youth-adult partnership, active listening, and effective negotiation to guide the development and implementation of your site's efforts. Dedicate time to developing relationships within the board, creating processes of cooperation, and having routine open and transparent communication among partners.

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT GUIDELINES OR BYLAWS

Create a set of guidelines to help govern the community partnership board, being sure to include young people in the planning team. Set guidelines for recruitment and retention of board members; create training and other supports; develop processes for youth and adult board members to work together and to make key decisions; and decide what types of support board members should expect. Also, draft expectations of board members, which can include participating in resource development and planning for sustainability, supporting the youth-engagement work, participating in the self-evaluation process, contributing to an advocacy agenda, and helping create more effective opportunities for young people. Guidelines should clearly outline that the community partnership board is not a governing board, but rather a collaborative working advisory board that plans, implements, and makes decisions.

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A WORK PLAN

Be strategic as you create a plan for implementing the five core strategies and improving policies and practices within state and local systems to positively affect outcomes for young people in transition. Be sure to include young people in the planning and implementation process for developing a work plan. Match individual strengths and interests to the functions of the community partnership board, ensuring that members with particular interests have opportunities to focus on their specific content areas. Use data from the Environmental Scan to set measurable goals and establish priorities of the board. Ensure that the work plan contains a communications component that will build and strengthen communication within, and external to, the board. Use the completed work plan to identify gaps in the board and seek new board members who can help achieve

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MICHIGAN

Pie company fund awards $6,000 in annual scholarships

The Grand Traverse Pie Company is helping Michigan young people transition from foster care to adulthood "one slice at a time." The company's owner, Denise Busley, began supporting the Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative (MYOI) with free meeting space (and pie) for youth leadership boards in Traverse City. Then she started a scholarship fund for Opportunity Passport™ participants, depositing 5 cents for each slice of pie she sold and collecting customer donations with a jar on the counter. Now she is a member of the community partnership board, connecting MYOI with resources, encouraging other local business owners to contribute, and helping Grand Traverse Pie Company franchisees across the state form relationships with their local MYOI boards. Each December, based on essays written by MYOI participants, the pie company awards approximately $6,000 in scholarships. At Thanksgiving, young people volunteer to make 100 pies for a community dinner. This long-term partnership, which began when a business owner met an MYOI coordinator for coffee many years ago, continues to grow and benefit more and more young people.

specific goals in the priority areas. Review and update the work plan at least annually to ensure that it remains relevant and accurately reflects the board members' priorities.

TRACK PROGRESS AND MAKE ADJUSTMENTS

Continuously evaluate the performance of the community partnership board by tracking progress toward the measurable goals outlined in the work plan, which should include indicators and performance measures that allow you to track progress. Continually assess whether performance measures are reflecting the effectiveness of implementation and if indicators are helping you measure progress in achieving results. Identify areas of strength and weakness, and make adjustments to eliminate activities that are not helping the board reach its goals and expand successful activities. Regularly communicate progress with and seek input from board members, the youth leadership board, the public child welfare agency, other youth-serving systems, and the community.

AUTHENTICALLY PARTNER WITH THE YOUTH LEADERSHIP BOARD

Ensure that at least two members of the community partnership board are Opportunity Passport™ participants, at least one of whom is an active member of the youth leadership board. Train members of the community partnership board on authentic youth engagement and youth-adult partnerships to create a strong foundation for productive collaboration between the two boards. Coordinate with the youth leadership board to develop, perform, and assess the community partnership board's plan for implementing the five core strategies. Create opportunities for community partnership board members to co-facilitate youth leadership board meetings and activities. Allow opportunities for youth leadership and community partnership board members to develop relationships with one another. For example, the two boards may want to occasionally hold joint meetings or schedule meetings consecutively to create dedicated time for discussion of shared agenda items.

ATLANTA

Diverse community partnership board meets identified needs

In Atlanta, Community Partnership Board members volunteer when they see chances to meet identified needs. For example, a board representative from Kaiser Permanente secured affordable ($25/month) health insurance for Opportunity Passport™ participants early in the demonstration phase. As the site moved toward statewide expansion, this "door opener" has grown statewide to include anyone under age 65 who has experienced foster care. To ensure board membership includes young people and representatives from the business community, university systems, state agencies, private agencies, the state Supreme Court Improvement Project, and community volunteers, the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta used a grid in planning board membership. The board not only included young people, but also championed their voices in developing the local plan and strategies. The initial Atlanta Community Partnership Board and the emerging Community Partnership Group now guide the statewide expansion of the Georgia Youth Opportunities Initiative.

Activity 2:
Resource Development

Your site will need to secure a creative mix of public and private funding to implement the five core strategies for the first three years. Over time, your community partnership board will need to expand the type and amount of resources available to address gaps in strategies, supports, and opportunities to reach more young people in your target area. Finally, your site can develop resources that improve results at greater scale and begin to "hardwire" public and private funding streams to assure the sustainability of your work beyond the initial three years.

KEY ACTION ITEMS

- Recruit and retain partners who can help garner resources.
- Secure funding for the first three years.
- Fill any identified service gaps.
- Develop and implement a sustainability plan.

RHODE ISLAND

Partnership leads to $2 million job-readiness research grant

In Rhode Island, the Community Partnership Board shifted its focus toward developing employment opportunities for young people in foster care after collecting and analyzing Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey data. The Community Partnership Board engaged Columbia University's Dr. Lauren Gates to help build provider competencies and support workforce development among young people in foster care. Lead agency Foster Forward then parlayed that collaboration into a five-year, $2 million grant from the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families. This demonstration grant, Works Wonders, is for randomized, controlled tests of a model of peer-based support and one-on-one job placement/coaching toward helping young people develop relational competencies for connecting to the workforce.

RECRUIT AND RETAIN PARTNERS WHO CAN HELP GARNER RESOURCES

Identify individuals and organizations with the potential to garner resources needed to implement, sustain, and take the five core strategies to scale. Conduct outreach to the potential new members, and include young people and community partnership board members in outreach efforts. Ensure that targeted partners share the goals of the community partnership board, and do not have conflicting goals of their own. Carefully examine potential partners' skills, experience, and relationships to ascertain the value a partner would bring to the community partnership board. This means identifying assets they may bring including visibility, funding support, or additional stakeholders. While recruiting partners, be clear about the expectations of the community partnership board, and come to an agreement about what each party's roles and responsibilities will be.[16]

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16 Making a difference in your neighborhood: A handbook for using community decision-making to improve the lives of children, youth, and families. Center for the Study of Social Policy.

MAINE

Community collaborative connects rural young people to employment

The Maine Youth Transition Collaborative (MYTC) connects the young people of rural southern Maine with employment opportunities through the York County Foster Care Collaborative (YCFCC). This community collaborative focuses on building community awareness about young people transitioning from foster care; exploring system changes that will better support young people; and leveraging community resources and connections that will help these young people enjoy stable, productive lives. Since 2011, collaborative members have successfully cooperated to provide work-readiness training and employment experiences for young people. For example, a local employer held an informational breakfast meeting for other employers to learn about the challenges facing young people transitioning from foster care; a partnership of service providers delivered work-readiness training for 15 young people; more than 20 young people were employed for summers, receiving worksite job coaches if needed; and several young people were able to retain employment after the summer.

SECURE FUNDING FOR THE FIRST THREE YEARS

When considering a partnership with the Jim Casey Initiative, estimate the costs of implementation by clarifying the scope and scale of the activities you intend to implement, based on your work plan and the outcomes you are working toward, identifying existing resources, assessing funding gaps for each activity, and developing a budget that addresses gaps. Account for budget items such as staff positions for supporting implementation, costs associated with convening and supporting the community partnership and youth leadership boards, stipends and supports for young people, discretionary funds for the youth leadership board to manage and distribute, seed money and matched funds for Opportunity Passport™ participants, training costs, costs associated with developing and implementing a sustainability plan and self-evaluation activities, and technical assistance beyond support from the Jim Casey Initiative. Once implementation costs have been identified, a plan must be developed and executed to secure the needed funds.

FILL ANY IDENTIFIED SERVICE GAPS

Conduct a needs assessment to identify any gaps in services for young people, and determine if any gaps can be filled by new opportunities or reallocation of existing resources. Use the community partnership and youth leadership boards to prioritize any gaps in services, supports, and opportunities for young people, and plan collaboratively to fill gaps. Use relationships to create more door openers to encourage the community to develop and redirect resources to meet young people's needs.

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Develop clarity around the scope and scale of the activities that will be sustained, and over what period of time. Gather data about how these activities will lead to the desired results and strategize about ways to use these data to make the case for investment. Develop a sustainable financing plan to determine fiscal needs, reliable public and private resources, gaps in resources, and the strategies that will be used to fill them. Establish a process for tracking and responding to new funding opportunities. Build a broad base of community support and key champions who can help secure additional resources and raise awareness in the general public about the work and its importance. Strengthen organizational capacity to efficiently deploy and manage resources, information, and personnel systems. Expand services and supports throughout the state as part of the sustainability process.

MICHIGAN

Varied fundraising efforts provide Opportunity Passport™ match dollars

The Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative (MYOI) uses the Internet, community partner contributions, and outreach to fund stipends and match dollars for Opportunity Passport™ participants over age 21. MYOIFUND.org offers information and an opportunity to donate. Supporters can also "shop for a cause" at artfulvision.com, where a portion of proceeds from the sale of Michigan arts and crafts goes to MYOI. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation is encouraging MYOI participants to finish high school and transition into post-secondary training with a grant that offers coaching and increases the match for education purchases to three-to-one. Recently, the Asian Pacific Law Students Association at the University of Michigan Law School coordinated multiple student groups for their fourth annual culture/variety show. The event featured singing, dancing, and comedy clips representing various cultures, and it contributed $2,300 to MYOI. Finally, at the "Make a Difference" event, MYOI members speak to community groups exploring options for philanthropy, simultaneously educating community partners and leveraging support.

Activity 3:
Engaging Young People as Partners

Young people need to be full partners in planning activities that build a community partnership board and in guiding and supporting sites' work. In order for young people to become full members of the community partnership board and participate in decisionmaking, partnerships between young people and adults must be authentic, and the young people and adults need to work together develop the skills and knowledge to put their partnerships into action. In order to avoid token participation by young people and help the community partnership board be accountable for developing authentic and effective partnerships, your site should provide specialized training and support for establishing youth-adult partnerships, clear roles for young people and adults, guidelines for working together, and clear expectations for young people and adult participants. The Jim Casey Initiative offers training and technical assistance opportunities so your site can develop youth-adult partnerships that will bring about meaningful and lasting change.

KEY ACTION ITEMS

- ◾ Provide youth-adult partnership training and supports.
- ◾ Incorporate youth-adult partnership into standard operations.

HAWAI'I

Beach picnic unites young people and adult partners

In Hawai'i, community partnership board members scheduled Youth-Adult Partnership Training through their Jim Casey Initiative site liaison to begin working together. Afterward, recognizing the need to form better personal relationships to collaborate more effectively, the Hawai'i: Helping Our People Envision Success (HI H.O.P.E.S.) youth leadership board invited the community partnership board members to a picnic on the beach. They had a bonfire, brought ukuleles, and "talked story" well into the evening. "There is great value in creating opportunities for young people and adult partners to spend time together in both formal and informal settings. It strengthens the work, develops relationships, and promotes networking."- Delia Ulima, EPIC Ohana, Inc.

PROVIDE YOUTH-ADULT PARTNERSHIP TRAINING AND SUPPORTS

Provide specialized training about establishing and maintaining youth-adult partnerships to young people and adults on an ongoing basis. Tailor supports to community partnership board members to meet the unique needs of young people and to partner effectively. Ensure that young people provide input to the training and supports that are offered. Create opportunities for young people and adults to explore what each has to offer the partnership, checking assumptions and stereotypes, and encouraging open communication. Allow adequate time for reflecting on how well youth-adult partnerships are functioning and supporting the work of the community partnership board.

INCORPORATE YOUTH-ADULT PARTNERSHIP INTO STANDARD OPERATIONS

Establish formal protocols that guide the efforts of the community partnership board as they relate to youth-adult partnerships, such as how to be respectful of young people's stories and experiences,

how to resolve conflicts, and how to allow space and time for young people's voices to be heard in an adult environment. Clearly define the roles of young people and adults in areas such as developing meeting agendas, setting goals and priorities, decisionmaking processes, and meeting facilitation. Seek out and secure resources for continued involvement of young people. Place young people in leadership roles that guide the development and implementation of your work plan, and give young people the power to make decisions about board activities and needed course corrections. Hold community partnership board meetings at times when young people can participate. Engaging young people doesn't mean always deferring to young people when making decisions. It means asking for and genuinely considering their input in the same way you consider the input of other partners.

Tools

The following tool in **Part C** is related to this strategy:

- Environmental Scan

Trainings

The following Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative training is related to this strategy:

- Youth-Adult Partnership Training

Additional Resources

Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative Website - www.JimCaseyYouth.org

Assessing Leverage: Lessons from the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative. By Cornerstone Consulting Group. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2008.

Authentic Youth Engagement: Youth-Adult Partnerships, Issue Brief #3. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2011.

Being Y-AP Savvy: A Primer on Creating & Sustaining Youth-Adult Partnerships. By Shepherd Zeldin and Jessica Collura. ACT For Youth Center of Excellence (Ithaca, NY). 2010.

Building Community Partnerships: Step by Step. A Product of the Family to Family Initiative. The Annie E. Casey Foundation (Washington, DC). 2005.

California Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership Website – www.co-invest.org

Catalyzing Networks for Social Change: A Funder's Guide. By Diana Scearce and Co-created by a group of 80 network practitioners. Monitor Institute (San Francisco, CA) and Grantmakers for Effective Oranizations (Washington, DC). 2011.

Connected Citizens: The Power, Peril and Potential of Networks. By Diana Scearce. Knight Foundation (Miami, FL) and Monitor Institute (San Francisco, CA). 2011.

Core Principles for Engaging Young People in Community Change. By Karen Pittman, Shanetta Martin, and Shanetta Martin, and Anderson Williams. The Forum for Youth Investment and Oasis/Community IMPACT (Washington, DC). 2007.

Final Report: Community Solutions for Opportunity Youth. By White House Council for Community Solutions. Corporation for National and Community Service (Washington, DC). 2012. p. 13.

The Finance Project—Sustainability Planning Resource Center – www.financeproject.org

Leveraging Resources. By Bettina Lankard Brown and Judith O. Wagner. Center on Education and Training for Employment, The Ohio State University (Columbus, OH). 2005.

Making a Difference in Your Neighborhood: A Handbook for Using Community Decision-Making to Improve the Lives of Children, Youth and Families. By Dorothy Smith and Aysha Gregory. Center for the Study of Social Policy (Washington, DC). 2011.

Meeting the Needs of Ontario Youth. By Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement. Ontario Trillium Foundation (Toronto, Ontario). 2006.

The Networked Nonprofit. By Jane Wei-Skillern and Sonia Marciano. (An article in the Stanford Social Innovation Review Spring 2008 issue.) Leland Stanford Jr. University (Standford, CA). 2008.

Scale of Change. By Andrew White. Center for the Study of Social Policy (Washington, DC). 2008.

Social Capital: Building Quality Networks for Young People in Foster Care, Issue Brief #2. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2011.

Typical Youth Participation vs. Authentic Youth Engagement from *Engaging Youth in Community Decision Making.* Center for the Study of Social Policy. (Washington, DC). 2007. p. 24.

The Youth Guide to Budgeting. By Kate Gaughen. The Finance Project (Washington, DC). 2010.

The Youth Guide to Developing Logic Models. By Kate Gaughen. The Finance Project (Washington, DC). 2010.

Youth Leadership Institute – www.yli.org

Strategy 3:
Research, Evaluation, and Communications

OBJECTIVE

To involve key stakeholders in using data to drive decisionmaking and communications in documenting results

BACKGROUND

Effective self-evaluation enables key partners and the public to understand whether activities are being implemented as planned and to what extent they are contributing to the desired results for the targeted population. It provides real-time information that enables partners to make course corrections. The Jim Casey Initiative's Theory of Change and logic model together serve as a framework for self-evaluation, describing the desired results for young people. These models also describe the improvements in systems and policies that are needed in order to produce, enhance, and sustain those results.

Effective self-evaluation goes hand-in-hand with a robust communications strategy. Through communications, a site can draw the public's attention to an issue in a way that leads them to allocate resources to improve outcomes. Data gathered through self-evaluation can be shared with policy makers, funders, and the public. Self-evaluation data are also vital to the external evaluation commissioned by the Jim Casey Initiative. The external evaluation, which aggregates information across sites to determine whether progress is being made toward the desired results, relies on data provided by each site's self-evaluation.

Activity 1:
Self-Evaluation Team

By implementing the core strategies, sites improve outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care and for the systems that serve them. One of the primary goals of self-evaluation is for each site to obtain accurate, relevant, and timely information to use in the ongoing, local decisionmaking process. The ongoing work of the self-evaluation team is to track progress and ensure that data are used to make decisions. Ultimately, the self-evaluation process leads to action fostered by sustained involvement of and ownership by community partners, young people, and key stakeholders throughout the process.

KEY ACTION ITEMS
- Recruit, train, and support adults and young people.
- Develop and implement a self-evaluation plan.
- Establish practices and policies for data collection.
- Track progress and make adjustments.

RECRUIT, TRAIN, AND SUPPORT ADULTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Compose the self-evaluation team to include young people who are involved in the local Jim Casey Initiative; a site staff member who is knowledgeable about the work; a community partnership board member; a representative of the public child welfare agency; a data analyst who has the skills to support the collection, analysis, and use of data; and a local self-evaluation coach who provides the team with technical assistance. Recruit and add members to the self-evaluation team to fill any gaps in evaluation capacity and to ensure that key stakeholders are represented on the team. Provide training to self-evaluation team members on evaluation principles and practices and also on youth-adult partnerships. Provide specific training on the use of Jim Casey Initiative data tools (Environmental Scan, Core Strategies Rubric Tool, Policy Matrix, Practice Pathways Tool, Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey, and Opportunity Passport™ Data System). In addition, the *Guide to Self-Evaluation* provides detailed information to help sites implement this strategy. Support young people's meaningful role in the self-evaluation team by encouraging youth-friendly language, placing young people in leadership roles, and building in time for advance preparation and debriefing.

RHODE ISLAND

Self-evaluation team successfully manages national database for state

The work of the self-evaluation team can build competencies and create leveraging opportunities. Rhode Island was one of only 13 states nationwide that achieved the federal baseline reporting standard. The state's self-evaluation team helped oversee and administer the Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey. This process helped the local initiative collect and analyze data for more than 80 percent of a population, and enabled the lead agency to successfully manage the National Youth in Transitions Database federal reporting mandate for Rhode Island.

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A SELF-EVALUATION PLAN

The development of a self-evaluation plan is critical for supporting an ongoing data-based decisionmaking process. An effective plan describes many things, but most importantly it establishes practices and policies for collecting relevant data and lays out how the self-evaluation team and other stakeholders will track progress and make adjustments based on the data collected. The Site-Level Logic Model and Core Strategies Rubric Tool are essential for developing the self-evaluation plan. They describe what high-quality implementation, data collection, and review will look like.

Integrate self-evaluation with planning and implementing the core strategies to ensure it does not become a stand-alone activity. Your everyday work should be making data-driven decisions that involve young people as partners and decision makers. The plan for self-evaluation should include activities to secure funds for evaluation activities. Use youth-adult partnerships in planning and outreach activities. Apply for and secure a diverse pool of funds to avoid dependency upon any one funding source. Ensure that there is financial support for a staff person who will be responsible for carrying out self-evaluation activities. Consider the skills, tasks, and time commitments required of team members, as well as the resources needed to support them.

TENNESSEE

Youth Transitions Advisory Council makes strong recommendations

Tennessee has built a statewide multidisciplinary board, the Youth Transitions Advisory Council, composed of legislators, staff from nonprofit organizations, Department of Children's Services staff, and young people. The council meets quarterly to review data from three Jim Casey Initiative sites across Tennessee. The members of the council make recommendations to the legislature regarding services and supports for older young people and young adults in foster care, and track progress. Recommendations have ranged from ensuring young people have their critical documents to ensuring transition plans are individualized.

ESTABLISH PRACTICES AND POLICIES FOR DATA COLLECTION

Create and implement a process for regularly updating the Environmental Scan, Policy Matrix, and the Opportunity Passport™ Data System. Determine the strategies for collecting baseline and follow-up data from young people using the Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey, including how to make computers with Internet access available to young people for survey completion. Establish strategies for maintaining at least an 80 percent response rate on the Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey, which may include using additional incentives such as planning "survey taking" social events and dinners during the months when follow-up surveys are completed.

TRACK PROGRESS AND MAKE ADJUSTMENTS

Determine strategic approaches and activities to achieve your site's outcomes; map how the strategies and activities are linked to performance measures; develop baselines for performance measures and indicators; establish benchmarks; and, using Jim Casey Initiative and local data collection tools, update the information regularly. Use the data obtained from this work to make informed decisions about adjustments to improve implementation. Prepare data so information can be shared regularly with multiple audiences, both internal and external to the site's work, with particular attention paid to sharing data with the youth leadership and community partnership boards.

Activity 2:
Communication with Multiple Audiences

The Jim Casey Initiative has collected impressive data about young people who are transitioning from foster care. These data can significantly increase public awareness of the challenges facing young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood. Sites contribute to this effort by communicating their findings to a range of audiences, including practitioners, policy makers, the media, and the general public. The media and other stakeholders can be powerful allies as sites work to create opportunities for young people. When young people strategically tell the stories of their experiences in foster care, they can serve as a powerful catalyst for positive change.

KEY ACTION ITEMS
- Develop and implement a communications plan.
- Track progress and make adjustments.

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Create an annual communications plan for your sites using the Communications Plan Template and Communications Webinar. Create communications goals and activities that help you reach key audiences; that effectively use data, especially young people's stories; that are measurable and obtainable; and that support your overall goals, the core strategies, and desired results and outcomes. Include your communications plan goals and activities in your annual Jim Casey Initiative site plan.

Carry out your plan: Effectively communicate with all audiences who can make a difference, including practitioners, policy makers, the media, young people, and the general public. Share stories of young people who have overcome odds, both through their personal resilience and through help and supports that are tailored to meet their needs. Link these stories to self-evaluation data to challenge the community to share responsibility for young people and to join together in creating opportunities for them.

TRACK PROGRESS AND MAKE ADJUSTMENTS

Create a report that lists each benchmark from your communications plan and provides space to enter the data described in the plan on a monthly or quarterly basis. Each month or quarter, review the communications plan, enter the data for the period

GEORGIA

EmpowerMEnt voices concerns of young parents in foster care

The Georgia youth leadership board, EmpowerMEnt, spoke with Department of Children and Family Services staff, caregivers, service providers, advocates, attorneys, and judges to communicate the needs of young parents in foster care. On a case-by-case basis, young people in foster care in Georgia are entitled to receive a stipend to support a baby without the baby having to be in foster care. However, too often the babies were being placed in foster care by default. Language was recently amended to reduce unnecessary infant placements and subsequent separation from mothers. A publication, "Know Your Rights – A Legal Guide for Parenting Teens Involved in the Child Welfare System," was created. And, juvenile judges now hold meetings with young people to discuss their rights, experiences in care, and expectations, and stakeholders participate in follow-up meetings to communicate young people's concerns.

NEBRASKA

Data collection supports extending services to age 21

In addition to the Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey, the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation collects data from young people who are not Opportunity Passport™ participants. The foundation used this data, as well as information from the Department of Health & Human Services and the justice and school systems, to make a powerful case for extending services and supports to young people up to age 21. The message has also resulted in the commitment from a private philanthropy for significant resources to supplement new state and federal funds.

into the benchmarks report, and discuss progress toward the benchmarks. If needed, make changes in the communications plan to more effectively move toward achieving the benchmarks and accomplishing your communications goals.

Activity 3:
Young People as Evaluators and Communicators

The self-evaluation process is a starting point for ensuring that young people are grounded in all aspects of your site's work. Soliciting early and consistent input from young people gives them an opportunity to become comfortable with data and familiar with the experiences of their peers. Young people also need support and opportunities to act as effective communicators about the site's work. Young people are empowered when they have the skills, knowledge, and support to share their stories effectively. They need to know what to share, how to share it, and how to get their message across without revealing too much and making themselves vulnerable.

KEY ACTION ITEMS

- ■ Recruit, train, and support young people as evaluators and communicators.
- ■ Establish meaningful leadership roles for young people.

RECRUIT, TRAIN, AND SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE AS EVALUATORS AND COMMUNICATORS

Create strategies for identifying and recruiting young people to participate in evaluation and communication activities. Rely on a relatively large number of young people to avoid overreliance on one or two young people and to reap the benefits of an economy of scale that can be reached. Ensure that some of these young people are not members of the youth leadership board. Train young people about youth-adult partnerships, strategic sharing, communications, research, and evaluation, and support the young people by offering time for preparation before meetings, offering encouragement during meetings, and providing opportunities to debrief after meetings.

ESTABLISH MEANINGFUL LEADERSHIP ROLES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Seek out and secure opportunities for young people to act as communicators. Educate members of the self-evaluation team about the power young people can have as communicators of data and the need for system reform. Ensure that central roles are not always filled by adults, creating space for young people to co-facilitate and lead activities related to evaluation and communications. Empower young people to play meaningful roles in evaluation and communications activities by providing them with the information and skills they need to be meaningfully engaged in the work.

MICHIGAN

Self-evaluation team provides influential update for top leadership

Young people who actively participated in the state-level self-evaluation team played a critical role in planning and delivering the first Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative (MYOI) update for top leadership. They helped create a timeline of critical events in service for older young people during the 10 years of MYOI implementation, highlighted data and successes, and discussed critical challenges that faced young people and the MYOI in the next year. The event, attended by Department of Human Services administrators and representatives of institutions offering post-secondary supports for young people transitioning from foster care, helped MYOI set priorities for the coming year. The timeline created for this occasion also provides historical context for staff, young people, and other stakeholders who are relatively new to MYOI.

Tools

The following tools in **Part C** are related to this strategy:

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

- Core Strategies Rubric Tool
- Environmental Scan
- *Guide to Self-Evaluation* Overview
- Opportunity Passport™ Data System Overview
- Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey
- Policy Matrix
- Practice Pathways Tool Overview
- Site-Level Logic Model

COMMUNICATIONS

- Brand Style Guide
- Communications Plan Template
- Communications Planning Webinar (other Jim Casey Initiative communications webinars are available at www.JimCaseyYouth.org)

Trainings

The following Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative trainings are related to this strategy:

- Opportunity Passport™ Data System Training
- Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey Training
- Self-Evaluation Training
- Youth as Leaders and Advocates Training

Additional Resources

Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative Website - www.JimCaseyYouth.org

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Self-Evaluation Discussion List

Understanding the State of Knowledge of Youth Engagement Financing and Sustainability.
By Aracelis Gray and Cheryl D. Hayes. The Finance Project (Washington, DC). 2008.

COMMUNICATIONS

Aging Out. By Roger Weisberg. Public Policy Productions, Inc. 2005. Additional resources, including a discussion guide in English and Spanish, are available at www.JimCaseyYouth.org.

Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative e-Newsletter

Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative Facebook and Twitter accounts

On Their Own. By Martha Shirk and Gary Stangler. Westview Press (Boulder, CO). 2004.

Public Service Announcement: Success Beyond 18. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2012.

Strategy 4:
Public Will and Policy

OBJECTIVE

To advance policy and practice that improve outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care

BACKGROUND

Making durable improvements in how we support young people who are transitioning from foster care to adulthood requires far more than developing new programs. To ensure lasting improvements, it is crucial to improve the laws, regulations, policies, practices, and financing mechanisms governing programs and services that directly or indirectly affect these young people. This effort to develop public will and to influence local and state policies and practices depends on the support of a range of stakeholders in the field: young people, political leaders, service professionals, foster and birth families, and other partners. The ultimate goal of the public will and policy strategy is to achieve systems improvements that result in better outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood.

Activity 1:
Agenda and Approach for Improving Public Policies and Systems

Implementing a successful systems-improvement agenda depends on establishing a consensus about the ways in which public systems can better meet the needs of young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood. Young people are key partners in building public will and improving policies because they know which systems are working and which are not working. Sites report the following strategies helped them successfully improve systems: engaging young people; using data to understand the current environment; setting clear and measurable goals for influencing policy; and forming partnerships with stakeholders who have experience, connections, and credibility.

KEY ACTION ITEMS
- ■ Develop policy goals and annual policy priorities.
- ■ Engage strategic partners.
- ■ Develop communication strategies.
- ■ Track progress and make adjustments.

DEVELOP POLICY GOALS AND ANNUAL POLICY PRIORITIES

Use input from young people and relevant data to inform the development of legislative and administrative policy goals. Sites should start by listening to the young people and mining existing data sources early in implementation. Examine legislative and administrative policies for areas in need of revision and strengthening. Analyze and mine the Environmental Scan and other state and national data, such as data from the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD). Working with young people, ascertain areas in which performance is falling short of expectations and set initial policy goals.

As you use Jim Casey Initiative data collection tools, the data you collect can further inform your policy goals. The Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey provides up-to-date outcome data every six months. Young people can help analyze and use those data to inform the agenda. Develop and review the Policy Matrix with young people, seeking their experience to inform discussions about the effectiveness of current policies. Compare current practices against the practices in the Practice Pathways Tool. Use the data from the Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey, the Policy Matrix, and the Practice Pathways Tool to further refine an agenda for systems improvement. Once policy goals have been developed, set measurable and achievable intermediate steps. Remember to make efforts to embed all practice improvements in writing to ensure their longevity in the face of staff turnover.

At least annually, revisit the policy goals and intermediate steps with young people to ensure they remain relevant and accurately reflect the needs of young people. Devise strategies for soliciting the input of young people on a regular basis, which could include engaging young people in focus groups, retreats, surveys, and events. Continue to identify priorities and build the advocacy agenda with young people, and work to identify young people who can be prepared to support advocacy efforts and ensure the agenda remains responsive to their needs.

ENGAGE STRATEGIC PARTNERS

Once policy goals are developed, analyze current partners' capacity to advance the agenda. Determine whether additional partners are needed. Identify the skills, experiences, and credibility that the lead agency and other partners have with the public and policy makers, helping to define the different roles partners can play. Cultivate partnerships with organizations that have a history of public policy involvement, with staff members who can interpret the political environment and help develop opportunistic and more intentional strategies for influencing policy. Those people who have long-standing relationships with legislative and agency decision makers can provide critical access for your advocacy efforts. Representatives of the child welfare agency, who have the ability to influence policy and practice, are critical members of the community partnership board. Legislators and agency leadership should always be seen as key stakeholders, even when there is not a specific legislative or administrative policy goal. They can support systems-improvement efforts in many ways, serving as unusual messengers to other decision makers and as necessary supports if services for young people are threatened. Philanthropic partners can also be very influential with decision makers.

DEVELOP COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

As part of communications planning, be sure to carefully select and define the primary audience for each policy goal. Consider external and internal communication strategies. For example, use the identified policy priority areas as a guide for places where public will needs to be built. Be proactive and reach out to all legislative and administrative decision makers; inform them about the policy goals identified by young people. However, also consider strategies for keeping all internal stakeholders, such as youth leadership and community partnership board members, informed and working toward a common goal.

NEBRASKA

Many stakeholders gather input to shape state legislation

Lead agency Nebraska Children and Families Foundation convened a diverse group of stakeholders, including Project Everlast youth council members, to design a model and conduct a fiscal analysis for extending foster care to age 21. Jim Casey Initiative and Mainspring Consulting supported the design and analysis. The Nebraska Children and Families Foundation also partnered with Nebraska Appleseed to conduct focus groups and surveys, gathering information to help shape the proposed legislation. "Seeking feedback from young people and stakeholders across the state allowed us to include hundreds of voices in the program design process, and we are hopeful that this wealth of input will assist Nebraska in creating a system of extended services and support that works for our young adults who age out of foster care," said Sarah Helvey, of Nebraska Appleseed. Young people and the sponsoring senator held a press conference, which drew positive coverage and editorials from several key media outlets in the state. "Basically, it's a great opportunity to keep kids from going on the street after foster care, because that's where everyone knows we end up at. When I think about it, if someone would have told me about this when I got out of foster care, I would have taken it in a heartbeat." —Ethan Wulf, Project Everlast Council member

MICHIGAN

Young people and *VOICE* publications address state legislators

In Michigan, when young people in foster care identified the 15 issues that most affect them, more than 20 state legislators listened. Legislators attended a breakfast where the young people presented the issues; many scheduled follow-up meetings and invited the young people to speak before legislative committees. How did these young people get their legislators' attention? Members of 16 youth boards came together for retreats and brainstorming. They put their thoughts on paper in a way that could be easily understood and presented. Publications Voice, Voice 2, and Voice 3—which note progress on goals and areas that need improvement—have informed public agency leaders, national and community partners, and the media. Young people led these efforts, while staff and community partners encouraged them, provided access to decision makers, and helped prepare young people for engaging various key audiences.

TRACK PROGRESS AND MAKE ADJUSTMENTS

Once you have set your policy goals, integrate the ongoing monitoring of progress toward those goals into your site's self-evaluation process. Make a plan for setting benchmarks, monitoring the implementation of your advocacy strategy, and making mid-course corrections part of the self-evaluation team's work. The Policy Matrix can be used to track how policies are improving over time.

As mentioned previously, ongoing review of data should help your site continue to identify its highest priorities for systems improvement, locate the greatest opportunities for action, and develop strategies for action.

Activity 2:
Young People as Advocates for Improved Systems

When young people are at the forefront of advocacy efforts, policy makers, public agency leaders, community members, and media respond positively to their message. Sites with successful advocacy efforts engage young people early and consistently; provide the skills, knowledge, and opportunities that young people need to become effective advocates; and continue to evaluate and refine their advocacy approach over time. By recruiting and supporting young people to become advocates, sites help young people gain valuable new skills that help them in their personal and professional lives.

KEY ACTION ITEMS

- Build advocacy strategies that utilize youth-adult partnerships.
- Recruit, train, and support young people as policy advocates.
- Engage young people in public will and policy advocacy opportunities.

BUILD ADVOCACY STRATEGIES THAT UTILIZE YOUTH-ADULT PARTNERSHIPS

Advocacy efforts are authentic and highly effective only when they adopt a strong youth-adult partnership approach. The public will and policy strategy must be integrated with your youth-engagement strategy. Train adults on the value of youth-adult partnerships; it is often the adults who need to shift their thinking the most to make the partnerships effective. Maintain balance between youth and adult perspectives; just as the work should not be completely driven by adults, it also should not be disproportionately driven by young people. Build in time for adults and young people to question the assumptions and stereotypes they may have about each other, and help them work together to see the value each partner can offer. Young people and adults who have not been exposed to legislative processes and advocacy will need training. When you build young people's advocacy skills, you are empowering them beyond the immediate result. You are building leadership and advocacy skills that will serve them throughout their lives.

RECRUIT, TRAIN, AND SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE AS POLICY ADVOCATES

Even before a youth leadership board is established and operational, devise strategies for identifying young people who are interested in advocacy. Use existing relationships with young people to find candidates to develop as advocates. Engage the child welfare agency's youth board mandated by the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 to identify potential opportunities for collaboration. Also use partners, such as community-based organizations

RHODE ISLAND

Regional youth boards create Sibling Bill of Rights

Rhode Island's well-trained and financially supported youth leadership board, VOICE, has helped many young people currently and formerly in foster care access employment and educational opportunities. VOICE has also had an impact on state and regional policy. Over the last two years, VOICE joined with youth leadership boards in each New England state to create and enact a Sibling Bill of Rights. The public child welfare directors of each New England state unanimously adopted the bill, changing the way child welfare agencies approach preserving and developing sibling connections. VOICE members have also served on the state legislature's Joint Legislative Committee on the Education of Children in DCYF Care and contributed to the report published by that group. VOICE also coordinated with DCYF, the Department of Education, the Board of Governors for Higher Education, and other community providers to sponsor a statewide Post-Secondary Education Summit for foster youth.

that have young affiliates, foster parent networks, group homes, and the public child welfare agency. Once young people are recruited and the youth leadership board is established, regularly train young people to prepare and deliver presentations and to understand the workings of state legislatures, providing them with opportunities to visit the legislature and observe proceedings before inviting them to participate in the process. Train young people on strategic sharing to ensure their advocacy does not become exploitative. Over the long term, develop a strategy for ongoing training, always developing new young advocates.

ENGAGE YOUNG PEOPLE IN PUBLIC WILL AND POLICY ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES

Engage young people early and consistently in the work, and develop a range of ways to form partnerships with young people. Work with partners to identify opportunities for youth and young adults to serve on boards and committees and work in other ways to influence how decisions and policies are made. Help young people use advocacy opportunities to build new skills and knowledge that can help them advocate effectively in their personal and professional lives. Expand leadership and development opportunities to other young people in foster care outside of the youth leadership board. Support for young people is needed before, during, and after engagements. Pay attention to the rest of their lives, and to individual youth versus all youth. Evaluate and refine efforts to engage young people over time.

HAWAI'I

HI H.O.P.E.S. member's summit speech catalyzes major change

For several years, advocating the extension of Medicaid to age 26 topped the list of priorities for members of the Hawai'i: Helping Our People Envision Success (HI H.O.P.E.S.) youth leadership board. In 2011, a board member presented at the Annual Children and Youth Summit, sponsored by the Keiki (Children's) Caucus, attended by more than 200 youth and child advocates. Based on that presentation, the extension became one of the caucus' top legislative priorities for 2012. HI H.O.P.E.S. members also met with the new Department of Human Services director, who testified in a Senate hearing on the bill that she intended to make the change administratively for January 2013. "Prior to me presenting at the Keiki Caucus, the majority of the people there said they were not even aware of these issues that young people encounter upon transitioning out of foster care. Even those who were representing...other issues voted for automatic enrollment to Medicaid for former foster youth. It was a great feeling." —Noy Worachit, Jim Casey Young Fellow

Tools

The following tools in **Part C** are related to this strategy:

- Core Strategies Rubric Tool
- Policy Matrix
- Practice Pathways Tool Overview

Additional Resources

Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative Website - www.JimCaseyYouth.org

The Adolescent Brain: New Research and its Implications for Young People Transitioning from Foster Care. By Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2011.

Authentic Youth Engagement: Youth-Adult Partnerships, Issue Brief #3. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2011.

Case Planning for Healthy Development, Issue Brief #6. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2012.

Equal Voice Youth Empowerment Toolkit. By Active Voice (San Francisco, CA) and Marguerite Casey Foundation (Seattle, WA). 2012.

Evaluating Policy Change and Advocacy. By Barbara Masters. Center for Evaluation Innovation (Washington, DC). 2009.

Foster Care to 21: Doing It Right, Issue Brief #1. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2011.

Policy for Results - www.policyforresults.org

Progress on State Policy Goals: The Policy Matrix Report. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2010.

Promoting Development of Resilience among Young People in Foster Care, Issue Brief #4. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2012.

Public Speaking: A Guide on How to Help Youth Prepare for Speaking Engagements from the Youth Leadership Toolkit. National Resource Center for Youth Development (Tulsa, OK). 2011.

Review of Policies and Programs Supporting Youth Transitioning Out of Foster Care. By Amy Dworsky and Judy Havlicek. Chapin Hall (Chicago, IL). 2009.

INDIANA

Young people get involved in care extension plans

Evaluating the potential costs and program implications of extending foster care beyond age 18, the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) prioritized input from young people formerly in foster care. Young people served with other stakeholders—DCS staff, leaders from other state agencies, and service providers—on committees that examined ways to improve service standards and service delivery approaches for young people transitioning from foster care. Young people were also included in a comprehensive technical assistance engagement that included sustainability planning for Indiana Connected By 25, analysis of state agency dollars spent on older young people, and projections of the cost of extending care. Young adults named the resulting plan for Indiana's extension of foster care Collaborative Care, to signal a real change in the way public and private agencies approach serving them.

Social Capital: Building Quality Networks for Young People in Foster Care, Issue Brief #2. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2011.

State Policies to Help Youth Transition Out of Foster Care. NGA Center for Best Practices (Washington, DC). 2007.

Transition Planning with Adolescents: A Review of Principles and Practices Across Systems. By Dianna Walters, Marty Zanghi, Dorothy Ansell, Eprise Armstrong and Kathy Sutter. National Resource Center for Youth Development and the University of Southern Maine, Muskie School of Public Service (Tulsa, OK). 2010.

Trauma-Informed Practice with Young People in Foster Care, Issue Brief #5. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2012.

Youth Involvement in Systems of Care: A Guide to Empowerment. By Marlene Matarese, Lorrin McGinnis, and Martha Mora. Technical Assistance Partnership (Washington, DC). 2005.

CONNECTICUT

Youth Capitol Day helps legislators hear young people

Connecticut Voices for Children's "Youth Capitol Day" has offered young people the opportunity to directly address legislators regarding critical issues for young people who are transitioning from foster care. Youth presentations to legislators played a crucial role in the introduction and passage of Public Act 12-71, requiring the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to facilitate weekly visits between siblings who are placed within 50 miles of each other.

In December 2012, Connecticut Voices for Children, the Center for Children's Advocacy, and the Jim Casey Initiative hosted a forum that brought the same stakeholders together with several national experts and youth speakers. They discussed how the state could provide supports to young people in care beyond the age of 18. Statewide events uniting young people, legislators, nonprofits, and DCF administrators can produce significant and lasting improvements for services to young people and young adults.

Strategy 5:
Increased Opportunities

OBJECTIVE

To create an array of opportunities and help young people gain access to them

BACKGROUND

Many young people transitioning from foster care face limited educational choices, lack of experience navigating the job market, difficulty finding affordable housing, and uncertain access to health care. Too few have the financial resources or know-how to obtain needed services or supports. In the absence of parental or family support to help them transition to adulthood, these young people need alternative ways to address their physical and developmental needs and opportunities to develop the skills, competencies, and knowledge they need to succeed. Mobilizing a diverse group of community partners to connect young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood to the opportunities they need is a key component of any effort to improve outcomes for these young people. Beginning with youth-led discussions about needs and partnering with adults, young people benefit from opportunities including becoming financially capable, navigating the financial services industry, and amassing assets. These are critical elements of helping young people access other opportunities. Additionally, opportunities must be offered to young people in ways that meet their developmental needs. Financial education training is more effective when applied through asset-development opportunities.

Activity 1:
Opportunity Passport™

Opportunity Passport™ is a key method for helping young people on the path toward economic success. Opportunity Passport™ is a package of resources that includes financial education and support in establishing, maintaining, and growing a bank account through matched savings opportunities. These financial resources assist young people with asset purchases such as vehicles, education and training, housing, health care, investments, credit building, and microenterprise endeavors.

KEY ACTION ITEMS

- ■ Recruit, enroll, and retain Opportunity Passport™ participants.
- ■ Deliver financial education and asset-specific training.
- ■ Support young people in saving and having bank accounts.
- ■ Support young people in purchasing assets.
- ■ Track progress and make adjustments.

IOWA

Youth Policy Institute helps launch Opportunity Passport™ sites

The Youth Policy Institute of Iowa (YPII) used its credibility and history of collaboration to create partnerships and influence the use of local funds to support the Opportunity Passport™. In Iowa, providers that delivered supports and services directly to young people implemented the Opportunity Passport™. Contracts with these providers included a requirement that participants take the Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey. As the work moves to more communities in Iowa, YPII continues to provide seed funding and technical assistance to help launch the Opportunity Passport™ in expansion sites. Service providers can now include activities to support matched savings accounts and financial education among other services to older young people.

RECRUIT, ENROLL, AND RETAIN OPPORTUNITY PASSPORT™ PARTICIPANTS

Develop an outreach plan for recruiting eligible Opportunity Passport™ participants who represent the demographics of the overall population of young people who are transitioning from foster care within the site's geographic area, as well as a variety of placements and living arrangements. Partner with local child welfare agencies as a referral source for participants. Engage young people in developing outreach strategies, preparing brochures or other written and electronic materials, and making presentations to potential participants. Enroll young people in Opportunity Passport™ once they have completed the first three modules of financial education training. Ensure that young people sign the participation letter of agreement outlining the expectations of their participation. Provide a stipend of $100 once the first phase (modules 1-3) of financial education is completed. Meet with young people on an ongoing basis to ensure their continued participation. Communicate with participants to share examples of successful asset purchases. Provide reminders of asset-specific trainings that are available. Identify and pursue potential funders for match and stipend dollars, reaching out to other community-based organizations, foundations, and corporate partners.

DELIVER FINANCIAL EDUCATION AND ASSET-SPECIFIC TRAINING

Develop a plan and schedule for financial education training, either using the Jim Casey Initiative's recommended curriculum, *Keys to Your Financial Future,* or work with your site liaison to get approval to use a different curriculum that incorporates the required competencies. Assist young people with the completion of the final four modules during their participation in Opportunity Passport™. Collaborate with young people in developing a training schedule that is sensitive to participants' work and school schedules, and to their daycare and transportation needs. Develop a plan for offering asset-specific training, whether in groups or on an individual basis, to help inform young people as consumers to make thoughtful purchases. When necessary, customize training sessions to meet the unique needs of young people in your community and to meet the developmental needs of young people of different ages. Engage young people as co-facilitators of the trainings. Help connect young people with the financial services community through creating opportunities for banking partners to be co-trainers. These partners may also be willing to provide training space and fund the production of training materials.

INDIANA

Bank employees act as mentors and financial trainers

Indiana Connected By 25 developed a unique relationship with the National Bank of Indianapolis to provide one-on-one financial education training. Each Opportunity Passport™ participant is matched with a bank employee, who serves as financial trainer and mentor to the young person. The pair works through each section of the financial education curriculum together over a period of weeks, so that young people and adults have time to get acquainted and discuss the material in depth.

SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE IN SAVING AND HAVING BANK ACCOUNTS

Support young people as they begin saving, planning for the future, setting goals, and locating opportunities for earning income. Find ways to build the monetary assets of young people. For example, provide incentives and stipends for youth leadership activities, personal efforts and enrichments, and other forms of participation and achievement such as participation in the youth leadership board and advocacy and community activities. Provide stipends in the form of cash, checks, or direct bank deposits. Form a partnership with a community-oriented, youth-friendly financial institution that is willing to alter policies to benefit young people. Assist young people in opening bank accounts that allow easy access to cash and that build experience with mainstream banking. Work with young people who may have barriers to opening a bank account, such as being in ChexSystems, to ensure they are able to have an account.

SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE IN PURCHASING ASSETS

Provide stipends for activities like taking the Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey, participating in the youth leadership board and community partnership board, and other activities determined by your site. Assist young people with setting goals for asset purchases, and support young people in achieving their goals. Establish procedures to verify available funds at the time of asset purchases. Create a process for the approval and purchase of participant-specific assets. Match Opportunity Passport™ participants' purchases dollar-to-

MICHIGAN

Iditarod Savings Challenge leads to savings goal successes

Inspired by the cold Northern Michigan winters, the MYOI coordinator created the Iditarod Savings Challenge, which took place at the same time as the famous dogsled race in Alaska. Opportunity Passport™ participants were invited to establish short-term goals for regular savings, using money from sources other than MYOI stipends. Of the 25 young people who enrolled, only one had ever made a non-stipend deposit into his savings account. At the end of the challenge, 21 young people had made at least one deposit, and a quarter of the participants realized their savings goals.

dollar up to $3,000 over the lifetime of a young person's participation for the purchase of Jim Casey Initiative-specified assets including credit building, investments, microenterprises, vehicles, housing, health, education and training, and participant-specific assets.

TRACK PROGRESS AND MAKE ADJUSTMENTS

Collect relevant data using the Opportunity Passport™ Data System and Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey to gather information about Opportunity Passport™ participants including demographics, contacts, asset purchases, training, financial education, funding partners, and site contacts. Ensure that data are consistently updated in the Opportunity Passport™ Data System and that Opportunity Passport™ participants consistently complete the Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey, a critical component in your site's ability to track progress and make course corrections as needed to effectively support participant success. Educate Opportunity Passport™ participants, community partnership board members, and youth leadership board members regarding the importance of Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey data and other reports in gaining and maintaining the resources needed to make these opportunities available to more young people. Use the data available to identify gaps in services in the community; to identify policy and practice goals; and to inform community partners, the public, and key decision makers.

Activity 2:
Door Openers

Door openers are opportunities specifically designed to help young people transitioning from foster care access the same resources that other young people have simply by being part of a family and community. Door openers help young people achieve critical developmental benchmarks and benefit from individuals promoting their personal, educational, and professional growth. Door openers are jointly created by the lead agency, community partners, and young people in order to expedite access to education, employment, housing, health care, and supportive personal and community relationships. The site's lead agency, youth leadership board, or community partners negotiate these opportunities with the public and private sectors, which include local employers, health care providers, educational institutions, service providers, and faith-based and community organizations.

MAINE

Community partnership board sends college students care packages

After a college student spoke about how challenging it was to see other students receiving care packages from their families, the local community partnership board began sending care packages to local Opportunity Passport™ participants who are attending college.

KEY ACTION ITEMS
- ■ Collaboratively create door openers.
- ■ Set benchmarks, collect data, and monitor progress.

COLLABORATIVELY CREATE DOOR OPENERS

Create door openers that are responsive to specific needs identified by young people and developed collaboratively with community partnership board members. Your site may want to begin by bringing together young people and adults who are excited about creating door openers in a subcommittee of the community partnership board or in a retreat or focus-group setting. Educate young people about door openers through brochures, electronic media, referral forms, catalogs, youth presentations at recruitment events, and youth leadership board meetings. Door openers are an excellent way to meet the individual needs of young people in a timely fashion. Community members can often be enlisted to help address their needs, once they are aware of what those needs are.

SET BENCHMARKS, COLLECT DATA, AND MONITOR PROGRESS

Establishing short- and long-term goals and methods for tracking progress will enable you to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of existing door openers and the need for additional door openers over

NEBRASKA

Four-to-one matching funds for autos offer extra support

In Nebraska, a local funder is helping young people receive four-to-one matching funds for auto purchases. Dealerships assign designated salespeople to take the young people and their cars to a company that will perform a required auto inspection at a negotiated price paid by the site. The company also makes all of the necessary repairs found during the inspection. "As a funder, it's important to know that supports are in place that help young people make wise purchases." —Kristin Williams of the Sherwood Foundation.

INDIANA

At "Ask the Experts," young people get financial answers

Indiana Connected By 25 participants have the opportunity to "Ask the Experts" at an annual, daylong event sponsored by ADP (Automatic Data Processing, Inc.). Employees bring together experts to address topics such as credit scores, navigating lease agreements, insurance, job searching, budgeting, saving, and purchasing a vehicle, and they get to know the young people during informal breakfast and lunch discussions.

time. Create a process to track how door openers are being used by young people in your community. Use various media resources such as Facebook or Twitter to communicate the availability of door openers to young people.

Activity 3:
Young People as Decision Makers for Increased Opportunities

Young people need to be the driving force behind the creation of opportunities if those opportunities are to meet young people's needs. Providing a seat at the table for interested young people from the very beginning ensures that sites produce useful opportunities that young people will be invested in. Sites have found it beneficial to involve young people in all aspects of Opportunity Passport™ and in creating door openers. Although engaging young people requires time and resources, sites recognize a return on their investment when young people's response to the opportunities offered increases.

KEY ACTION ITEMS

- Engage young people in developing and monitoring door openers.
- Engage young people in gathering and evaluation of data.
- Utilize young people as communicators and recruiters.

ENGAGE YOUNG PEOPLE IN DEVELOPING AND MONITORING DOOR OPENERS

Integrate this component of the increased opportunities strategy with the youth-engagement strategy. Identify young people who are interested in developing and carrying out an implementation plan for the Opportunity Passport™ and helping to identify and create door openers. Encourage subcommittees of the youth leadership board and community partnership board to do periodic surveys about the use of and need for door openers, asset-specific training, and ongoing financial education trainings. Analyze the utilization rate of doors openers. If a door opener has proven to be very popular and effective, explore the potential benefit of approaching the public sector to institutionalize and fund it.

ENGAGE YOUNG PEOPLE IN GATHERING AND EVALUATION OF DATA

Utilize young people as members of the self-evaluation team. Train them with the help of your Jim Casey Initiative site liaison to understand the data and how it can be used to improve outcomes for young people in your community. Use data with the youth leadership board to inform the site of where there are gaps in services

NEW MEXICO

Heart Gallery provides needed mattresses to young people

The Heart Gallery of New Mexico supports a local youth leadership board composed of young people currently and formerly in foster care. Young people expressed the need for mattresses when they transitioned from foster care. The Heart Gallery developed a partnership with a mattress company, which currently provides a free, brand-new mattress to all young people aging out of foster care in New Mexico. Once a young person has established a place to live, the mattress company will deliver and set up their mattress. The Heart Gallery works to facilitate this process. According to the involved young people, something as simple as having a clean, comfortable bed can help them achieve in areas such as education, employment, and health.

and resources in a community and to identify policy and practice goals. Data can also be powerful when communicating your site's work to the legislature, child welfare agencies, and other state and local agencies.

UTILIZE YOUNG PEOPLE AS COMMUNICATORS AND RECRUITERS

Word of mouth has often been reported as a mechanism of recruiting young people in a community, so enlist young people to spread the word about Opportunity Passport™. Young people should be used as communicators and advocates to assist with recruiting additional young people, and supporting other participants. Identify interested young people and provide them the skills and knowledge they need to be effective trainers.

Tools

The following tools in **Part C** are related to this strategy:

- Environmental Scan
- *Keys to Your Financial Future* Overview
- Opportunity Passport™ Data System Overview
- Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey

Trainings

The following Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative trainings are related to this strategy:

- Increased Opportunities and the Opportunity Passport™ Training
- *Keys to Your Financial Future* Train-the-Trainer Webinar
- Opportunity Passport™ Data System Training

Additional Resources

Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative Website - www.JimCaseyYouth.org

Asset Platform – www.assetplatform.org

Assets Alliance – www.assetsalliance.org

Center for Family Economic Success at The Annie E. Casey Foundation – www.aecf.org

Center for Financial Services Innovation - www.cfsinnovation.com

Center for Social Development at Washington University in St. Louis - https://csd.wustl.edu

Choose to Save - www.choosetosave.org/asec

Corporation for Enterprise Development - www.cfed.org

Council on Economic Education - www.councilforeconed.org

Credit Builders Alliance - www.creditbuildersalliance.org

Credit Builders Toolkit, Credit Builders Alliance – www.creditbuildersalliance.org/toolkit

California Connected by 25: Efforts to Address Financial Competency and Asset Development Among Transitioning Foster Youth. By Heidi Sommer, Lynn Wu, and Jane Mauldon. California Connected by 25 (Berkeley, CA). 2009.

Enduring Assets: The Financial Lives of Young People Transitioning from Foster Care. By Clark Peters, Margaret Sherraden, and Anne Marie Kuchinski. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2012.

The Finance Project - www.financeproject.org

Financing Asset-Building and Financial Education Programs for Youth Transitioning Out of Foster Care. By Aracelis Gray. The Finance Project (New York, NY). 2007.

Individual Development Accounts: Summary of Research. By Michael Sherraden and Benjamin E. Youngdahl. Center for Social Development at Washington University (St. Louis, MO). 2002.

Jump$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy – www.jumpstart.org

Mainspring Consulting, LLC – www.mainspringconsulting.org

National Community Reinvestment Coalition – www.ncrc.org

National Endowment for Financial Education – www.nefe.org

The Opportunity Passport™: Building Assets for Young People Transitioning from Foster Care: Findings from the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (St. Louis, MO). 2009.

Search Institute – www.search-institute.org

U.S. Financial Literacy and Education Commission – www.mymoney.gov

Why Assets Matter: An overview of research on assets and their effect on financial stability and economic opportunity Corporation for Enterprise Development (Washington, DC). 2011.

Youth Transitions Resource Center at The Finance Project – www. financeproject.org

PART C

TOOLS

JIM CASEY YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES INITIATIVE TOOLKIT FOR SITES

JIM CASEY YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES INITIATIVE TOOLKIT FOR SITES

TOOLS: ALPHABETICAL LIST

Annual Plan Template
Brand Style Guide
Communications Plan Template
Communications Planning Webinar
Core Strategies Rubric Tool
Environmental Scan
Guide to Self-Evaluation Overview
Keys to Your Financial Future Overview
Opportunity Passport™ Data System Overview
Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey
Policy and Practice Recommendations
Policy Matrix
Practice Pathways Tool Overview
Site-Level Logic Model
Technical Assistance Overview

TOOLS: GROUPED BY CORE STRATEGY

Strategy 1: Youth Engagement
Core Strategies Rubric Tool

Strategy 2: Partnerships and Resources
Environmental Scan

Strategy 3: Research, Evaluation, and Communications
Brand Style Guide
Communications Plan Template
Communications Planning Webinar
Core Strategies Rubric Tool
Environmental Scan
Guide to Self-Evaluation Overview
Opportunity Passport™ Data System Overview
Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey
Policy Matrix
Practice Pathways Tool Overview
Site-Level Logic Model

Strategy 4: Public Will and Policy
Core Strategies Rubric Tool
Policy Matrix
Practice Pathways Tool Overview

Strategy 5: Increased Opportunities
Environmental Scan
Keys to Your Financial Future Overview
Opportunity Passport™ Data System Overview
Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey

ANNUAL PLAN TEMPLATE

Annual Plan Template

INTRODUCTION (one paragraph to one half page)

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS YEAR'S KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CRITICAL AREAS OF CHALLENGE (two to three pages)

Accomplishments around *implementation of the five core strategies***:**

- Youth Engagement
- Partnerships and Resources
- Research, Evaluation, and Communications
- Public Will and Policy
- Increased Opportunities

Critical areas of challenge in *implementation of the five core strategies* **over the past year:**

- Youth Engagement
- Partnerships and Resources
- Research, Evaluation, and Communications
- Public Will and Policy
- Increased Opportunities

Accomplishments around improving *outcomes* **for young people transitioning from foster care:**

- Permanence
- Education
- Employment
- Financial Capability
- Housing
- Physical and Mental Health
- Social Capital

Critical areas of challenge for improving *outcomes* **for young people transitioning from foster care:**

- Permanence
- Education
- Employment
- Financial Capability
- Housing
- Physical and Mental Health
- Social Capital

Annual Plan

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION WORK PLAN

Strategy/activity	Goal	Related Core Strategies Rubric criteria	What will success look like?	Lead	Target date	Review dates	Progress to date	How young people are involved	Related communications goals
Youth Engagement									
Partnerships and Resources									
Research, Evaluation, and Communications									
Public Will and Policy									
Increased Opportunities									
Sustainability									
Expansion									

What technical assistance, if any, is needed to accomplish these goals?

OUTCOME WORK PLAN

Outcome area	Policy/practice changes needed?	Goals	Related youth and/ or systems indicator(s)	Intermediate performance measures	Lead	Target date	Review dates	Progress to date	How young people are involved	Related
Permanence										
Education										
Employment										
Financial Capability										
Housing										
Physical and Mental Health										
Social Capital										

What technical assistance, if any, is needed to accomplish these goals?

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION (one paragraph to one half page)

ATTACHMENTS

Most recent Performance Measure and Benchmark State Summary Tool

Budget and Budget Narrative

Due-diligence requirements (only as specifically requested, as most are now available online)

BRAND STYLE GUIDE

Brand Style Guide

This Brand Style Guide provides information and tools that your site needs in order to use the Jim Casey Initiative brand.

The Approval Process

To ensure that the Jim Casey Initiative's key messages and brand image are clearly and consistently communicated, your site is required to submit any material bearing the Jim Casey Initiative logo to your site liaison for review prior to release.

If you have any questions, please contact:

> Director of Communications
> Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative
> 314-863-7000

Language Guidelines—Core Messages

▪ Tagline

Helping young people make successful transitions from foster care to adulthood

▪ Positioning Statements

The Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative was created in 2001 from a vision that every young person leaving foster care should have the opportunities and support needed for a successful transition to adulthood. For more than 10 years, the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative has been one of the leading national voices in child welfare, particularly focused on supporting young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood. The Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative bridges a gap in services for a very targeted, definable group: young people ages 14 to 25 who are transitioning from foster care to adulthood.

▪ Mission Statement

The mission of the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative is to ensure that young people—primarily those between ages 14 and 25—make successful transitions from foster care to adulthood. We do this by working nationally, in states, and locally to improve policies and practices, promote youth engagement, apply evaluation and research, and create community partnerships. Our work creates opportunities for young people to achieve positive outcomes in permanence, education, employment, housing, health, financial capability, and social capital.

Language Guidelines—Elevator Pitch

The Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative is dedicated to helping young people make a successful transition from foster care to adulthood. Each year, nearly 30,000 young people transition from foster care without connections to a stable family or community. Many haven't benefited from typical growing-up experiences that teach self-sufficiency,

and without a solid family and community network, they face significant challenges: more than one in five will become homeless after age 18, and only 58 percent will graduate high school by age 19.

The Jim Casey Initiative works on a national and state-by-state level to improve the lives of young people transitioning from foster care. For example, as a result of our work:

- Seven states have extended Medicaid coverage for young people ages 18 to 21 who have left foster care.
- Four states now provide post-secondary education opportunities through tuition waivers for young people who have aged out of foster care.
- Two states have implemented the federal option to extend foster care from age 18 to 21.

This is a solvable problem, and a population that we can wrap our arms around. With the right community connections, policies, and strategic investments in place, we can make sweeping change – and truly improve how the foster care system operates in America.

Language Guidelines—Style Principles

The following general rules should be followed when creating communications content related to the Jim Casey Initiative:

1. When speaking about the organization, always say "Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative." *
2. When writing about the organization, write "Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative" on first mention and then "Jim Casey Initiative" thereafter. Never refer to it as "the Initiative." *

    This shift in style conveys the importance of Mr. Jim Casey to our work; by always including his name, even after the first mention, we are reinforcing the organization's identity.

3. <u>NEVER</u> use the acronym JCYOI in public or press documents. Use of JCYOI internally should be avoided.
4. The Jim Casey Initiative focuses on young people "transitioning from foster care to adulthood."
5. We focus on "young people" who are in foster care and transitioning from foster care, not "foster kids," "foster youth," or "foster children."
6. The Jim Casey Initiative supports the work of "sites," not "pilot sites" or "demonstration sites."
7. Refer to the Jim Casey Initiative, not the "Program."
8. "Opportunity Passport™" is always written with initial capital letters and the trademark symbol.
9. Use "Jim Casey Initiative Young Fellows" on first mention and "Young Fellows," capitalized as shown here, thereafter.
10. Contact information for the organization should be written using the following formats:

    A. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative
       222 South Central Ave., Suite 305
       St. Louis, MO 63105

    B. www.JimCaseyYouth.org

    C. 314-863-7000

* Use "the" when the name of the organization is a noun, but not when it is an adjective.

Visual Guidelines—Logo Narrative

The Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative was created from a vision that every young person leaving foster care should have the opportunities and support needed for a successful transition to adulthood. Our logo conveys the adult-youth partnerships at the core of our work that facilitate this transition.

The adult tree stands for stability and guidance. The young tree represents growing strength and resilience. The proximity of the two trees symbolizes the critical relationships and trust necessary for young people in—and transitioning from—foster care to cultivate confidence, and become self-sufficient, successful adults.

The adult and young person represented in the trees stand on one united foundation, and draw strength from the youth opportunities that the Jim Casey Initiative strives to implement on a state and national level.

Visual Guidelines—Horizontal Logo (Preferred)

The logo of the Jim Casey Initiative is the main visual element, which connects people to the organization's mission. The logo is carefully proportioned to work at a variety of sizes in marketing, media, and philanthropy engagement materials, in both web and print formats. Please follow these guidelines for use to ensure that the logo retains its impact as the official mark of the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative.

CORE ELEMENTS: The logo consists of two trees in an overlapping configuration. It should not be redrawn, digitally manipulated or altered in any way. The logo must always be reproduced from a digital master reference. This is available in eps, jpeg, png and gif format. Please ensure the appropriate artwork format is used.

USES: The logo should be included on all publications, marketing, and communications material coming from the Jim Casey Initiative. While (a) is the main logo mark and should be included either on the front or back of all material, version (b) offers a two-color approach, and (c) offers a grayscale approach as alternatives to accommodate printing limitations.

FILE FORMATS: EPS, JPEG, GIF, PNG digital usage. To receive this artwork, please contact the communications director.
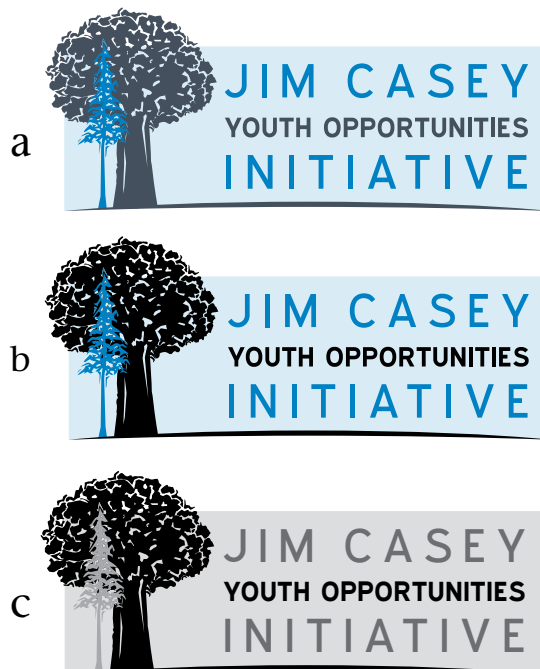
Visual Guidelines—Vertical Logo

The logo of the Jim Casey Initiative should be used primarily in landscape (horizontal) mode, as described on the prior page. However, when space requires, the logo can be used secondarily in portrait (vertical) mode, as outlined here.

USES: Similar to the default landscape logo, (a) is the main logo in full color. Version (b) offers a two-color approach, and (c) offers a grayscale approach as alternative versions.
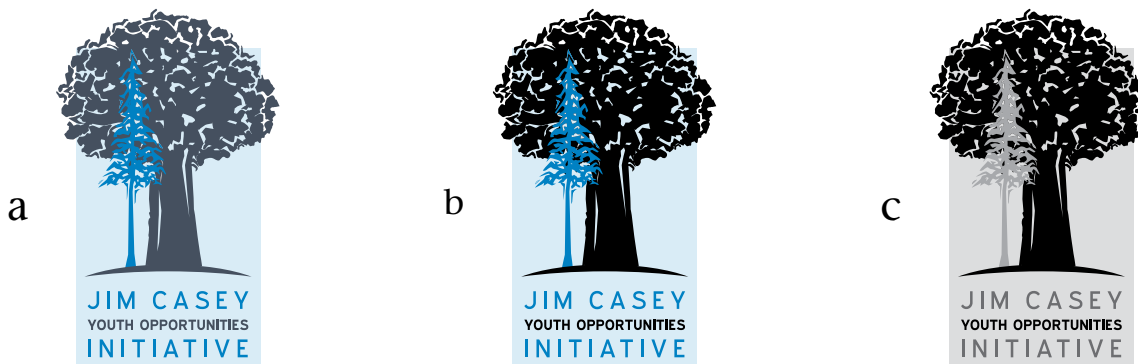
Visual Guidelines—Logo Colors, Contrast, and Type

LOGO COLORS

Three (3) versions of the logo have been created to suit the various applications in which it might be used.

1. PMS 296 & Process Blue

2. PMS Black & Process Blue

3. Monochrome/Grayscale

LOGO CONTRASTS

When using the logo with a colored background, you should make sure there is enough contrast between the design elements in the logo and the background.

Enough contrast

Not enough contrast

The colors used in the primary Jim Casey Initiative logo are:

PMS	296	
WEB	#003366	
RGB	0, 45, 86	
CMYK	100, 46, 0, 70	

PMS	Process Blue	
WEB	#3399CC	
RGB	0, 153, 204	
CMYK	78, 24, 6, 0	

The typeface used in the Jim Casey Initiative logo is **Expressway**.

Visual Guidelines—Logo Positioning and Sizing

LOGO POSITIONING—DO

When used as a main design element on a cover of a publication, the primary horizontal logo (shown below) should be used whenever possible as shown in the image below:

<u>YES</u>

POSITIONING THE LOGO WITH COPY

When the logo is to be used in conjunction with copy, it's important to have enough blank space around the logo to not crowd the design elements. A minimum of a ½ inch margin around the logo should be used.

LOGO POSITIONING—DON'T

When using the logo, do not reconfigure the elements or sizing between them. The *aspect ratio* of the logo should never be changed. It should not be stretched in any way.

<u>NO</u>
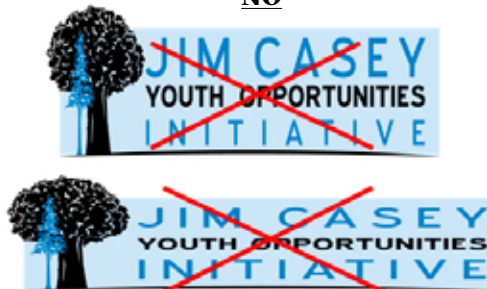
SIZING

The logo is dynamic enough to be scaled up or down significantly. However to ensure readability, the logo itself should never be smaller than 1.75 inches.

Conversely, the logo should never be larger than 25 percent of a document's size.

Brand Attributes

The brand of the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative can be defined through its brand attributes—the elements that represent the organization's core philosophy and goals.

JIM CASEY INITIATIVE BRAND ATTRIBUTES ARE:

The Environment: Nurturing, Collaborative, Engaging, Committed to Learning

The Product: Foster Care, Child Welfare, Excellence, Quality, Permanency, National Voice

The Feeling: Empowering, Engaging, Experienced, Tenacious, Resilient, a Solvable Problem

The People: Professional, Invested, Youth-Led

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN TEMPLATE

ABOUT THE COMMUNICATIONS PLAN TEMPLATE

This template will help your site develop communications goals and activities that advance your overall plan to carry out the Jim Casey Initiative core strategies. The Planning Questions table below will help guide your completion of the subsequent pages.

Once you have completed the template, copy the communications goals and activities into your site's annual plan, or attach this as an appendix. If you have any questions about creating a communications plan using this template, please contact your site liaison.

PLANNING QUESTIONS

CORE STRATEGY	COMMUNICATION GOALS	SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES	BENCHMARKS
[THIS FIELD IS PRE-FILLED]	**Ask yourself:** ■ What could we accomplish through communications that would contribute most to implementing this core strategy? ■ What challenge(s) do we face this year that we should or need to address through communications? ■ Which stakeholders or other key audiences do we need to reach most?	**Ask yourself, with regard to the communications goal:** ■ What steps do we need to take to achieve this goal? ■ What data would help us achieve this goal? (How can we get and prepare young people's personal stories? Can we obtain this and other data from local sources or the Jim Casey Initiative?) ■ What activity and message would be most effective at reaching each of the identified key audiences? ■ What materials would help us achieve this goal? (Can we obtain and/or adapt these from local sources or the Jim Casey Initiative?) ■ Can we use social media to achieve this goal? ■ What special events would help us achieve this goal? ■ How can youth leadership board members participate in achieving this goal? ■ Are there examples of other successful site activities we can draw from? ■ How can we budget for the communications activities we need? **As needs are identified above, activities can be listed, e.g.:** ■ Involve young people in creating Facebook page for our site. ■ Develop donor outreach brochure. ■ Revise PowerPoint presentation using Jim Casey Initiative template.	**Ask yourself, with regard to the communications goal and each supporting activity:** ■ How will we measure our success in accomplishing this goal? ■ What specific benchmarks would we like to achieve for each activity (e.g., number of Facebook likes, key donors we want to reach with brochure, etc.)? ■ What are our deadlines or desired completion dates for these benchmarks? ■ What data will we need to collect to measure progress against benchmarks? ■ Who will gather and track the data?

Communications Plan

Core Strategy	Communications Goal	Supporting Activities	Benchmarks
Youth Engagement	▪		

Core Strategy	Communications Goal	Supporting Activities	Benchmarks
Partnerships and Resources	▪		

Communications Plan

Core Strategy	Communications Goal	Supporting Activities	Benchmarks
Research, Evaluation, and Communications	■		

Core Strategy	Communications Goal	Supporting Activities	Benchmarks
Public Will and Policy	■		

Communications Plan

Core Strategy	Communications Goal	Supporting Activities	Benchmarks
Increased Opportunities	▪		

COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING WEBINAR

ABOUT THE COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING WEBINAR

This tool will help you create an effective communications plan for your site. It is a summary of one of the communications-themed webinars that the Jim Casey Initiative has provided to sites. These webinars are presented throughout the year. You can participate in them as they take place or download them from the Jim Casey Initiative website after logging in.

Contact your site liaison to learn about upcoming communications webinars.

Communications Planning

This is one of the communication-themed educational webinars from the Jim Casey Initiative. It was presented on February 16, 2012. It is available for download at www.JimCaseyYouth.org.

Effective communications planning involves:
- Goal setting
- Developing initiatives that have impact
- Measuring success

To develop a goal you must:
- Understand your challenges
- Identify target audiences
- Determine your current resources

Sample Challenges Faced by Sites
- Lack of solutions-focused messaging for various audiences
- Lack of resources to develop and execute a communications plan
- Inability to brand/co-brand content for the web and print that ties the work of sites to the national Jim Casey Initiative
- Need for guidance on how to use young people's content in telling stories of impact and how to be most effective and sensitive to their needs
- Gaining the support of key stakeholders
- Sustaining a sense of urgency among key stakeholders and the media

Sample Target Audiences for Sites
- Child welfare and other state agencies
- Local funders
- Policy makers and the court system
- Media
- Business and non-profit agencies
- Foster parents
- Young people formerly in foster care
- Public education systems and institutions of higher education

Developing Goals
To be effective, goals should be:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Realistic
- Time-Defined

Sample Goals from Sites

Core Strategy	Sample Site Communications Goal
Youth Engagement	• Empower young people in foster care to share stories of struggle and success with stakeholders, including the media.
Partnerships & Resources	• Increase funding/donations. • Increase participation of community partners. • Better align site work with that of national Jim Casey Initiative.
Research, Evaluation, & Communications	• Increase communications between and among the sites and between the sites and the national Jim Casey Initiative. • Ensure consistent message delivery by all site staff. • Increase Jim Casey Initiative knowledge and promotion of site successes.
Public Will & Policy	• More effectively integrate data from the national Jim Casey Initiative into communications materials.
Increased Opportunities	• Ensure young people know about available opportunities (e.g., Opportunity Passport™).

Sample Communications Activities

Core Strategy	Communications Goal:	Sample Activities:
Youth Engagement	• Empower young people in foster care to share their stories of struggle and success with key stakeholders, including the media.	• Host a quarterly roundtable for young people to share feedback on issues that they'd most like to address or share about their personal experiences transitioning from foster care to adulthood. Focus media relations around the identified core issues. • Repurpose national media interview best practices webinar content and host a media training session with select young people to help prepare and empower them to share their stories of impact with the media and other stakeholders. • Host a special meet-and-greet twice a year to give community partners, donors, and other stakeholders an opportunity to engage directly with the young people their programs and funding support.

Sample Communications Activities

Core Strategy	Communications Goal:	Sample Activities:
Partnerships & Resources	• Increase funding/donations and participation from community partners.	• Secure opportunities for young people to speak at events where potential funders and donors will be present. • Update existing outreach materials to ensure they include recent data, success stories, and young people's anecdotes (use Jim Casey Initiative materials as resource). • Develop a set of materials targeted specifically toward donors.

Sample Communications Activities

Core Strategy	Communications Goal:	Sample Activities:
Research, Evaluation, & Communications	• Reach out regularly to convey the challenges and positive outcomes of young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood.	• Develop an outreach schedule listing issues to discuss with media and other audiences to draw positive attention to young people in foster care and site outcomes (For example: September = Education). • Respond to e-newsletter monthly calls to action to share site successes, best practices, and other accomplishments with site colleagues. • Draw from the successful practices and activities in the Jim Casey Initiative toolkit.

Sample Communications Activities

Core Strategy	Communications Goal:	Sample Activities:
Public Will & Policy	• More effectively integrate policy and child welfare data into communications materials.	• Write a letter to legislators encouraging them to improve policies for young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood (use/repurpose "Letter to Funders and Legislators" available at www.JimCaseyYouth.org). • Bring partners together to meet with legislators on extending foster care to age 21 (use/repurpose issue brief *Extending Foster Care to 21: Doing It Right,* available at www.JimCasey.org). • Use both qualitative (young people's stories) and quantitative (Opportunity Passport™) data to influence policy makers. • View the webinar on the Opportunity Passport™ data and messaging (available at www.JimCasey.org).

Sample Communications Activities

Core Strategy	Communications Goal:	Sample Activities:
Increased Opportunities	• Ensure young people know about the opportunities offered to support their transition to adulthood (e.g., Opportunity Passport™).	• Social media • Flyers • E-newsletters • Local career fairs • College fairs • High school events • County fairs • Child welfare outreach vehicles

What Does Success Look Like?
And How Will Your Site Measure Success?

Qualitative Success

Can be measured by:
• Public, media, and staff perception
• Types of media hits
• Message quality

Quantitative Success

Can be measured by:
• Number of news stories
• Increased web traffic
• Social network subscribers/followers
• E-newsletter subscribers and click-through rates
• Number of secured speaking opportunities

CORE STRATEGIES RUBRIC TOOL

ABOUT THE CORE STRATEGIES RUBRIC TOOL

The Core Strategies Rubric Tool is an interactive version of the Core Strategies Rubric that helps you use benchmarks to set goals, quantify your success, and keep your work on track. It is a self-evaluation tool.

Each local site submits a completed Core Strategies Rubric Tool to its state lead agency regularly throughout the year. The state lead agency uses these to complete an annual work plan and an annual statewide summary report, which it submits to the Jim Casey Initiative.

Fill out the Core Strategies Rubric Tool on an ongoing basis, not all at once at the end of the year. Involve a broad array of people who are active in your site—including self-evaluation team members, youth leadership board members, community partnership board members, and child welfare agency representatives. Make sure everyone understands the criteria, the language used, and how that language relates to your local implementation. You can separate the pages of the tool and give them to the people most closely engaged in the activity or strategy described.

How To Complete the Core Strategies Rubric Tool

The Core Strategies Rubric Tool helps you complete a self-assessment to gauge your site's progress toward full implementation of the five core strategies of the Jim Casey Initiative. The core strategies are as follows:

- Youth Engagement
- Partnerships and Resources
- Research, Evaluation, and Communications
- Public Will and Policy
- Increased Opportunities

Within each core strategy, the rubric lists several activities that your site will carry out as you implement the core strategies.

As you read the tool from left to right, you'll see that each column describes one of the four stages of implementing the activities within the core strategies:

- Preparation
- Application
- Refinement
- Optimization

The Core Strategies Rubric Tool provides four different ways for you to track your site's progress toward implementing the core strategies:

1. CRITERIA CHECK BOXES

Find the column corresponding to your stage of implementation and check off the criteria that you have met under each activity. At the bottom of each column, tally the number of criteria that are checked. (This occurs automatically

when you fill out the electronic version of the tool, available from your site liaison.)

2. COMMENTS FIELD

Use the comments field at the bottom of each column to chart your site's progress in each stage of implementation.

3. PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND BENCHMARKS

For each activity with a related performance measure, the performance measure is noted under the name of the activity, and the Core Strategies Rubric Tool provides corresponding questions to assist your site in setting benchmarks and assessing progress.

4. REVIEW QUESTIONS

At the end of each core strategy section, answer the two questions at the bottom of the page to help you assess your key accomplishments and challenges and plan for improvement. Identify what next steps or technical assistance you might need to make progress.

If You Are the State Lead Agency

With support from your Jim Casey Initiative site liaison and Metis liaison, you are asked to:
- Coordinate local sites' completion of the Core Strategies Rubric Tool.
  - Introduce local sites to the Core Strategies Rubric Tool. Tell them of any criteria, such as those related to setting policy goals, that do not apply to them.
  - Ensure that the tool is completed as part of their self-evaluation process throughout the year. The process might look a little different in each local site.
  - Work with your Jim Casey Initiative site liaison to determine how to local sites should submit their tools to you.
- Analyze the data from all sites statewide regularly.
  - Use the tool to keep your work on track and set goals on the local and state levels.
  - Work with your Jim Casey Initiative site liaison and Metis liaison to determine how best to analyze the data.
- Complete the Core Strategies Rubric Tool annually on the state level.
  - Based on the tool that each site submits for the full calendar year, complete the tool on the state level as part of your state's self-evaluation process.
  - Do this at a time that allows you to use the data in your state's process for completing an annual plan.
  - You do not need to submit a completed Core Strategies Rubric Tool to the Jim Casey Initiative.
  - Local funding partners, if applicable, can determine whether they would like the Core Strategies Rubric Tool to be submitted to them.
- Develop an annual plan based on the completed Core Strategies Rubric Tool.
  - Each year, submit an annual work plan to the Jim Casey Initiative. This work plan must indicate that you

have completed a self-assessment using the Core Strategies Rubric Tool.

- • Your Jim Casey Initiative liaison can provide you with guidance on completing an annual work plan.

■ Submit a state summary report to the Jim Casey Initiative by Jan. 31 of each year, reporting on the previous calendar year.

- • In this report, you summarize progress on performance measures across all sites in your state. Complete this report with guidance from your Jim Casey Initiative site liaison.

- • This report does not need to coincide with the completion of your statewide Core Strategies Rubric Tool or annual plan for the preceding calendar year. You can use the most recent Core Strategies Rubric Tools submitted by sites.

- • This report does need to be based on statewide Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey data, Opportunity Passport™ Data System data, and leverage data from the preceding calendar year.

Core Strategies Rubric Tool

Strategy 1: Youth Engagement

OBJECTIVE:

To prepare young people to be meaningfully involved as decision makers and self-advocates

Activity 1: Youth Leadership Boards

CRITERIA   Please check off each criterion that has been met by your site for each stage of implementation.

PREPARATION	APPLICATION	REFINEMENT	OPTIMIZATION
The site prepares for the development of a youth leadership board. Essential criteria are:	The site has a formally established youth leadership board. Essential criteria are:	The site has practices in place to support an ongoing youth leadership board. Essential criteria are:	The site has in place a youth leadership board that is a partner in developing and evaluating practices and policies that affect them. The essential criterion is:
❑ Recruitment and retention strategies are designed to engage a cross-section of young people in the board.	❑ The board has guidelines or bylaws that govern its functioning.	❑ A plan is in place for engaging younger members to the board and providing them with training to ensure continuity of leadership as other members move on.	❑ The board's work improves policies and practices in public and private agencies.
❑ Training that supports new board members in creating the board's agenda, setting benchmarks, and establishing preliminary guidelines is provided.	❑ The board members develop important peer relationships and acquire professional skills by working together on tangible projects such as deciding how to spend board funds, making grants, recruiting and training new members, and developing written resources for young people in care.	❑ The board is involved in developing and evaluating practices and policies affecting young people in and transitioning from foster care to adulthood.	
❑ Sufficient funds are available for board member stipends.			
❑ Discretionary funds are available for youth leadership board members to manage and distribute.	❑ The board is working with the community partnership board to implement the five core strategies.		
❑ Procedures are in place for providing stipends, transportation, and other logistical supports.	❑ The board receives public attention for its work and contributions to child welfare and other systems' policy and practice.		
❑ Adult staff who will support the youth leadership board and apply the principles of youth-adult partnership have been identified and trained.			
___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met
Comments:	Comments:	Comments:	Comments:

Strategy 1: Youth Engagement

Activity 1: Youth Leadership Boards

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND BENCHMARKS

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	GUIDELINES	CURRENT BENCHMARK date set: _____	PROGRESS as of _____ date	BENCHMARK FOR NEXT PERIOD date set: _____
Number and percent of Youth Leadership Board/s goals met	❑ Site sets benchmark for % of goals to be accomplished. ❑ Goals are related to Youth Leadership Board operations, such as goals for recruitment of members, for board member training, or for improved board functioning. ❑ Youth Leadership Board/s goals outlined in sites' plans and updated annually.	_____N / _____% of goals met (list goals)	_____N / _____% of goals met	_____N / _____% of goals met (list goals)

NOTES

Strategy 1: Youth Engagement

Activity 2: Young People as Effective Self-Advocates

Please check off each criterion that has been met by your site for each stage of implementation.

PREPARATION

Developmentally appropriate self-advocacy training and supports for young people are identified or developed. Essential criteria are:

❑ Self-advocacy training and supports are available to help young people:
- understand their strengths and needs;
- identify personal goals;
- know their legal rights and responsibilities; and
- know how best to communicate the above to others.

❑ Training and supports help the public child welfare agency and other systems act as partners with and support young people as they advocate for themselves.

❑ Young people are involved in identifying or developing training and supports.

___ of ___ criteria met

Comments:

APPLICATION

Young people are receiving training and supports to help them become effective self-advocates. Essential criteria are:

❑ Self-advocacy training and supports are provided to young people.

❑ Young people are facilitating and/or co-facilitating self-advocacy training and supports.

❑ Advocacy strategies utilizing youth-adult partnerships support young people in becoming effective self-advocates are implemented. Resources are available to support self-advocacy training and supports.

___ of ___ criteria met

Comments:

REFINEMENT

Young people are involved in the process of making decisions about their own lives. Essential criteria are:

❑ The public child welfare agency and other systems that serve young people consistently provide opportunities for young people to make decisions about their own lives.

❑ Self-advocacy training and supports are provided on an ongoing basis to an increasing number of young people.

___ of ___ criteria met

Comments:

OPTIMIZATION

Young people are leading the process of making decisions about their own lives. Essential criteria are:

❑ In multiple public and private agencies, young people are consistently provided developmentally appropriate opportunities to lead the process of making decisions about their own lives.

❑ Systems have committed funds to providing young people with ongoing self-advocacy training and supports.

___ of ___ criteria met

Comments:

Strategy 1: Youth Engagement

Based on criteria checked and progress made on the performance measure, what are your key accomplishments for this strategy area? How did you accomplish them?

How do you plan to address any challenges that have been encountered? What are the areas in which you may need some technical assistance, and how would technical assistance ensure progress in the identified area?

Strategy 2: Partnerships and Resources

OBJECTIVE:

To access the resources of public and private systems and philanthropic organizations, expand and deepen community support, and cultivate community champions for young people transitioning from foster care

Activity 1: Community Partnership Boards

Please check off each criterion that has been met by your site for each stage of implementation.

PREPARATION	APPLICATION	REFINEMENT	OPTIMIZATION
The site engages a diverse cross-section of community members when forming its community partnership board. Essential criteria are: ❑ Young people transitioning from foster care, key leaders from the child welfare agency, community stakeholders, and potential funders are included. ❑ Influential public and private partners from the following sectors: education, employment, housing, physical and mental health financial capability, permanence, and social capital are included.	The community partnership board is active in implementing the five core strategies. Essential criteria are: ❑ The community partnership board has guidelines that govern its functioning. ❑ Working with the youth leadership board, the community partnership board sets board agendas, benchmarks, and policy and practice goals. ❑ The board uses the self-evaluation process to refine and improve implementation of the five core strategies.	The community partnership board includes leaders of the public and private sector who understand the needs of young people transitioning from foster care. Essential criteria are: ❑ The board works to improve policy and practice within state and local systems. ❑ Public and private partners have begun to integrate some aspects of the five core strategies into their ongoing work.	Community partnership board leaders have embedded the core strategies into philanthropic, private, and public systems. Essential criteria are: ❑ The five core strategies are aligned with and integrated into the work of the child welfare agency and the education, labor, housing, and physical and mental health departments. ❑ Private partners support the five core strategies and use them to improve outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care.
___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met
Comments:	Comments:	Comments:	Comments:

Strategy 2: Partnerships and Resources

Activity 2: Resource Development

Please check off each criterion that has been met by your site for each stage of implementation.

PREPARATION	APPLICATION	REFINEMENT	OPTIMIZATION
The site identifies resources for implementing core strategies within its geographic area. Essential criteria are:	The site leverages additional resources in the community to support young people in and transitioning from foster care. Essential criteria are:	The site expands the reach of the core strategies and finds resources to fill gaps in services and support. Essential criteria are:	The site has secured diverse and sufficient public and private resources for expanding and sustaining the core strategies for all young people within its geographic area.

PREPARATION

❑ The community partnership board is comprised of members that can help garner both private and public resources.

❑ Funding to support the first three years of implementation is obtained, including, but not limited to, funding for:
- youth leadership board stipends;
- discretionary funding for youth leadership board to manage and distribute;
- matched funds;
- financial education; and
- staff positions that are crucial in implementing and supporting the core strategies.

APPLICATION

❑ The community board and youth leadership board identify gaps in services and supports and begin seeking resources to fill them.

❑ Sustainability planning with key decision makers, including young people, has begun.

❑ Funding is secured for ongoing youth engagement activities such as training, financial and other supports, and discretionary funds for the youth leadership board.

REFINEMENT

❑ A sustainability plan is being implemented by key decision makers and young people.

❑ Resources are identified to fill service gaps and to expand supports to the majority of young people in the site's geographic area.

___ of ___ criteria met | ___ of ___ criteria met | ___ of ___ criteria met | ___ of ___ criteria met

Comments: | Comments: | Comments: | Comments:

Strategy 2: Partnerships and Resources

Activity 2: Resource Development

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND BENCHMARKS

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	GUIDELINES	CURRENT BENCHMARK date set: _____	PROGRESS as of _____ date	BENCHMARK FOR NEXT PERIOD date set: _____
Dollar value of in-kind resources. Amount of non-Initiative financial support leveraged.	❑ Initiative provides guidelines for calculation. ❑ Increase in cumulative amount leveraged over time. ❑ Site sets benchmarks for yearly increase.	$ _____ (total)	$ _____ (cash leveraged) $ _____ (indirect cash leveraged) $ _____ (in-kind leveraged) $ _____ (public policy leveraged) $ _____ (TOTAL leveraged) **Cumulative Leverage** $ _____ Total amount leveraged PRIOR *to this reporting period* $ _____ *Cumulative leverage (Total leveraged + Prior)*	$ _____ (total)

NOTES

Strategy 2: Partnerships and Resources

Activity 3: Engaging Young People as Partners

Please check off each criterion that has been met by your site for each stage of implementation.

PREPARATION

The site acknowledges and accepts the principles and values of the youth-adult partnership. Essential criteria are:

❑ Training and supports are identified or developed.

❑ Young people are prepared and supported by a designated adult partner to make meaningful contributions to meetings.

❑ Young people and adults are working together to establish the community partnership board and begin to review data; and, identify policy and practice goals for young people transitioning from foster care.

APPLICATION

The site incorporates the principles of youth-adult partnership into its operations. Essential criteria are:

❑ Youth-adult partnership training and supports are provided to adults and young people.

❑ Guidelines are established for working together that will lead to effective youth-adult partnerships.

❑ Work plans are developed jointly by young people and adults.

❑ Community partnership board meetings occur at times when young people can attend.

❑ Community partnership board policies and practices ensure that young people have defined roles and are involved in making decisions.

REFINEMENT

Young people are in leadership positions on the site's community partnership board and its partner organizations. Essential criteria are:

❑ Board policies and practices place young people in leadership roles that help guide all aspects of the work.

❑ The principles of youth-adult partnerships have begun to be accepted by key public and private partners, as evidenced by young people's leadership roles within their organizations.

OPTIMIZATION

The site successfully embeds youth-adult partnerships in its partner organizations and agencies. The essential criterion is:

❑ The child welfare agency and other public and private partners have adopted the principles and values of youth- adult partnership, as evidenced by young people's leadership roles in guiding and directing all services to young people transitioning from foster care.

___ of ___ criteria met

___ of ___ criteria met

___ of ___ criteria met

___ of ___ criteria met

Comments:

Comments:

Comments:

Comments:

Strategy 2: Partnerships and Resources

Based on criteria checked and progress made on the performance measure, what are your key accomplishments for this strategy area? How did you accomplish them?

How do you plan to address any challenges that have been encountered? What are the areas in which you may need some technical assistance, and how would technical assistance ensure progress in the identified area?

Strategy 3: Research, Evaluation, and Communications

OBJECTIVE:

To involve key stakeholders in using data to drive decisionmaking and communications and in documenting results

Activity 1: Self-Evaluation Team[1]

Please check off each criterion that has been met by your site for each stage of implementation.

PREPARATION	APPLICATION	REFINEMENT	OPTIMIZATION
The site has a commitment from key stakeholders to support and participate in ongoing self-evaluation activities. Essential criteria are:	The site is reliably using local and Jim Casey Initiative data collection tools, and stakeholders are reviewing progress toward benchmarks. Essential criteria are:	The site has engaged key stakeholders in ongoing evaluation of implementation and outcome data from multiple sources and regularly uses data to drive decisionmaking. Essential criteria are:	The site is using data routinely to drive decision making with respect to all of the core strategies. Essential criteria are:
❑ Young people and the child welfare agency are involved in establishing the self-evaluation team.1	❑ Data are regularly updated and "cleaned" in the Opportunity Passport™ Data System	❑ Practices and procedures are in place to achieve a response rate of at least 80 percent on the semiannual OPPS.	❑ Youth and systems data are regularly reviewed to gauge improvements in policy and practice.
❑ The self-evaluation plan is developed and includes strategies for data collection, maintenance, and analysis; data collection tools, resources needed, and established roles of stakeholders are identified.	❑ Practices and procedures are in place to achieve a response rate of at least 75 percent on the semiannual OPPS.	❑ Stakeholders, including the youth leadership board and community partnership board, are examining and updating local data collection tools and benchmarks as needed.	❑ Progress is documented with respect to all youth and systems outcomes.
❑ Key staff are trained in using Jim Casey Initiative supported data collection tools such as Opportunity Passport™ Data System and Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey and the expectations for their use. Partners are familiar with these tools.	❑ Local and Jim Casey Initiative data collection tools are being used as needed.	❑ The child welfare agency and other stakeholders are using data to inform improvements in policy and practice.	❑ Best practices and lessons learned are being communicated broadly.
❑ Benchmarks are established for recruiting, retaining and supporting Opportunity Passport™ participants.	❑ Policy Matrix is completed and used to determine baseline for policies and to begin to set benchmarks.	❑ Youth and systems data are being shared broadly, in and outside of the site team.	❑ Data are being used to support and focus efforts to make the site's work sustainable.
❑ An Environmental Scan to understand the conditions in the community that need to be addressed by the strategies and activities completed; and to establish priorities for implementation.	❑ The Practice Pathway Tool (PPT) is completed to identify local areas of priority for practice improvement Baselines are established for youth outcomes.	❑ Resources are available to support ongoing self-evaluation.	❑ Resources for ongoing self-evaluation have been integrated into the operations of the public and private partners.
❑ Resources are secured to support ongoing self-evaluation work.	❑ Opportunity Passport™ recruitment, retention, and support benchmarks are being achieved and refined as needed.	❑ Data are being used to guide the implementation of the sustainability plan.	
	❑ Benchmarks are established for: • policy goals; • communications goals; • Opportunity Passport™ asset purchases and savings; • door opener development and use; and • resource leverage.		
	❑ Analysis of data is occurring on a regular basis, is being shared and discussed with stakeholders, including young people and is being used to drive decisionmaking.		
	❑ Data are being used to begin sustainability planning.		
___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met
Comments:	Comments:	Comments:	Comments:

1 The self-evaluation effort may not always be defined as a "team" locally, but the work must fulfill the purpose and functions outlined in this guide.

Strategy 3: Research, Evaluation, and Communications

Activity 1: Self-Evaluation Team

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND BENCHMARKS

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	GUIDELINES	CURRENT BENCHMARK date set: _____	PROGRESS as of _____ date	BENCHMARK FOR NEXT PERIOD date set: _____
Number and Percent of Opportunity Passport™ Participant Surveys Taken on Time	❑ Practices and procedures are in place to achieve a 75% response rate on semi-annual OPPS administration. (Application stage). ❑ Practices and procedures are in place to achieve an 80% response rate on semi-annual OPPS administration. (Refinement stage).	_____ N / _____% of OPPS Taken on Time	_____ N / _____% of OPPS Taken on Time	_____ N / _____% of OPPS That Will Be Taken on Time

NOTES

Strategy 3: Research, Evaluation, and Communications

Activity 2: Communication with Multiple Audiences

Please check off each criterion that has been met by your site for each stage of implementation.

PREPARATION	APPLICATION	REFINEMENT	OPTIMIZATION
The site has formulated its key messages and identified primary internal and external audiences. Essential criteria are:	The site has regular communication mechanisms among internal audiences, and external communications begin. Essential criteria are:	The site is assessing and documenting progress toward communications goals. Essential criteria are:	The site has consistent communications activities for multiple audiences that are aligned with all five core strategies. Essential criteria are:
❑ Measurable communications goals and action steps are set. ❑ Mechanisms for disseminating information have been explored.	❑ Regular, identifiable communication occurs among community partners, for example, via e-mail updates, newsletters, and presentations. ❑ As self-evaluation data are available, they are incorporated into communications to external audiences and are used to refine communications goals. ❑ The site has set benchmarks to measure progress toward its communications goals.	❑ Regular, identifiable communications occur to internal and external audiences. ❑ Communications goals and action steps have been updated as needed. ❑ Achievement of or progress toward communications goals can be documented.	❑ Communications goals are regularly refined as needed and consistently reach multiple audiences. ❑ Achievement of or progress toward communications goals can be documented and helps support work in all core strategies.
___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met
Comments:	Comments:	Comments:	Comments:

Strategy 3: Research, Evaluation, and Communications

Activity 2: Communication with Multiple Audiences

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND BENCHMARKS

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	GUIDELINES	CURRENT BENCHMARK date set: _____	PROGRESS as of _____ date	BENCHMARK FOR NEXT PERIOD date set: _____
Number and percent of communications goals met	❑ Site sets benchmark for % of goals to be accomplished. ❑ Communications goals outlined in sites' plans and updated annually.	_____N / _____% of goals to be met (list goals)	_____ N / _____% of goals met	_____N / _____% of goals to be met (list goals)

NOTES

Strategy 3: Research, Evaluation, and Communications

Activity 3: Young People as Evaluators and Communicators

Please check off each criterion that has been met by your site for each stage of implementation.

PREPARATION

The site has established meaningful roles for young people in self-evaluation and communications. Essential criteria are:

❑ Young people have been identified, and are supported, to participate in self-evaluation and communications activities.

❑ Young people have input into developing communications goals and the self-evaluation plan.

❑ Supports for young people are in place to ensure that their involvement is meaningful and that they are appropriately compensated for their time and contributions. Training and supports are identified or developed to ensure young people can participate.

___ of ___ criteria met

Comments:

APPLICATION

The site has engaged young people in self-evaluation and communications activities. Essential criteria are:

❑ Young people contribute to analysis and interpretation of data in partnership with adults.

❑ Young people are trained and supported in telling their own stories (strategic sharing).

❑ Young people are trained and supported in making presentations on behalf of young people in and transitioning from foster care.

___ of ___ criteria met

Comments:

REFINEMENT

The site regularly recruits and supports new young people to partner with adults in self-evaluation and communications activities. Essential criteria are:

❑ Young people incorporate data in advocacy for policy and practice improvements.

❑ Young people take leadership roles in communications efforts, for example, in developing advocacy documents and websites.

___ of ___ criteria met

Comments:

OPTIMIZATION

The site has ongoing opportunities for young people to be involved in evaluation and communications activities and provides high-level training and support to ensure that these experiences are positive and meaningful. Essential criteria are:

❑ Young people have local, state-level and, in some cases, nation- al opportunities to act as spokespeople on foster care issues.

❑ Young people are helping to lead communications efforts.

___ of ___ criteria met

Comments:

Strategy 3: Research, Evaluation, and Communications

Based on criteria checked and progress made on the performance measure, what are your key accomplishments for this strategy area? How did you accomplish them?

How do you plan to address any challenges that have been encountered? What are the areas in which you may need some technical assistance, and how would technical assistance ensure progress in the identified area?

Strategy 4: Public Will and Policy

OBJECTIVE:

To advance policy and practice that improve outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care

Activity 1: Agenda & Approach for Improving Public Policies & Systems

Please check off each criterion that has been met by your site for each stage of implementation.

PREPARATION

The site develops baseline data in key policy areas. The essential criterion is:

❑ An Environmental Scan is completed.

❑ Young people are engaged in identifying policy and practice issues for advocacy efforts.

APPLICATION

The site analyzes policy and practice issues and engages in strategic advocacy efforts. Essential criteria are:

❑ A Policy Matrix is completed.

❑ Practice Pathways tool is completed.

❑ Annual policy and practice goals are developed with related advocacy strategies and benchmarks.

❑ Relationships are developed with child welfare agency staff, elected officials, community stakeholders, and key decision makers in multiple institutions and disciplines.

❑ Advocacy efforts engage young people and multiple partners.

❑ Quantitative and qualitative data gathered through the self-evaluation process are used to develop and promote the policy and practice improvements

❑ The site's advocacy efforts extend to monitoring effective implementation of targeted policy and practice improvements.

REFINEMENT

The site uses data to measure progress toward policy and practice goals and to develop new goals. Essential criteria are:

❑ The Policy Matrix is updated and used to monitor progress toward benchmarks and refine benchmarks as needed.

❑ Policy and practice improvement agendas are established that are increasingly in-depth and ambitious and focus on broad systems' improvements .

❑ The agenda includes local, county and state policy and practice issues.

❑ Young people, site leaders, partners, and key decision makers, are sought out for input and advice on issues affecting young people transitioning from foster care.

OPTIMIZATION

The site has transformed how young people in and transitioning from foster care are engaged, perceived, and treated, as evidenced by the presence of developmentally appropriate practices, procedures, and policies across disciplines and departments. Essential criteria are:

❑ Policy and practice decisions are not made without input from young people.

❑ Issues affecting young people are continuously monitored and reassessed to ensure that outcomes are improving.

❑ Written protocols such as memoranda of understanding and letters of agreement are in place among agencies to ensure coordinated and holistic approaches.

❑ Policies are more effective due to improvement in supporting practices and ongoing feedback from young people.

___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met
Comments:	Comments:	Comments:	Comments:

Strategy 4: Public Will and Policy

Activity 1: Agenda & Approach for Improving Public Policies & Systems

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND BENCHMARKS

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	GUIDELINES	CURRENT BENCHMARK date set: _____	PROGRESS as of _____ date	BENCHMARK FOR NEXT PERIOD date set: _____
Number and percent of public will and policy goals met	❑ Site sets benchmark for % of goals to be accomplished. ❑ Policy goals align with policies related to systems indicators. ❑ Policy goals outlined in sites' plans and updated annually.	_____N / _____% of goals to be met (list goals)	_____ N / _____% of goals met	_____N / _____% of goals to be met (list goals)

NOTES

Strategy 4: Public Will and Policy

Activity 2: Young People as Advocates for Improved Systems

Please check off each criterion that has been met by your site for each stage of implementation.

PREPARATION

The site solicits early and consistent input from young people in developing the policy and practice improvement agenda. Essential criteria are:

❑ Young people are identified and supported as partners in the agenda development process.

❑ Training and supports are identified or developed to help young people become effective advocates.

APPLICATION

The site develops practices, protocols, and mechanisms that ensure meaningful input from young people is consistently provided and considered on policy issues. Essential criteria are:

❑ Young people are recruited, trained, and retained as advocates.

❑ The site's advocacy strategies involve adults and young people working together.

❑ Young people are partners in the development of policy and practice goals and related messages.

❑ Within the child welfare system, young people serve on boards and committees that make decisions about young people in and formerly in foster care.

❑ Resources, including financial supports, are available to support young people serving as advocates.

REFINEMENT

The site evaluates and refines practices, protocols, and mechanisms for bringing youth voices to bear in public policy. Essential criteria are:

❑ Young people are recruited for leadership opportunities in a broad and ongoing fashion.

❑ Adults are trained to support and partner with young people on an ongoing basis.

❑ Resources, including financial supports, are available to support increasingly more young people as advocates.

❑ Young people understand and use data in their advocacy efforts.

❑ The public child welfare agency and other systems that serve young people recognize the value of their input and routinely invite them to serve on committees, make presentations, and comment on practices and policies affecting them.

OPTIMIZATION

The site makes no policy decision affecting young people without their involvement. Essential criteria are:

❑ In all public and private systems, young people are recognized as experts on issues related to young people transitioning from foster care and are influential in making decisions.

❑ Youth advocacy training and support is widely acknowledged as a necessary resource for improving systems.

❑ Systems have committed financial resources, including financial supports, to provide ongoing training and support.

___ of ___ criteria met | ___ of ___ criteria met | ___ of ___ criteria met | ___ of ___ criteria met

Comments: | Comments: | Comments: | Comments:

Strategy 4: Public Will and Policy

Based on criteria checked and progress made on the performance measure, what are your key accomplishments for this strategy area? How did you accomplish them?

How do you plan to address any challenges that have been encountered? What are the areas in which you may need some technical assistance, and how would technical assistance ensure progress in the identified area?

Strategy 5: Increased Opportunities

OBJECTIVE:

To create an array of opportunities and help young people gain access to them

Activity 1: Opportunity Passport™

Please check off each criterion that has been met by your site for each stage of implementation.

PREPARATION

The site prepares to deliver the Opportunity Passport™. Essential criteria are:

❑ Matched funds are secured.

❑ Strategies for recruiting, retaining, and supporting Opportunity Passport™ participants are determined and related benchmarks are set.

❑ Banking support is secured with the banking partner to provide Opportunity Passport™ participants with a personal bank account.

❑ A written plan is completed for financial education and asset-specific training, which includes such items as customizing the curriculum, identifying trainers, and setting a preliminary schedule.

___ of ___ criteria met

Comments:

APPLICATION

The site enrolls young people in the Opportunity Passport™ and provides them with needed support. Essential criteria are:

❑ Benchmarks for enrollment are being achieved and refined as needed.

❑ Benchmarks for asset purchase and savings are established.

❑ Matched funds are secured to expand enrollment to an increasing number of young people.

❑ Financial education and asset-specific training are delivered on a regular basis and are continually assessed and refined.

❑ Data are consistently updated and cleaned in the Opportunity Passport™ Data System.

❑ Young people are provided with ongoing support with regard to their bank accounts, such as help with setting savings goals and maintaining bank account.

❑ Banking partners are available to provide Opportunity Passport™ participants with personal bank accounts in a supportive environment.

___ of ___ criteria met

Comments:

REFINEMENT

The site increases the capacity of the Opportunity Passport™ and the efficiency of administering it. Essential criteria are:

❑ The Opportunity Passport™ is offered to more young people in the site's geographic area, and matched funds are secured for the expansion.

❑ Barriers to participation are identified and addressed; for example, participation is not restricted based on placement type or special needs.

❑ Policies and procedures are refined or adapted as needed to address changing conditions and new issues.

❑ Banking partners are available to work with young people transitioning from care to refine the services and supports that they provides to them.

___ of ___ criteria met

Comments:

OPTIMIZATION

The site has embedded the Opportunity Passport™ in the ongoing delivery of services and supports. Essential criteria are:

❑ Reliable long-term funding is secured for:

• matched funds for expansion;
• replenishing matched funds on an ongoing basis; and
• support and infrastructure.

❑ Participants represent the demographics of the overall population of young people in transition within the site's geographic area.

❑ The banking partner has adopted principles and values that support young people transitioning from care.

___ of ___ criteria met

Comments:

Strategy 5: Increased Opportunities

Activity 1: Opportunity Passport™

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND BENCHMARKS

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	GUIDELINES	CURRENT BENCHMARK date set: _____	PROGRESS as of _____ date	BENCHMARK FOR NEXT PERIOD date set: _____
1 of 6: • Number of Opportunity Passport™ participants ever enrolled • Number and percent of Opportunity Passport™ participants currently enrolled • Number and percent retained after one year	❑ Ever enrolled and currently enrolled continue to increase; and sites enroll 75 per year. ❑ Retention rates should increase. ❑ Site sets benchmark for increase.	_____ N ever enrolled _____ N / _____ % currently enrolled _____ N / _____ % retained after one year	_____ N ever enrolled _____ N / _____ % currently enrolled _____ N / _____ % retained after one year	_____ N that will be enrolled (ever) _____ N that will be enrolled (currently) _____ N / _____ % that will be retained after one year

NOTES

Strategy 5: Increased Opportunities

Activity 1: Opportunity Passport™

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND BENCHMARKS

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	GUIDELINES	CURRENT BENCHMARK date set: _____	PROGRESS as of _____ date	BENCHMARK FOR NEXT PERIOD date set: _____
2 of 6: Percent of Opportunity Passport™ participants currently enrolled by age, gender, and ethnicity	❑ Reflects breakdown of target population (e.g., demographics of 14–18 year olds still in care)	List demographics benchmarks	Attach MIS IDA Demographics Report	List demographics benchmarks

NOTES

Strategy 5: Increased Opportunities

Activity 1: Opportunity Passport™

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND BENCHMARKS

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	GUIDELINES	CURRENT BENCHMARK date set: _____	PROGRESS as of _____ date	BENCHMARK FOR NEXT PERIOD date set: _____
3 of 6: Number and percent of Opportunity Passport™ participants that have an individual who supports them through the Opportunity Passport™ process	❑ 95–100% of ACTIVE participants report that they have an individual who supports them with Opportunity Passport™ on the most recent survey.	_____ N / _____% of participants	_____ N / _____% of participants	_____ N / _____% of participants

NOTES

Strategy 5: Increased Opportunities

Activity 1: Opportunity Passport™

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND BENCHMARKS

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	GUIDELINES	CURRENT BENCHMARK date set: _____	PROGRESS as of _____ date	BENCHMARK FOR NEXT PERIOD date set: _____
4 of 6: Number and percent of Opportunity Passport™ participants that are engaged in savings activities with their IDA accounts	❑ 60–70% or higher of ACTIVE participants that have made a deposit in last 12 months	_____ N / _____% of participants	_____ N / _____% of participants	_____ N / _____% of participants

NOTES

Strategy 5: Increased Opportunities

Activity 1: Opportunity Passport™

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND BENCHMARKS

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	GUIDELINES	CURRENT BENCHMARK date set: _____	PROGRESS as of _____ date	BENCHMARK FOR NEXT PERIOD date set: _____
5 of 6: Number and percent of Opportunity Passport™ participants that participated in asset-specific training, by asset-category	❑ Increases in number of ALL participants that participate in asset-specific training. ❑ Increases in percent of ACTIVE participants that participate in asset-specific training. ❑ Site sets benchmarks for increases. ❑ Corresponds with the N of participants that purchased assets, by asset category.	_____ N of ALL participants that participate in asset-specific training _____ % of ACTIVE participants that participate in asset-specific training	Attach MIS IDA Asset-Specific Training Report	_____ N of ALL participants that will participate in asset-specific training _____ % of ACTIVE participants that will participate in asset-specific training

NOTES

Strategy 5: Increased Opportunities

Activity 1: Opportunity Passport™

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND BENCHMARKS

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	GUIDELINES	CURRENT BENCHMARK date set: _____	PROGRESS as of _____ date	BENCHMARK FOR NEXT PERIOD date set: _____
6 of 6: Number and percent of Opportunity Passport™ participants that purchased an asset, by category	❑ Increases in number of ALL participants that purchase an asset. ❑ Increases in percent of ACTIVE participants that purchase an asset. ❑ Site sets benchmarks for increases.	_____ N of ALL participants that purchase an asset _____% of ACTIVE participants that purchase an asset	Attach MIS IDA Total Dollars by Asset Category Report	_____ N of ALL participants that will purchase an asset _____% of ACTIVE participants that will purchase an asset

NOTES

Strategy 5: Increased Opportunities

Activity 2: Door Openers

Please check off each criterion that has been met by your site for each stage of implementation.

PREPARATION	APPLICATION	REFINEMENT	OPTIMIZATION
The site generates ideas and assigns responsibility for creation of door openers in all outcome areas (permanence, education, employment, financial capability, housing, health—physical and mental, and social capital). Essential criteria are:	The site creates accessible door openers in all outcome areas and monitors their use. Essential criteria are:	The site increases the number of door openers and the number of young people accessing door openers in each outcome area. Essential criteria are:	The site offers a wide range of door openers in all outcome areas and ensures access for all youth and young people in its geographic area. The essential criterion is:
❑ Young people and the community partnership board participate in identifying areas in which door openers will be created by reviewing the Environmental Scan, which identifies existing resources and gaps.	❑ The youth leadership board and community partnership board are involved in creating door openers in all outcome areas.	❑ Multiple, effective door openers are available in each outcome area, and they are being used by young people.	❑ Multiple, effective door openers are consistently available and used in each outcome area.
❑ The infrastructure for door openers is created, including methods to communicate to young people about accessing door openers.	❑ Communications vehicles are used to inform young people about door openers.	❑ Door opener benchmarks are refined as needed, and benchmarks are consistently being achieved.	
❑ A process for determining whether door openers are effective and are being used by young people is developed.	❑ Benchmarks are set and progress is monitored to ensure that the door openers are effective and are being used by young people.		

___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met
Comments:	Comments:	Comments:	Comments:

Strategy 5: Increased Opportunities

Activity 2: Door Openers

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND BENCHMARKS

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	GUIDELINES	CURRENT BENCHMARK date set: _____	PROGRESS as of _____ date	BENCHMARK FOR NEXT PERIOD date set: _____
Number and percent of the door openers that have been used, by opportunity area	❑ Coverage in all areas ❑ All door openers used at least once	**Education:** _____ N / _____% used **Employment:** _____ N / _____% used **Personal and Community Engagement:** _____ N / _____% used **Housing:** _____ N / _____% used **Physical and Mental Health:** _____ N / _____% used	**Education:** _____ N / _____% used **Employment:** _____ N / _____% used **Personal and Community Engagement:** _____ N / _____% used **Housing:** _____ N / _____% used **Physical and Mental Health:** _____ N / _____ %used	**Education:** _____ N / _____% that will be used **Employment:** _____ N / _____% that will be used **Personal and Community Engagement:** _____ N / _____% that will be used **Housing:** _____ N / _____% that will be used **Physical and Mental Health:** _____ N / _____% that will be used

NOTES

Strategy 5: Increased Opportunities

Activity 3: Young People as Decision Makers for Increased Opportunities

Please check off each criterion that has been met by your site for each stage of implementation.

PREPARATION	APPLICATION	REFINEMENT	OPTIMIZATION
The site engages young people in implementing and developing the Opportunity Passport™ and door openers. Essential criteria are: ■ Young people are involved in setting policies and procedures for the Opportunity Passport™. ■ Young people are supported in using the Environmental Scan to identify gaps in services and supports. ■ Young people are helping to set up door openers.	The site engages young people in implementing the Opportunity Passport™ and door openers. Essential criteria are: ■ Young people receive financial education and are helping to conduct the training. ■ Young people are involved in identifying and monitoring door openers to ensure that they are being accessed by and meeting the needs of young people. ■ Young people are helping to develop the communications activities related to the Opportunity Passport™ and door openers.	The site engages young people in leading the efforts to expand the reach of the Opportunity Passport™ and ensure that door openers are available in all outcome areas. Essential criteria are: ■ Young people are actively engaged in recruiting Opportunity Passport™ participants. ■ Young people are leaders in the development and assessment of door openers in all outcome areas.	The site fully engages young people in all decisions concerning the Opportunity Passport™ and door openers, including expanding the reach of these opportunities to all young people in the site's geographic area.
___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met	___ of ___ criteria met
Comments:	Comments:	Comments:	Comments:

Strategy 5: Increased Opportunities

Based on criteria checked and progress made on the performance measure, what are your key accomplishments for this strategy area? How did you accomplish them?

How do you plan to address any challenges that have been encountered? What are the areas in which you may need some technical assistance, and how would technical assistance ensure progress in the identified area?

Additional Comments

Use the space below for any comments that did not fit on previous pages.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

The Environmental Scan is an important data tool for self-evaluation. It helps sites and communities understand the extent to which they possess the five critical conditions necessary to improve systems and outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood. These five critical conditions are:

- Young people are decision makers and advocates for themselves and others.
- Partners in public and private systems provide the necessary resources and support.
- Stakeholders use data to drive decisionmaking, communications, and the documentation of results.
- Public will is galvanized by the need to improve outcomes.
- Policy is focused on the reforms necessary to improve outcomes.

Users of the Environmental Scan report that it has value in multiple contexts. It provides a systematic way of: identifying data that is available; identifying data that is needed but missing; assessing the ability of the state or local data management system and continuous quality improvement system to adapt and respond as needs evolve; and assessing the jurisdiction's ability to analyze and use data to make important policy and practice decisions. In addition, the tool has self-evident value, which provides a credible vehicle for introducing the work, building relationships, and soliciting community members to be partners in this work. It is also used as a multipurpose communications document. Finally, it captures in one convenient place the relevant and targeted data that is needed to establish baselines, develop implementation plans, and track progress.

Jurisdictions may use different methods to complete the Environmental Scan. Convening a diverse community planning group, including young people, can be an essential element to any method deployed. A planning group can help establish community ownership of the work from the very beginning and ensure that the data being captured in the Environmental Scan is complete and representative of the community. Some communities use a two-phased, consecutive approach in which the Environmental Scan is completed before the planning process begins. Other states have reported great success in blending the processes. The communities using a blended approach concurrently develop the Environmental Scan and the implementation plan. Lead agencies report that this approach has made it easier to attract young people, community partners, and advocates into the process because they like the idea of reviewing data on a particular subject and then immediately beginning the process of planning and problem solving. It provides a real-time, real-life context for analyzing data and using the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative framework for developing a planning response to the data.

Jurisdictions also vary in how they use human resources to complete the tasks. Some communities contract with outside universities or other research vendors to guide the work and produce the completed document. Others rely on internal expertise within the lead agency or community planning group. Whether internal or external, the data experts provide technical assistance to the planning group about ways to capture and use data. The planning group provides context and practical assistance in analyzing the data. Whichever method is used, it is important that a broad based community group which includes young people be involved in the process of developing or reviewing the Environmental Scan. Sites are also encouraged to take advantage of technical assistance that is available from the assigned Jim Casey Initiative liaison.

ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN (CONTINUED)

Once the lead agency has determined the methodology sites will use, they should obtain the Environmental Scan as a Word file from the site liaison. The planning group may complete it electronically or use the hard copy. If using a hard copy, the answers may be printed out on separate pages.

The initial Environmental Scan is used to assess the site's readiness to implement the Jim Casey Initiative's five core strategies and establish baselines for measuring progress. When the Environmental Scan is complete, it is forwarded to an assigned Jim Casey Initiative liaison. The liaison will provide feedback about the site's strengths and areas that may need additional attention. The feedback will include recommendations for how to address challenges specific to a site and will indicate whether a site is ready to draft an implementation plan.

Subsequent updates and modifications of the Environmental Scan are used to assess the efficacy of annual implementation plan submissions, updates, and modifications. The Environmental Scan needs to be updated frequently enough to ensure that the data remains trustworthy for the purpose of making changes to the implementation plan. The Environmental Scan is formatted so that users can easily enter initial information, and then update it regularly.

Environmental Scan

Please indicate your sources of the data throughout the scan.

A. CAPACITY TO PLAN

1. Public Child Welfare Agency Support: A strong partnership with the public child welfare agency is in place to maximize the impact of the core strategies.

Describe the extent to which:

A. The public child welfare agency engages in effective partnerships and collaborations with the community and key stakeholders.

B. Past efforts and future plans by the agency include services and supports to older youth in foster care.

C. The agency is committed to participate and champion planning activities for implementation of the core strategies.

D. The agency commits resources, financial and/or in-kind, to support implementation of the core strategies.

Answer:
Source of data:

2. Interagency Coordination/Collaboration: Multiple public and private systems, working with the lead agency and key stakeholders, take responsibility and are accountable for achieving good outcomes for young people in, and exiting from, foster care.

Describe the extent to which:

A. Systems of care (e.g., education, mental health, juvenile justice, adult services, and labor) that provide or broker services and supports that affect the well being of young people in, or exiting from, foster care have been identified and engaged.

B. Systems of care support the core strategies and recognize the importance of implementing all five strategies in combination for maximum effect.

Answer:
Source of data:

3. Capacity of Lead Agency for Developing the Implementation Plan: The lead agency engages young people, public and private agencies, and community partners in all planning, implementation, and evaluation of the five core strategies.

Describe the extent to which:

A. The lead agency's mission statement includes working with young people and families who enter the child welfare system as well as a history of supporting youth engagement and principles of positive youth development in service delivery.

B. The lead agency has a proven ability to convene natural partners, including the child welfare agency, private placement agencies, and other systems and community partners, to actively engage in creating opportunities for young people in, or exiting from, foster care.

C. The lead agency has the support of private and public funding partners.

Answer:
Source of data:

4. Data Gathering and Analysis: Planning to implement the core strategies is based on data gathering and analysis, to inform knowledge of the unique needs, opportunities, and challenges in the community and state.

Describe the extent to which:

A. The lead agency and its partners have a history of gathering data and the capacity to complete the Environmental Scan; including an identified contact in the child welfare agency to gather data on system indicators.

B. Challenges and opportunities have been identified based on data, such as economic condition of the community and state, number of young people entering and exiting foster care each year, dependence on congregate care, over-representation of youth and families of color in the child welfare system, and political climate. Partners have been identified who are willing to address the challenges.

Answer:
Source of data:

B. DEMOGRAPHICS

5. Define the current target area(s) of the local initiative (geographically and overall population count). Please include a map.

Answer:
Source of data:

6. Describe the population in the current target area(s) and state in items a-m below. Please feel free to copy and paste published data below, or complete the table below. Additional rows may be added to the table.

Characteristics of the Overall Population (unless otherwise specified)		
Characteristics	**Current Target Area(s)**	**State**
a. Age breakdown		
Source of data:		
b. Gender breakdown		
Source of data:		
c. Race/ethnicity breakdown		
Source of data:		
d. Languages spoken		
Source of data:		
e. Poverty rate		
Source of data:		
f. Income level		
Source of data:		
g. Unemployment rate for young people ages 18 to 25[1]		
Source of data:		

1   Include young people up to their 26th birthday.

Characteristics of the Overall Population (unless otherwise specified)		
Characteristics	**Current Target Area(s)**	**State**
h. High school graduation rate of young people ages 18 to 25[2]		
Source of data:		
i. Percentage of young people ages 18 to 26[3] with any kind of medical insurance		
Source of data:		
j. Housing vacancy rate		
Source of data:		
k. Average rental rate for a two-bedroom apartment		
Source of data:		
l. Average home price		
Source of data:		
m. Percentage of young people ages 18 to 25[4] who are currently experiencing or have experienced homelessness		
Source of data:		

7. Describe the child welfare population in the current target area(s) and state in items a-k below. Please feel free to copy and paste published data or complete the table below. Additional rows may be added to the table.

Characteristics of the Child Welfare Population		
Characteristics	**Current Target Area(s)**	**State**
a. Number of children in foster care		
Source of data:		
b. Number of children in foster care, by age *(please provide age range)*		
Source of data:		

2 Include young people up to their 26th birthday.
3 Include young people up to their 26th birthday.
4 Include young people up to their 26th birthday.

Characteristics of the Child Welfare Population		
Characteristics	**Current Target Area(s)**	**State**
c. Number of young people in foster care, ages 14 and older[5], by gender		
Source of data:		
d. Number of young people in foster care, ages 14 and older[6], by race/ethnicity		
Source of data:		
e. Number of young people in foster care, ages 14 and older[7], by language spoken		
Source of data:		
f. Number of children in foster care, by placement type		
Source of data:		
g. Number of young people aging out of foster care on an annual basis		
Source of data:		
h. Unemployment rate for young people ages 18 to 25[8] who were formerly in foster care		
Source of data:		
i. High school graduation rate for young people ages 18 to 25[9] who were formerly in foster care		
Source of data:		
j. Percentage of young people ages 18 to 25[10] who were formerly in foster care and who are currently experiencing or have experienced homelessness		
Source of data:		

8. Is the public child welfare system in your state administered by the state, the county, or both?

Answer:
Source of data:

5 Include young people up to their 21st birthday.
6 Include young people up to their 21st birthday.
7 Include young people up to their 21st birthday.
8 Include young people up to their 26th birthday.
9 Include young people up to their 26th birthday.
10 Include young people up to their 26th birthday.

C. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

OBJECTIVE:

To prepare young people to be meaningfully involved as decision makers and self-advocates

9. Describe how young people are involved in designing, implementing, and evaluating the child welfare system that serves them.

Answer:
Source of data:

10. Describe the ways in which the community supports youth participation, both in the local initiative and in other community activities (e.g., childcare, transportation, and timing and location of meetings). What are some of community barriers to youth participation?

Answer:
Source of data:

11. Describe the policies and practices in place that ensure that young people are actively involved in their own case planning and decisionmaking.

Answer:
Source of data:

12. Describe the access that young people in foster care have to legal advocacy services and supports, like a court-appointed representative for youth in foster care, such as an attorney, attorney or non-attorney GAL, or CASA representative.

Answer:
Source of data:

D. PARTNERSHIPS AND RESOURCES

OBJECTIVE:

To access the resources of public and private systems and philanthropic organizations, expand and deepen community support, and cultivate community champions for young people transitioning from foster care

13. What is the general economic condition of your community, including the fiscal condition of both your state and current target area(s)?

Current Target Area(s):	Statewide:
Answer:	Answer:
Source of data:	Source of data:

14. To what extent do changing economic conditions affect demand for the types of opportunities you are creating and the availability of resources to support your work?

Current Target Area(s):	Statewide:
Answer:	Answer:
Source of data:	Source of data:

15. List key employers, both public and private, in your current target area(s).

Public:	Private:
Answer:	Answer:
Source of data:	Source of data:

16. Describe the local Workforce Investment Board and its support for young people transitioning from foster care.

Answer:
Source of data:

17. List any organizations in your current target area(s) that provide services for job readiness, job development, and job retention.

Answer:

Source of data:

18. List any educational resources in your current target area(s) that are available or could be made available to young people in foster care.

Answer:

Source of data:

19. Describe any programs or services in your current target area(s) that are available or could be made available to young people in foster care who are pregnant and/or parenting.

Answer:

Source of data:

20. List the housing resources that are available or could be made available to young people in foster care in your current target area(s) (e.g., low-income housing, Section 8 vouchers, emergency housing or homeless shelters, transitional living housing units). What are some of the barriers to accessing these resources?

Answer:

Source of data:

21. Describe the accessibility of physical and mental health resources in your current target area(s). What are some of the barriers to accessing these resources?

Answer:

Source of data:

22. What is the recent history and status of any community collaboration efforts that are relevant to issues faced by young people transitioning from foster care? What outcomes have they achieved?

Answer:
Source of data:

23. List the formal and informal community leaders, both young people and adults, in your current target area(s).

Answer:
Source of data:

24. List the key businesses and philanthropic organizations in your current target area(s).

Answer:
Source of data:

25. List the other Casey entities operating in your current target area(s) (e.g., Child Welfare Strategy Group, Casey Strategic Consulting, Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative). How are you engaged with those entities?

Answer:
Source of data:

26. List other existing foundation initiatives in your community that might be interested in supporting work relevant to child welfare and children in foster care.

Answer:
Source of data:

27. List any organizations that can assist with diversity training and technical assistance, particularly related to race (disproportionality), class, culture, and sexual orientation in your current target area(s).

Answer:
Source of data:

28. Describe the potential to leverage resources, like public agencies, local businesses, and community foundations, in your current target area(s).

Answer:
Source of data:

29. List the organizations in your current target area(s) that serve similar populations.

    a)   Are these organizations competitors for funding?

    b)   Are they potential (or current) partners?

    c)   What capacity can these organizations bring to your community and to your collaboration?

Answer:
Source of data:

E. RESEARCH, EVALUATION, AND COMMUNICATIONS

OBJECTIVE:

To involve key stakeholders in using data to drive decisionmaking and communications and in documenting results

30. Describe your state's National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) data collection efforts.

Answer:
Source of data:

31. Describe other data collection efforts that may provide comparison data for your own local data collection efforts.

Answer:
Source of data:

32. List any partners providing technical assistance related to self-evaluation.

Answer:
Source of data:

33. List any partners providing technical assistance related to communications.

Answer:
Source of data:

F. PUBLIC WILL AND POLICY

OBJECTIVE:

To advance policy and practice that improve outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care

34. List any major upcoming transitions in political leadership that could have an impact on transitioning youth.

Answer:
Source of data:

35. What are the current needs and priorities identified by young people transitioning from foster care in the following areas?

a) Permanence

Source of data:

b) Education

Source of data:

c) Employment

Source of data:

d) Financial Capability

Source of data:

e) Housing

Source of data:

f) Physical and Mental Health

Source of data:

g) Social Capital

Source of data:

36. What evidence is there of increased public awareness and public will in support of young people transitioning from foster care in your current target area(s) and statewide?

Current Target Area(s):	Statewide:
Answer:	**Answer:**
Source of data:	Source of data:

37. What successes has the child welfare system had in the past year related to improving supports and services for young people transitioning from foster care, upon which the five core strategies could build?

Answer:
Source of data:

38. What is the history of "hot issues" related to child welfare (child deaths, missing children, special panel appointments, etc.) in the past year?

Answer:
Source of data:

39. List the public policy advocates in your current target area(s) who have track records for addressing child welfare and other issues of child and family well-being.

Answer:
Source of data:

G. INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES

OBJECTIVE:

To create an array of opportunities and help young people gain access to them

40. Describe the availability of financial institutions in your current target area(s) that are community-oriented, youth-friendly, and may be willing to alter policies to benefit young people.

Answer:
Source of data:

41. Describe the potential for securing funds to match young people's savings.

Answer:
Source of data:

42. Describe the availability of financial literacy education providers, including financial institutions and other community organizations.

> **a) Are any of these organizations or institutions current or potential partners?**

Source of data:

> **b) What capacity can these organizations or institutions bring to your community and to your collaboration? To what extent can they provide support to customize the financial literacy curriculum?**

Source of data:

43. List possible providers of asset-specific training in the following areas: vehicles, education/training, housing, investments, microenterprise, credit building, and health.

> **a) Are any of these organizations or institutions current or potential partners?**

Source of data:

> **b) What capacity can these organizations or institutions bring to your community and your collaboration? To what extent can they provide support to develop customized, asset-specific training curricula?**

Source of data:

44. Describe the current availability of opportunities in the community that could be customized or enhanced to create door openers for young people transitioning from care.

Answer:
Source of data:

45. List possible partners for the provision of door openers in all outcomes (permanence, education, employment, financial capability, housing, physical and mental health, and social capital).

Answer:
Source of data:

GUIDE TO SELF-EVALUATION

OVERVIEW

Guide to Self-Evaluation Overview

The *Guide to Self-Evaluation* is available from your Jim Casey Initiative site liaison. It is built on the field's best practices in self-evaluation. It provides tools your site can use for data collection along with information you will need to complete the self-evaluation process. It covers ways you can use data to guide your site's implementation of the core strategies, and it offers techniques for interpreting and disseminating data for various audiences.

The guide walks you through the Jim Casey Initiative's "Theory of Change" and describes elements of the site-level logic model in detail. It then covers the principles of self-evaluation and describes the three steps to self-evaluating. The three steps to self-evaluating are as follows:

1) Identifying and recruiting the self-evaluation team and coach to coordinate and implement self-evaluation activities at the site
2) Developing a self-evaluation plan to outline procedures for self-evaluation activities
3) Measuring progress and using data to make decisions

The *Guide to Self-Evaluation* includes presentation slides, training modules, handouts, tip sheets, and exercise worksheets, which your site can use and customize to train adult partners and young people and to build your site's self-evaluation capacity. The guide also includes copies of all data collection tools and information about indicators and performance measures.

KEYS TO YOUR FINANCIAL FUTURE OVERVIEW

Keys to Your Financial Future Overview

*K*eys to Your Financial Future is a financial education curriculum for young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood. Young people who participate in the Opportunity Passport™ take part in financial education using *Keys to Your Financial Future*. The full curriculum and facilitator's guide are available from your site liaison.

As young people transition from foster care to adulthood, it's critical that they learn to manage money and navigate the many decisions they face regarding housing, transportation, taxes, and finances.

Keys to Your Financial Future is a comprehensive curriculum, divided into seven training modules. It is designed to be an ongoing resource for sites to help young people on their way to becoming financially independent and capable.

The seven modules of *Keys to Your Financial Future* are:

Module 1: Asset Building—Unlocking the door to long-term benefits

Module 2: Good Credit—Your score in the game of life

Module 3: Money Management—Cashing in on financial success

Module 4: Education and Training—The power of knowledge for work and college

Module 5: Housing—Reality in realty

Module 6: Transportation—Enjoy the ride

Module 7: Saving and Investing—Making the change by keeping it

Specifically, Keys to Your Financial Future helps young people increase:

- Their financial knowledge and skills to transition out of the foster care system, which includes the ability to do the following:
  - Set and achieve personal and financial goals
  - Open and maintain savings and checking/debit accounts
  - Find a stable and secure place to live
  - Find and pay for safe, reliable, and affordable transportation
  - Pay for education or training to achieve job-related and career goals
  - Keep sources (income and benefits) and uses (expenses, debt repayment, saving, asset building, charitable contributions) of resources in balance
  - Know which key documents they need and how to access and protect them
  - Develop knowledge and understanding of community resources and how to access them
  - Continue to build assets and protect those they have
- Their savings for both asset building and emergencies
- Their knowledge about the access, use, and management of credit, credit reports, and credit scores
- Their connections with financial service professionals within the community
- Their ability to manage financial accounts
- Their confidence in getting and managing financial resources and assets

OPPORTUNITY PASSPORT™

DATA SYSTEM OVERVIEW

Opportunity Passport™ Data System Overview

What is the Opportunity Passport™ Data System (OPDS)?

OPDS is a web-enabled data collection and reporting system provided by the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative to help your site implement the Opportunity Passport™. It has an easy-to-use sidebar menu and replaces the Management Information System for Individual Development Accounts (MIS IDA). To use this system, visit www.jimcaseyyouthopds.org

What kind of data does OPDS track?

OPDS collects, stores, and reports on these data:

- Participant data, including participant demographic information, contacts, financial education, asset training, asset purchases, and savings
- Site data, including site contacts, funding partners, and financial education curricula

How does OPDS accommodate key changes to and support specific aspects of the Opportunity Passport™?

As a system that supports key features of the Opportunity Passport™, OPDS:

- Eliminates the need to enter data from bank statements
- Collects and reports on actual asset purchases (not just asset categories)
- Expands funding partner and match rate profiles, and performs necessary calculations related to match rate dollars and asset purchases
- Expands on the type of contact information collected for young people and their key contacts, providing support for building social capital, as well as an easy way to track and stay in contact with young people
- Collects and tracks financial education modules completed and curricula used
- Reports on most performance measures (in the near future, all performance measures will be collected and reported through OPDS)
- Contains enhanced dropdown menus adjusted to the new Opportunity Passport™ as needed

What else does it do?

In response to sites' needs for a more flexible, intuitive, and useful data system, OPDS also:

- Enables your site to create and run statistical reports and to produce participant lists displaying various data elements collected in the system
- Exports reports to Word, Excel, PDF, and other file types
- Features an alert button that quickly identifies young people whose situation may need to be reviewed, and also quickly identifies data errors
- Has an "assign all" feature that streamlines entry of financial education and asset training data
- Helps you upload and download supporting documentation
- Allows you to record participant transfers to other sites within a state

OPPORTUNITY PASSPORT™

PARTICIPANT SURVEY

Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey

Welcome to the Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey. The answers you provide will help us learn more about the experiences of young people in foster care across the country.

We will make every effort to protect the confidentiality of your answers. If you would like more information or want to find out the results of the survey, please contact: ebjerke@metisassoc.com.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. **What is your date of birth?**

   _____ /_____ /_____

   Month / Day /Year

2. **Are you male or female?**

   ☐ Male ☐ Female

3. **What is your race or ethnic background? (Please check all that apply.)**

   ☐ White
   ☐ Black/African-American
   ☐ Hispanic/Latino
   ☐ Asian
   ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
   ☐ Native American/Alaskan Native
   ☐ Other (Please specify.) _____

4. **Are you currently in foster care** *(under the legal responsibility of the child welfare agency)*?

   ☐ Yes ☐ *No* ☐ Don't know

5. **Altogether, how many foster homes or other placements have you ever had?**

   ☐ 1-3 ☐ 11-20
   ☐ 4-10 ☐ More than 20

6. **Of these, how many have been in foster homes (not group homes, shelters, or residential treatment centers)?**

   ☐ 0 ☐ 11-20
   ☐ 1-3 ☐ More than 20
   ☐ 4-10

7. **Of these, how many have been in group care (for example group homes, shelters, or residential treatment centers)?**

   ☐ 0 ☐ 11-20
   ☐ 1-3 ☐ More than 20
   ☐ 4-10

8. **What is your marital status?**

☐ Single   ☐ Separated

☐ Living with a partner   ☐ Divorced

☐ Married   ☐ Widowed

9. **How many children do you have?**

☐ None (Skip to #10.)   ☐ 3

☐ 1   ☐ 4 or more

☐ 2

9a. If you have children, do any of these children currently live with you?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

10. **Who has helped you the most with continuing participation in your Opportunity Passport™?**
(Please check one.)

☐ Foster parents

☐ Biological parents

☐ Adoptive parents

☐ Other family member (for example aunt, grandmother, brother, sister, etc.)

☐ Another young person (for example friend, roommate)

☐ Caseworker (includes case coordinator, case manager, social worker, Independent Living staff, Life Skills worker, Chafee worker, Transition Specialist)

☐ Teacher

☐ Someone at my job

☐ Someone on my Youth Leadership Board

☐ Someone on my Community Partnership Board

☐ Opportunity Passport™ staff

☐ Other (Please specify.) _____

☐ Nobody helped me. (Skip to #11.)

> **FYI**
>
> Helping you to continue participation in your Opportunity Passport™ may include things like encouraging you to save money and make deposits, giving you advice about purchasing assets, taking surveys, etc.

10a. How helpful has that assistance been to continuing your participation?

☐ Very helpful   ☐ Not very helpful

☐ Somewhat helpful   ☐ Not helpful at all

11. **Are you a member of the local Youth Leadership Board?**

☐ Yes   ☐ No

EDUCATION

12. Are you currently enrolled in school?

☐ Yes   ☐ No *(Skip to #13.)*

12a. What type of school are you currently enrolled in? *(Please check all that apply.)*

☐ Junior high school or   ☐ College
   middle school   ☐ Graduate school
☐ High school   ☐ GED class
☐ Vocational school   ☐ Other (Please specify.) _____
☐ Community college   _____

12b. Are you in school full-time or part-time?

☐ Full-time   ☐ Part-time

13. What is the highest grade you have completed at this time? *(Do not include the year you are presently in.)*

☐ Sixth grade or less
☐ Seventh grade
☐ Eighth grade
☐ Ninth grade
☐ 10th grade
☐ 11th grade
☐ 12th grade
☐ One or more years of college, but no college degree
☐ Associate's or two-year college degree
☐ Bachelor's or four-year college degree
☐ Some graduate school
☐ Graduate degree

14. Have you received a high school diploma, a general equivalency diploma (GED), or any other high school equivalent diploma? *(Please check one.)*

☐ High school diploma
☐ GED or other high school equivalent diploma
☐ None of the above (Skip to #15.)

14a. Have you participated in or attended any of the following? *(Please check all that apply.)*

☐ Military
☐ Americorps
☐ Job Corps
☐ Peace Corps
☐ Vocational school (includes trade or technical school)
☐ None of the above

EMPLOYMENT

15. Are you currently participating in any of the following? *(Please check all that apply.)*

☐ Work experience activity ("job shadowing" —spending time with an employee at a workplace to see what their job is like—or interviewing an employer or employee for a project or report) (Skip to #16.)

☐ Internship (working on a short-term basis for a company or organization in order to gain practical work experience, could be paid or unpaid) (Skip to #16.)

☐ Apprenticeship (learning a trade or art through a combination of paid on-the-job training and classes, usually under agreement or contract) (Skip to #16.)

☐ Pre-employment training (for example, developing a resume, training on work ethics, appropriate dress, or time management) (Skip to #16.)

☐ On-the-job training (for example, learning how to operate a cash register or a phone system, etc.) (Skip to #16.)

☐ Independent living classes (either paid or unpaid) (Skip to #16.)

☐ I am not currently participating in any of these activities. (Go to 15a.)

15a. If you are not currently participating in these activities, have you ever participated in any of the following? *(Please check all that apply.)*

☐ Work experience activity ("job shadowing" —spending time with an employee at a workplace to see what their job is like—or interviewing an employer or employee for a project or report)

☐ Internship (working on a short-term basis for a company or organization in order to gain practical work experience, could be paid or unpaid)

☐ Apprenticeship (learning a trade or art through a combination of paid on-the-job training and classes, usually under agreement or contract)

☐ Pre-employment training (for example, developing a resume, training on work ethics, appropriate dress, or time management)

☐ On-the-job training (for example, learning how to operate a cash register or a phone system, etc.)

☐ Independent living classes (either paid or unpaid)

☐ I have not participated in any of these activities.

16. Do you currently have one (or more) paying job(s) *(including participation on your local Youth Leadership Board)*?

☐ Yes *(Skip to #16b.)*   ☐ No

16a. If no, have you ever had a paying job?

☐ Yes *(Skip to #17.)*   ☐ No *(Skip to #17.)*

16b. If yes, is participation on the Youth Leadership Board your only current job?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

16c. On average, how many hours do you work per week? *(Please enter a number, for example 20 or 30.)*

_____ Hours/Week

16d. Have you been working full-time *(40 hours or more per week)* **without interruption for the past six months or longer?**

☐ Yes ☐ No

16e. How many months or years have you been working without interruption at your current job?

If less than 1 year, enter the number of months you have been working.

_____ Months

(Enter a whole number, for example 3, 4, 5, etc.)

If 1 year or more, enter the number of years you have been working.

_____ Years

(Enter a whole number, for example 1, 2, 3, etc. Round your answer so that less than 1 and a half years would be written as 1 year, while 1 and a half years would be written as 2 years.)

16f. What is your hourly pay? *(Please enter a number, for example 7.50 or 8.00.)*

$_____

17. **Are you currently receiving Medicaid?** *(You do not need to answer if you are currently in foster care. If you are in foster care, skip to #18.)*

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know

17b. Are you currently receiving any other form of public assistance (for example, Social Security, TANF, Disability, Unemployment, Food Stamps, WIC, EBT, or Section 8)? **Please do not include supports that you are receiving because you were in foster care, such as transitional housing or room and board payments.** *(You do not need to answer if you are currently in foster care.)*

☐ Yes ☐ No
☐ Don't know

FYI

Other names for Medicaid include HUSKY, Medi-Cal, TennCare, MaineCare, RItecare, and Title 19.
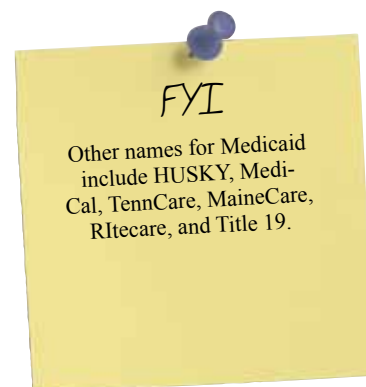
PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

18. **When you need someone to give you good advice about a crisis, which of the following do you have?**

☐ Enough people you can count on   ☐ No one you can count on
☐ Too few people you can count on   ☐ Don't know

19. **When you need someone to give you advice about your job or school, which of the following do you have?**

☐ Enough people you can count on   ☐ No one you can count on

☐ Too few people you can count on   ☐ Don't know

20. **When you need someone to loan you money in an emergency, which of the following do you have?**

☐ Enough people you can count on   ☐ No one you can count on

☐ Too few people you can count on   ☐ Don't know

21. **Do you have an adult in your family that you will always be able to turn to for support** *(for example, birth or adoptive parent, spouse, adult sibling, extended family member, legal guardian)***?**

☐ Yes   ☐ No *(Skip to #22.)*

    21a. If yes, which one adult family member do you turn to most often? *(Please check one.)*

      ☐ Birth parent

      ☐ Adoptive parent

      ☐ Spouse

      ☐ Adult sibling

      ☐ Extended family member (for example aunt, grandfather, cousin, etc.)

      ☐ Legal guardian

    21b. If you need it, what can you count on this person to do? If needed, I can count on him or her to… *(Please check all that apply)*

      ☐ Celebrate special events with me, such as my birthday, holidays, etc.

      ☐ Talk with me about my problems

      ☐ Help me feel good about myself

      ☐ Be trusted with my most private information

      ☐ Provide me with a place to live

      ☐ Help me find a job

      ☐ Help me if I am sick

      ☐ Celebrate my successes with me, such as school graduation, getting a new job, etc.

      ☐ Help me get into college, community college, or vocational school

      ☐ Help me pay for some or all of my education

      ☐ Help me care for my children

FYI

Helping you get into school includes any support you don't need to pay for, like helping you find a college or school, helping you fill out applications, taking you to college visits, etc.
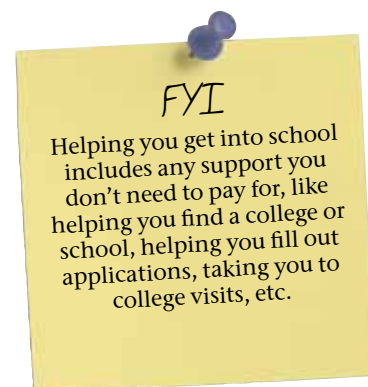
22. **Do you have an adult other than a family member that you will always be able to turn to for support?**

☐ Yes   ☐ No *(Skip to #22P.)*

    22a. If yes, which one adult would you turn to most often? *(Please check one.)*

      ☐ *Foster parent*

      ☐ Caseworker (includes case coordinator, case manager, social worker, Independent Living staff, Life Skills worker, Chafee worker, Transition Specialist)

☐ Teacher

☐ Someone from my church or faith-based community

☐ Other (please specify) _____

22b. If you need it, what can you count on this person to do? If needed, I can count on him or her to... *(Please check all that apply.)*

☐ Celebrate special events with me, such as my birthday, holidays, etc.

☐ Talk with me about my problems

☐ Help me feel good about myself

☐ Be trusted with my most private information

☐ Provide me with a place to live

☐ Help me find a job

☐ Help me if I am sick

☐ Celebrate my successes with me, such as school graduation, getting a new job, etc.

☐ Help me get into college, community college, or vocational school

☐ Help me pay for some or all of my education

☐ Help me care for my children

FYI

Helping you get into school includes any support you don't need to pay for like helping you find a college or school, helping you fill out applications, taking you to college visits, etc.

22c. Please think about adults in your life who support you in some way. If you need it, what can you count on these people to do? *(Please check all that apply.) (You do not need to answer this question if you answered "yes" to #21 or #22. If you answered "yes" to one of these questions, skip to #23.)*

☐ Celebrate special events with me, such as my birthday, holidays, etc.

☐ Talk with me about my problems

☐ Help me feel good about myself

☐ Be trusted with my most private information

☐ Provide me with a place to live

☐ Help me find a job

☐ Help me if I am sick

☐ Celebrate my successes with me, such as school graduation, getting a new job, etc.

☐ Help me get into college, community college or vocational school

☐ Help me pay for some or all of my education

☐ Help me care for my children
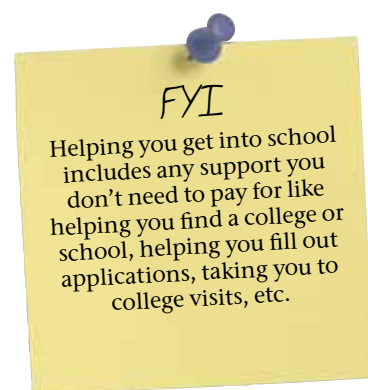
HOUSING

23. Where are you currently living? *(Please check one.)*

- ☐ Living independently (by myself, with a friend, roommate, boyfriend, girlfriend, fiancé, husband, wife, etc.)
- ☐ Living with family (with birth parents, or another relative such as aunt, sibling, adoptive parents, or legal guardian)
- ☐ Living in a foster home
- ☐ Living in a group setting (group home, residential care, or residential treatment facility)
- ☐ Living in a school dormitory (Indian boarding school or college dormitory)
- ☐ Independent living program or supervised independent living program or transitional living program
- ☐ Couch surfing or moving from house to house (because you don't have a place to stay)
- ☐ Homeless (includes living in a homeless shelter)
- ☐ Other (Please specify.) _____

24. How many different places have you lived in the past 12 months? *(Please enter a number, for example 3.)*

_____

25. Have you ever couch surfed or moved from house to house because you didn't have a place to stay?
(You do not need to answer if you selected Couch surfing in #23.)

- ☐ Yes   ☐ No

26. Have you ever slept in a homeless shelter or in a place where people weren't meant to sleep *(for example in a car or on the street)* **because you didn't have a place to stay?** *(You do not need to answer if you selected Homeless in #23.)*

- ☐ Yes   ☐ No

27. Do you pay for housing?

- ☐ Yes   ☐ No

28. Is your housing affordable?

- ☐ Yes   ☐ No

29. Do you feel safe inside your home?

- ☐ Yes   ☐ No

30. Do you feel safe in the neighborhood where you live?

- ☐ Yes   ☐ No

FYI
If you are paying for some of your rent, you should say "yes."

FYI
Affordable means you can pay for your housing and still have enough for other expenses such as food, transportation, and utilities.
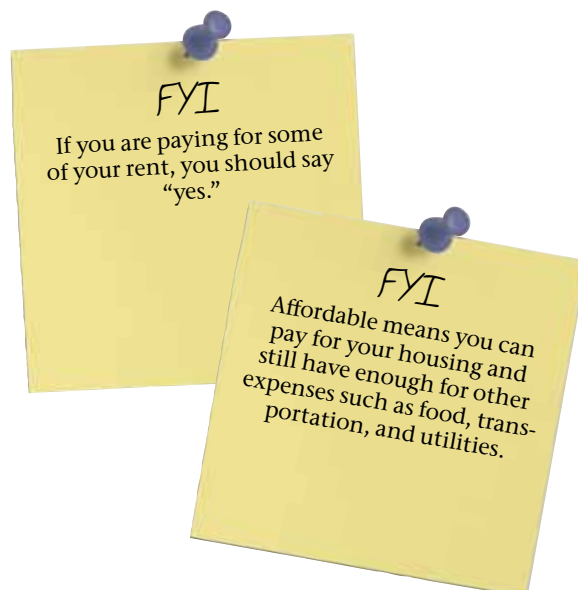
31. **Do you feel that your housing situation is stable** *(for example, can you stay as long as you would like to, and do you have control over whether you stay or have to leave)?*

☐ Yes   ☐ No

32. **Do you have access to the transportation you need to get to school or work?**

☐ Yes   ☐ No

33. **Do you have a valid driver's license?**

☐ Yes   ☐ No

☐ I'm not old enough

34. **Do you own a motor vehicle** *(for example car, van, truck, etc.)?*

☐ Yes   ☐ No

35. **Do you have an Independent Living Plan that a caseworker or social worker helped you to prepare?**
(You only need to answer this question if you are currently in foster care.)

☐ Yes   ☐ No *(Skip to #36.)*

    35a. **If yes, does it contain a housing plan that you believe will lead to safe, stable, and affordable housing?**

    ☐ Yes   ☐ No *(Skip to #36.)*

    35b. **Did you participate in the development of this housing plan?**

    ☐ Yes   ☐ No

> **FYI**
> An Independent Living Plan is a written plan to prepare you for adulthood that might include goals for education, employment, and housing.

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

36. **Do you have health insurance?** *(You do not need to answer if you are currently in foster care. If you are in care, skip to #37.)*

☐ Yes   ☐ No *(Skip to #37.)*   ☐ Don't know *(Skip to #37.)*

    36a. **If yes, who pays for your health insurance? (Please check one.)**

    ☐ I am covered by my parents' insurance.
    ☐ I am covered by my spouse's insurance.
    ☐ I am covered by insurance provided by my employer.
    ☐ I am covered by insurance provided by my school.
    ☐ I buy private insurance myself.
    ☐ I am covered by Medicaid (including HUSKY, Medi-Cal, TennCare, MaineCare, Rite Care, and Title 19).
    ☐ Other (Please specify.) _____
    ☐ Don't know

36b. Does your health insurance have dental benefits, or do you have separate dental insurance?

☐ My health insurance has dental benefits.

☐ I have separate dental insurance.

☐ I do not have dental insurance.

☐ Don't know

36c. Does your health insurance pay for you to get mental health services, like counseling and substance abuse treatment, if you needed it?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ *Don't know*

37. When did you last have a physical examination by a doctor or nurse?

☐ Less than a year ago

☐ One to two years ago

☐ More than two years ago

☐ Never

☐ Don't know

38. When did you last have a dental examination by a dentist or hygienist?

☐ Less than a year ago

☐ One to two years ago

☐ More than two years ago

☐ Never

☐ Don't know

39. Has there been any time over the past six months when you thought you should get medical care but you did not?

☐ Yes ☐ No *(Skip to #40.)*

39a. What kept you from seeing a health professional when you really needed to? *(Please check all that apply.)*

☐ Didn't know who to go and see

☐ Had no transportation

☐ Had nobody to go with me

☐ Parent or guardian would not go with me

☐ Didn't want my parents or others to know

☐ Difficult to make an appointment

☐ Afraid of what the doctor would say or do

☐ Thought the problem would go away

☐ Didn't want to talk about the problem

☐ Couldn't pay

☐ Other (Please specify.) _____

☐ _____

☐ Don't know

40. Has there been any time over the past six months when you thought you should see a mental health professional for a problem such as depression, substance abuse, or anxiety, but did not?

☐ Yes ☐ No *(Skip to #41.)*

40a. What kept you from seeing a mental health professional when you really needed to?
(Please check all that apply.)

☐ Didn't know who to go and see
☐ Had no transportation
☐ Had nobody to go with me
☐ Parent or guardian would not go with me
☐ Didn't want my parents or others to know
☐ Difficult to make an appointment
☐ Afraid of what the doctor would say or do
☐ Thought the problem would go away
☐ Didn't want to talk about the problem
☐ Couldn't pay
☐ Other (Please specify.) _____
☐ _____
☐ Don't know

FINANCIAL CAPABILITY

41. Right now, do you have a bank or credit union account you can use to deposit and withdraw money?

☐ Yes ☐ No

41a. (If yes, what kind of account do you have? *(Please check all that apply.)*

☐ Savings account
☐ Checking account

42. In the past month, did you have enough money to cover your expenses?
(for example rent, bills, food, transportation, school supplies, child care, school loans, etc.)

☐ Yes ☐ No

> **HELP:**
> This is an account that you can use any time for all of your financial needs. This account is not in overdraft status or ChexSystems.

43. How did you cover your expenses? *(Please check all that apply.)*

☐ Got money from a job or found additional work
☐ Used money from student loans or scholarships
☐ Got money that I do NOT have to repay from a family member or friend
☐ Got money that I have to repay from a family member or friend
☐ Got a loan from a bank or credit union
☐ Got money from some other type of lender (for example payday loans, loan shark, pawn broker, etc.)

- [ ] Got money from stipend, organization, or agency (for example Opportunity Passport™, Independent Living classes, speaking engagements, community agency, etc.)
- [ ] Used money that I saved for other purposes (Savings can be money that you put away somewhere in your home, deposited in an account at a bank or credit union, etc.)
- [ ] Sold some of my possessions
- [ ] Used my credit cards
- [ ] Overdrew my bank account ("go negative")
- [ ] Used government resources (for example welfare, TANF, WIC, SNAP, state funds, food stamps, etc.)
- [ ] I did not cover my expenses.

44. What would you do if you had an emergency and needed $500? *(Please check all that apply.)*

- [ ] Get money from a job or find additional work
- [ ] Use money from student loans or scholarships
- [ ] Get money from a family member or friend
- [ ] Get a loan from a bank or credit union
- [ ] Get money from some other type of lender (for example payday loans, loan shark, pawn broker, etc.)
- [ ] Get money from stipend, organization, or agency (e.g., Opportunity Passport™, Independent Living classes, speaking engagements, community agency, etc.)
- [ ] Use money that I saved for other purposes (Savings can be money that you put away somewhere in your home, deposited in an account at a bank or credit union, etc.)
- [ ] Sell some of my possessions
- [ ] Use my credit cards
- [ ] Overdraw my bank account ("go negative")
- [ ] Use government resources (for example welfare, child support, TANF, WIC, SNAP, state funds, food stamps, etc.)
- [ ] I would not know what to do.

> **HELP:**
> Experts have found that $500 is an amount of money that people often need in emergencies. Try to imagine what <u>you would do if you needed $500 in an emergency right now.</u>

45. Do you currently have any savings? *(Savings can be money that you put away somewhere in your home, deposited in an account at a bank or credit union, asked a family member or friend to keep for you, etc.)*

- [ ] Yes   - [ ] No

46. Do you currently owe money?

- [ ] Yes   - [ ] No

46a. If yes, to whom do you owe money? *(Please check all that apply.)*

- [ ] Family member or friend (for example foster parent; adoptive parent; biological parent; sibling; extended family member like a cousin, grandparent, or aunt, significant other, etc.)
- [ ] Credit cards
- [ ] Student loans

- ☐ Home mortgage
- ☐ Bank or credit loan
- ☐ Car or other motor vehicle loan
- ☐ Student obligations (for example PELL grant, parking fees, activity fees, library fees, housing, etc.)
- ☐ Bank account (for example ChexSystems, overdraft fees, etc.)
- ☐ Child support
- ☐ Other type of lender (for example payday loans, loan shark, pawnbroker, etc.)
- ☐ Medical expenses (for example insurance, hospital, doctor, co-pay bills, etc.)
- ☐ Court-related costs (for example restitution, fees, etc.)
- ☐ Employer

OTHER

Is there anything else that you would like to tell us?

_____

_____

_____

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE SURVEY! The answers you gave will help your community make decisions about creating opportunities for young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood. Remember, follow-up surveys are in April and October - don't forget to take your next one!

POLICY AND PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy and Practice Recommendations

To make a successful transition to adulthood by age 25, every young person requires a permanent family that provides an enduring source of emotional support; services and supports that are racially and ethnically equitable; a stable education that includes post-secondary opportunities; opportunities to achieve economic success; a place to live that is safe, stable, and affordable; access to comprehensive, coordinated health and mental health care; and opportunities to shape their own future.

To ensure that all young people in foster care make successful transitions, the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative recommends the following policies:

To connect young people with permanent families, policy makers should:

- Mandate that all young people leaving foster care are discharged to a family, legal guardian, adoptive parent, or permanently committed, caring adult.
- Provide subsidized legal guardianship and kinship care as options.
- Ensure that young people in foster care are placed with families, reducing reliance on congregate care.
- Provide placements that permit young people to remain in their neighborhoods and communities.
- Provide opportunities for young people to safely re-engage with birth parents or relatives.
- Place siblings together (unless safety is an issue) or facilitate sibling visitation.*
- Extend foster care to age 21, along with continued permanency planning.*

To provide access to services and supports that are racially equitable, policy makers should:

- Utilize individualized assessments that are free of bias and provided by culturally competent staff.
- Ensure that services are equally accessible to all young people in foster care, regardless of their race or ethnicity.
- Collect and analyze data to identify and address racial disproportionality and disparate outcomes for young people of color.

To provide stable education and post-secondary opportunities, policy makers should:

- Ensure that young people remain in the school in which they are enrolled when possible, and ensure prompt transfer of records if a school change is required.*
- Provide tuition waivers to public or private colleges (or post-secondary schools) to young people formerly in foster care to age 25.
- Provide other supports for post-secondary education (such as books, computers, school supplies, tuition payment, Education and Training Vouchers, and housing).

To create opportunities for economic success, policy makers should:

- Provide matched savings accounts—also known as individual development accounts (IDAs)—to all young people currently or formerly in foster care, with developmentally appropriate financial literacy training.
- Ensure that all young people transitioning from foster care receive necessary personal documents (social security card, a certified birth certificate or green card, and a government-issue photo ID).
- Provide early and consistent work experience with priority access to workforce programs, developmentally appropriate training, and ongoing support.

* These items are included in the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008.

To provide safe, affordable housing, policy makers should:

- Offer a variety of living arrangements for young people from ages 18-21, including remaining with foster parents, kinship/guardianship placements, and independent living—and allow young people to return to foster care or a supervised living setting at any time up to age 21.
- Provide priority access to safe housing options for young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood.

To ensure access to physical and mental health care, policy makers should:

- Extend Medicaid to young people age 21, and ensure coordination of Medicaid beyond age 21 for young people who meet adult requirements.
- Ensure that health care services are comprehensive and coordinated when young people are in foster care* and that plans are in place to continue health care coverage when they exit care.

To enable young people to shape their own futures, policy makers should:

- Require that young people lead the development of their case planning, including permanency and transition planning.*
- Provide access to competent legal counsel.
- Provide leadership and community involvement opportunities for young people.
- Implement the National Youth in Transition Database to find out from young people how they are doing after leaving foster care so that policy and practice can be improved.

* These items are included in the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008.

POLICY MATRIX

ABOUT THE POLICY MATRIX

In many cases, changes in state executive and/or legislative policy are needed in order to provide the supports and practices that are critical to young people's success. The Jim Casey Initiative has created and regularly updates a set of policy matrices that track states' progress in making recommended policy changes. One version tracks policy across states, and another focuses in a more in-depth way on each state that is home to a Jim Casey Initiative site. On the following pages is an example of a policy matrix from Hawai'i.

HAWAI'I POLICY MATRIX

Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative Policy and Practice Goals

A permanent family that provides an enduring source of emotional support

Goal: Mandate that all young people leave foster care to their family, legal guardian, adoptive parent, or are discharged to a permanently committed, caring adult.

Systems Indicator: Number and percent of young people (by race/ethnicity) who exit care, age 14 to 21, with an enduring, permanent family relationship in one of the following categories: reunification with birth parents or relatives, adoption by relatives or non-relatives, legal guardianship with relatives or non-relatives, or a planned, committed relationship with a caring adult.

Policies Currently in Effect	Policy Nuances, Related Practices, and Other Information	Advocacy and Systems Change Goals and Efforts
It is not mandated in policy that all youth leaving care have a family/relative connection.	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - According to an analysis completed by EPIC 'Ohana staff, the current rate of relative placement in Hawaii is approximately 47%. - The Department has placed a heavy emphasis on placement with relatives through a variety of strategies, including introducing child-specific licensure, as well as non-legislative efforts such as 'Ohana Conferencing, 'Ohana Finding, and 'Ohana Connections (see next bullet), all of which are conducted by EPIC 'Ohana as part of a contract with DHS. - 'Ohana Conferencing, a Polynesian model similar to Family Group Decision Making, brings together extended family members of children who are involved with CWS to work with CWS and other community support to collaboratively make decisions for the safety of	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - In the past, families have often been reluctant to commit to adoption because of differences between adoption and legal guardianship support. In response to this problem, the state made changes to make the supports equal, to remove disincentives to adoption and other permanency outcomes. As a result, adoption, permanency assistance, and foster care families and children now receive the same benefits, including ongoing financial support, Medicaid, transitional services, and higher education benefits. This change has occurred as an ongoing process for several years. The changes were made procedurally within administrative rules as well as within statutory rules. The change was led by DHS with support from EPIC 'Ohana.

the children.

- Started in 2007, 'Ohana Finding (or "Family Finding") includes an extensive search for family members and other kinship support for children and youth entering foster care or who have lost connections with parents, siblings and extended family while in foster care. The 'Ohana Finding program creates maternal and paternal family lists that can help CWS and social workers engage family to help care for a child or reconnect children to their families of origin. 'Ohana Finding utilizes database case mining and internet searches to find and confirm family. Once family finding research is completed, the engagement of family members is picked up by an 'Ohana Conference coordinator or an 'Ohana Connections specialist. 'Ohana Finding is not reflected in policy.

- Also started in 2007, the 'Ohana Connections Program works in conjunction with the 'Ohana Finding Program to find and engage family members and other kinship family for foster youth, and help nurture and support those renewed family connections. 'Ohana Connections work is team work, where the workers collaborate with families, youth, Guardians Ad Litem, resource caregivers, and other providers. The intent is for all members of the team to play an important role in the Connections effort, each contributing their expertise, active engagement, and support throughout the mending process which may take several months. The 'Ohana Connections program is not reflected in policy.

- In 2009, Hawaii applied for and was granted a Federal Family Connections Grant to expand 'Ohana Finding and 'Ohana Conferencing in the state. According to a summary of the grant project, "the Hawaii Department of Human Services (DHS) has contracted for family finding and 'Ohana Conferencing, the Polynesian model of FGDM, since 1996.... This grant proposes to increase family finding and family connections work by providing two enhanced interventions

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- Each year, a Keiki Caucus is run to identify important children's issues. According to the website of a state representative participating in the Caucuses, "the Keiki Caucus is a bipartisan group of House and Senate members joined by a community resource group of children, youth advocates, and providers." This group frequently identifies issues related to child welfare.

(Accessed 1/19/12 from: http://www.cynthiathielen.com /education/keikicaucus.htm)

to two new populations of children in two heavily Hawaiian areas....

• *The Placement Prevention Intervention* will seek to prevent children birth to 17 from entering foster care, and if removed, place them with relatives. Intensified family finding will support an early 'Ohana Conference within 24 to 72 hours for children who are assessed by a social worker to be in need of placement but not yet placed and children placed in care due to imminent risk of harm.

• *The Permanency Intervention* will revisit options for children aged 4-14 in long-term foster care without permanent family connections. This intervention will utilize enhanced family finding, family engagement, assessment, 'Ohana Conferencing and further team building to develop permanent family connections and on-going support."

- Since Fostering Connections established that families have to be identified and notified within 30 days of a child entering care, 'Ohana Finding has been used to comply with that law in Hawaii by conducting an extensive search and notification of relatives within 30 days of a child entering care whenever possible.

- Beginning 1/1/2012, 'Ohana Finding and 'Ohana Connections work was started for every child coming into foster custody.

- 'Ohana Conferencing was included in Hawaii's 2004 Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) Program Improvement Plan (PIP), where use of the conferences was described as "a primary strategy for increasing the efficacy and level of family involvement." It was also included in Hawaii's 2010 PIP2, where 'Ohana Conferences were incorporated as a key element of multiple action steps related to family engagement in case planning.

- EPIC 'Ohana became the Department's incubator for 'Ohana Finding and 'Ohana Connections work when those programs started in 2007. EPIC 'Ohana has established a small

Hawaii Policy Matrix – Final as of 3/21/2012

department of family-finding specialists serving both children coming into care and children who are in long-term care.

- Using technology for Family-finding is an emerging practice in child welfare. EPIC 'Ohana is able to develop large lists of unconfirmed family members, but then staff must call each person to confirm that they are family, which is highly resource-intensive.

(Family Connections Grant summary accessed 9/5/11 from: http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socworknrcfcpp/grantees/documents/shdhs.pdf)

(Hawaii PIP accessed 1/3/2012 from: http://hawaii.gov/dhs/protection/social_services/child_welfare/child_and_family/Revised%20Hawaii%20PIP%20Overview%206-21-04.pdf)

Systems Indicator Data

Number and percent of young people (by race/ethnicity) who exit care, age 14 to 21, with an enduring, permanent family relationship.

Outcome	Number	Percent*
reunified with birth parents or relatives	268	58.9%
adopted by relatives or non-relatives	34	7.5%
legal guardianship with relatives or non-relatives	51	11.2%
planned, committed relationship with a caring adult	data not available	
TOTAL	455	100.0%

* *Based on the 455 young people ages 12 to 18 who exited foster care in the past state fiscal year (7/1/2010 – 6/31/2011).*

Source of data: Preliminary information from DHS, pending possible publication in the Department of Human Services Report on Fiscal Year 2011 (7/1/2010 – 6/31/2011) (known as the Storybook).

According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff:

- Of the 101 young people whose outcomes are not reflected above, 93 emancipated without permanency, 4 transferred to another agency, 2 were runaways, and 2 had exited but their final paperwork had not yet been submitted.

- A planned, committed relationship with a caring adult is not a formal permanency option in Hawaii.

- In general, permanency data are captured by race and ethnicity. The data are used by the Department. Currently, the Department is currently using the data to develop an increased awareness of the unique needs of specific groups of young people. The Department has not yet designed specific interventions for youth of specific race/ethnicity.

- DHS uses finer race/ethnicity categorizations than AFCARS, including ethnicities that are more relevant to Hawaii than other U.S. states.

***Goal:* Provide subsidized legal guardianship and subsidized kinship care as options for permanence.**

Policies Currently in Effect	*Policy Nuances, Related Practices, and Other Information*	*Advocacy and Systems Change Goals and Efforts*
Subsidized Guardianship *Legal Guardianship* According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3 Section 4.13, "Although adoption is the preferred permanency goal for children, there are situations where adoption is not in the best interest of the child. When a child refuses to be adopted or when a family is committed to the permanency of the child but does not want to adopt then the next, most secure, permanency goal is guardianship. Guardianship entitles the caregiver to make all the decisions for the child. Guardians are also expected to meet all the needs of the child, including any special needs. Guardians serve without compensation (except if eligible for permanency assistance) and, as the child is not adopted, are not financially responsible for the child." According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3, Section 4.13.1, re: Children Eligible for Department Guardianship Services, eligibility requirements for legal guardianship are as follows: "A. A child under the age of 18 years who is under the placement responsibility of the department at the time permanent custody is awarded to the department pursuant to 587 HRS. B. A child whose proposed permanency situation has been reviewed and approved by PRT [permanency review team]. C. Adoption was determined not to be in the best interest of the child. D. The permanent plan delineated the reasons why guardianship is the best permanency goal for the child. E. The court terminated parental rights under HRS 587 and agreed that the goal of guardianship is the proper goal for the child. EXCEPTION: When termination of parental rights is not seen as being in the best interest of the child, but return to the family home is not being considered, then, with permission from the court, the court can make findings that the family is not now or in the foreseeable future willing or able to care for the child and agree to the plan of guardianship, but the court does not divest parental rights."	**Subsidized Guardianship** According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - While policy states that "Guardians serve without compensation (except if eligible for permanency assistance) and, as the child is not adopted, are not financially responsible for the child," the great majority of guardians receive permanency assistance and therefore are compensated. - Permanency assistance is not limited to legal guardianship. Hawaii maintains a permanency status that provides permanent custody post-TPR, as well as a co-permanent custody status where the Department and an individual or family share permanent custody of a child. These permanency options are also supported through permanency assistance. - The level of financial support provided through permanency assistance is the same as that provided to legal guardianships families, licensed foster families, and adoptive families. - The KinGAP program is in the state Title IV-E plan that has been approved and is in effect. This allows for Title IV-E reimbursement for children placed with relatives. Hawaii's legal guardianship and permanency assistance programs for children were in place prior to the introduction of KinGAP and federal funding. - The KinGAP program does not replace the existing legal guardianship and permanency assistance programs. Services and supports to guardianship children and families have remained the same, and procedures for families and agency staff have not changed, with the exception of some additional paperwork that	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - As noted above, in the past, families were often reluctant to commit to adoption because of differences between adoption support and legal guardianship/permanency assistance support. In response to this problem, the state made changes to make the supports equal, to remove disincentives to adoption. As a result, adoption, permanency assistance, and foster care families and children now receive the same benefits, including ongoing support, Medicaid, transitional services, and higher education benefits. This change has occurred as an ongoing process for several years. The changes were made procedurally within administrative rules as well as within statutory rules. The change was led by DHS with support from EPIC 'Ohana. - In approximately SFY 2007-2008, Diana English from Casey Family Programs was brought in to share cross-state research on the efficacy of kinship care through a series of public forums. Based on that research, DHS decided to do a study looking at the practice of kinship care, and to look at Hawaii kinship data. The study found that the majority of practitioners did support kinship care, and found it to be equal to or better than a non-kinship placement. This raised consciousness of already existing practices in Hawaii.

(Accessed 6/25/11 from: http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch03/chp3sec4.pdf)

Permanency Assistance

According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 5, Section 5.0 re: Permanency Assistance "Permanency Assistance is provided through State funds to facilitate the placement of children into permanent homes when adoption is not the goal or an adoptive home is not available. Permanency Assistance provides financial assistance and medical coverage as if the child had continued in foster care. The major difference is that the legal guardians or permanent custodians assume the parental responsibilities and the social worker is no longer the case manager. Services may be provided on a voluntary basis if the legal guardians/permanent custodians request services; otherwise, the case is primarily monitored for payment only."

As stated in DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 5, Section 5.4, financial support associated with Permanency Assistance includes "a subsidy or money grant to meet the child's basic maintenance needs at the established basic foster board rate" and "foster care related payments when the need is established by the department social worker," including the following:

A. Clothing; Necessary for maintenance and for special circumstances or special events when the need has been established by the department social worker.
B. Minimum rates for Transportation and Other Costs to Move with Legal Guardians/Permanent custodians to their new State of residence....
C. Medical Care Benefits available through Med-QUEST.
D. Difficulty of Care Payments for children and legal guardians/permanent custodians who meet the eligibility requirements in Procedures section 5.2."

DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 5, Section 5.1 states that, in order to be eligible for permanency assistance, the following criteria must be met:

"A. Child is unable to be reunified with his or her parents or to be placed for adoption;
B. Child must be under the placement responsibility of the department at the time permanent custody or legal guardianship was awarded;
C. The legal guardians/permanent custodians are going to be sole guardians or custodians, not co-permanent custodians with the department, and the department will be relieved of placement responsibility;
D. The child is not eligible for room and board payments under Chapter 17-828; and
E. The child's income shall not exceed the maximum Permanency Assistance

must be completed by the case manager to use Title IV-E funds. The key impact of the new KinGAP program has been the introduction of a new source of funding for guardianship subsidies.

- Legal guardianship and permanency assistance are available to family and non-family members.
- A barrier to guardianship is a perception in the state that if a person opts for legal guardianship, the lack of an active case manager assigned to the child means that the guardian has more burden and fewer supports. However, the state has started to provide the same services and supports to adoptive, legal guardianship, and foster parents, so this perception of lack of support is diminishing.
- The State management information system collects data regarding the number of young people who enter subsidized guardianship annually.

Kinship Care

According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff:
- Kin and non-kin have the same options for assuming care of a child.
- In terms of qualifications, assessments, license, and supports, there are no differences between child-specific licenses and general foster licenses. Each license specifies whether it is for a certain child or general. However, the Department may waive minor requirements such as space or number of children (i.e., siblings) for a child-specific license.
- As part of Hawaii's differential response system, some low- and moderate-risk cases are assigned to voluntary community-based services, rather than being referred to the child welfare agency. In such circumstances, a family can privately arrange a legal guardianship or adoption without involving DHS. If the caregiver is a relative, they can receive general assistance and Medicaid coverage for the child. The caregiver cannot receive these supports if she/he is not a relative,

as eligibility for general assistance is based on the needs of the child and degree of relatedness between the caregiver and the child. For more information on Hawaii's differential response system, see the policy goal re: provide individualized assessments that are racially and ethnically equitable.

- The general assistance subsidy rate is a few hundred dollars per month less than the foster care subsidy rate.

- Children may be placed with kin or non-kin chosen by the family at any time as a diversion from foster care, which is an acknowledgement that the birth parents may decide that they cannot care for their child.

- Hawaii's native culture strongly emphasizes the importance of family ('Ohana). This culture has undergirded extensive efforts in the past decade to find family, and place children with family. Important components of those efforts have been to introduce 'Ohana Conferencing, 'Ohana Finding, and the 'Ohana Connections Program, as well as child-specific licensure. For more information about 'Ohana Conferences, 'Ohana Finding, and the 'Ohana Connections Program, please see the section above re: mandate that all young people leave foster care to their family, legal guardian, adoptive parent, or are discharged to a permanently committed, caring adult.

- Monthly data reports including information about legal guardianship and kinship placements are shared with section administrators, supervisors and staff. Currently the Department is working on incorporating more performance measures and indicators into these reports, and working on including data related to the CFSR performance improvement plan. These reports are also shared with providers (such as EPIC 'Ohana), who receive data to conduct analyses and identify youth who are approaching age 18 and will need transition plans 90 days before their birthday.

subsidy and difficulty of care payments.*

F. A child can continue to be eligible for Permanency Assistance after reaching the age of majority and Permanency Assistance can continue to be paid to the permanent custodians/legal guardians, provided that;

1. The child will be graduating the same year the child turns 18; or
2. The child continues to be eligible to remain in high school and is nineteen years old or younger; or
3. The person is twenty-one years old or younger and attending an accredited institution of higher education on a full-time basis.
   a. To confirm eligibility for higher education payments, the youth must complete Form 1616, "Agreement Between the DHS and Foster Child/Child Participating in the Higher Education Foster Board/Permanency Assistance Program."
   b. Examples of institutions of higher learning are community college, 4-year university or college, private business schools, vocational schools specializing in specific skill areas such as beauty/cosmetology, electronics, cooking, etc."

*DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 5 Section 5.4 re: Income to be Considered states that income sources to be considered when determining permanency assistance payment eligibility include the legal parents' income and the child's unearned income.

(Accessed 6/25/11 from:
http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch05/chp5sec5.pdf)

Kinship Care

According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3, Section 4.4.2 re: Placement of a Child Outside of the Home, "Whenever a child is removed from the family home and placed with a substitute caregiver, the first placement option to be considered should be with an appropriate extended family member or interested individual who has an acknowledged emotional, but not blood related, relationship with the child."

Definition of kin

According to Policy Directive PA-2005-5, "Kin is defined as both maternal and paternal relatives, adult siblings, or individuals not biologically or legally related to the family, including but not limited to family friends, hanai caregivers, or family pastor or minister, but who are, nevertheless, perceived as "family" by the children and/or their family members."

(Accessed 12/18/2011 from: http://ittakesanohana.org/2011/02/dhs-policy-announcements/)

Licensure options for kin

According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 4, Section 1.3.1, a relative may choose to become licensed through the general foster care or adoption licensing process, or they may choose to become licensed as a child-specific home, allowing them to care for one specific child only. Certain requirements are waived for child-specific homes. Child-specific licensure is deemed appropriate when the following criteria are met:

"A. A relationship exists between the child and the prospective foster parent. This relationship may be through blood, adoption, or marriage, or through familiarity, such as a school teacher, a neighbor, or a parent of a friend. In addition, placement in this home, rather than in a general licensed foster home, is in the child's best interest;

B. There are no general licensed foster homes available or appropriate for this child and the licensing worker and child's worker concur that a home needs to be licensed for this specific child; and

C. The individual has no intention of fostering other children and is only interested in caring for this specific child. The license is valid only for this specific child and the license terminates when the child leaves the home. If the family is interested in continuing to provide foster care, the family must be general licensed and participate in the PRIDE training."

(Accessed 6/25/11 from: http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch04/chp4sec1.pdf)

Emergency Kin Placements

Kin who have not been assessed for safety and appropriateness by a CWS social worker are not permitted to care for a child in emergency placement situations. DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 4, Section 4.4.2 states that "Although all efforts should be made to place the child in the least restrictive and most family-like setting, such resources are not always available. The CWS social worker needs to provide immediate safety for the child while looking for more appropriate options as the case progresses."

Selecting a Placement Option in Non-Emergency Situations

According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 4, Section 4.4.2, "After the child has been temporarily placed in a safe setting, the CWS social worker needs to find the most appropriate placement. The facts of the case, assessment of the child's needs and availability of appropriate placement resources to meet each

child's physical and emotional needs are factors in assessing every placement resource." Furthermore, DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 4, Section 4.4.2 states: "The placement options below are listed in order of preference:

i. Placement in a home that can accommodate the child and any siblings, with family if possible, unless the case situation indicates that such placement should not be effected.

ii. Placement with an appropriate member of the child's extended family.

iii. Placement with an appropriate adult or family who is known to the child, and has a positive relationship with the family, such as those persons who are considered by the child and family to be hanai relatives."

iv. A family foster home licensed, approved or certified by the department, in close proximity to the family home and where the child may be maintained, if possible, in the same school setting. (To minimize disruptions in the child's life.)

v. An Institution for children, such as a group home, licensed and approved by the department which has a program that will meet the child's needs.

vi. An emergency shelter home, while a determination whether the child will require continued placement is made or while a more permanent and appropriate placement is being sought.

Furthermore, Policy Directive PA-2005-7 "re-affirms DHS policy to seek and assess kin as foster, adoptive, and/or permanent placement for children in the Department's custody." It states that "in the absence of safety factors, as defined in accordance with the CWSB Differential Response Intake Assessment, placement with kin meeting CWSB licensing requirements shall be a priority…."

(Accessed 12/19/2011 from: http://ittakesanohana.org/2011/02/dhs-policy-announcements/)

Identifying Kin Caregivers

According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 4, Section 4.3.1 re: Ohana Conference, "It [the Ohana conference] is also a critical component of our casework practice that can be used to facilitate the Department's priority for placement with relatives or kin by assisting in the early identification of appropriate family members that can be enlisted as foster and potential permanent placements and resources for children within their extended family system."

(Accessed 6/12/2011 from:
http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch03/chp3sec4.pdf)

Policy Directive PA-2005-5 states that "on-going efforts shall be made by CWSB staff to identify, explore, encourage, pursue, locate, and offer support and assistance to kin as a foster, adoptive, and/or permanent placement resource. CWSB staff shall utilize Ohana Conference to locate kin."

Supporting Kin Caregivers

Policy Directive PA-2005-5 states that "CWSB staff shall assist kin by encouraging and expediting the paperwork and placement process, including but not limited to child-specific foster parent application and home study, inter-island home study request, interstate compact home study request, adoptive home study request, transition visits, and/or courtesy supervision placement."

Furthermore, the Directive states that "Kinship placement requires realignment of relationships [among kin]. …Therefore services and supports shall be provided by CWSB staff and providers during the process and for the duration of the kinship placement."

(Accessed 12/18/2011 from: http://ittakesanohana.org/2011/02/dhs-policy-announcements/)

***Goal:* Ensure that young people are placed with families, thereby reducing reliance on congregate care.**

Systems Indicator: Number and percent of young people age 14 to 21 (by race/ethnicity) that have ever been placed in congregate care settings, excluding emergency or temporary placement episodes not in excess of five days.

Policies Currently in Effect	*Policy Nuances, Related Practices, and Other Information*	*Advocacy and Systems Change Goals and Efforts*
DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3, Section 4.4.2 re: Placement of the Child Out of the Family Home reflects a preference for family placements over congregate care placements. According to this policy, "The placement options below are listed in order of preference. i. Placement in a home that can accommodate the child and any siblings, with family if possible, unless the case situation indicates that such placement should not be effected. ii. Placement with an appropriate member of the child's extended family. iii. Placement with an appropriate adult or family who is known to the child, and has a positive relationship with the family, such as those persons who are considered by the child and family to be hanai relatives. iv. A family foster home licensed, approved or certified by the department, in close proximity to the family home and where the child may be maintained, if possible, in the same school setting. (To minimize disruptions in the child's life.) v. An Institution for children, such as a group home, licensed and approved by the department which has a program that will meet the child's needs. vi. An emergency shelter home, while a determination whether the child will require continued placement is made or while a more permanent and appropriate placement is being sought. (Considered the less appropriate placement option as shelters are temporary and short term, thus not allowing a sense of placement.)" (Accessed 6/12/11 from: http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch03/chp3sec4.pdf)	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - There are very few children in congregate care in Hawaii. As a result of the small number of children placed in congregate care, congregate care reduction initiatives are not a priority for the state. Rather, initiatives promoting family-based placements and family connections are emphasized. - The Department started the Keiki Placement Project about five years ago, which entails weekly review by CWS administrators of all cases with children age zero to three to ensure that relatives are identified and engaged early on in the case for placement if necessary and as support and connection for the child and family. This is done as a matter of practice. It is not legislated and not in procedures.	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - Project First Care (PFC), a partnership of CWS, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Partners In Development Foundation, Hui Ho'omalu, Kokua 'Ohana, the Na Kupuna Tribunal Council and EPIC 'Ohana Conferencing, trains and licenses foster families to work with children with special needs. "PFC was implemented to provide safe, nurturing, temporary and on-call placement with specially trained PFC Resource Caregivers for infants and children in CWS custody. This model requires the Caregivers to work with the Birth Parents to support reunification or placement with relatives—through First Meetings, facilitation of meaningful and supportive visitations and participation in 'Ohana Conferencing." - A division of PFC is devoted specifically to teenagers (Project First Care Teens). "Like PFC for Infants and Toddlers, this initiative provides similar supports and is designed for the needs of teens." (Accessed 12/30/11 from: cfsr.dhshawaii.net/documents/download/49)

Systems Indicator Data

Number and percent of children and youth placed in emergency shelters.

During the state Fiscal Year 2011 (7/1/2010 – 6/31/2011), a total number of 2,327 children were in care. During the month of November 2010, 1% of the 1,193 children in care were in emergency shelters.

Source: CPS information system.

According to DHS staff:

- Very few youth enter emergency shelters, and even fewer enter other forms of congregate care in Hawaii. Low rates of placement in congregate care settings may be attributable to the Department's focus on community and family placements, as well as the importance of family ('Ohana) in Hawaii's native culture.

- Monthly data reports including these data are shared with section administrators, supervisors and staff, as well as provider agencies. However, the emphasis of analyses tends to be community and relative placement, not discouraging congregate care.

Goal: Provide access to supports and placements that permit young people to remain in their neighborhoods and communities.

Systems Indicator: Number and percent of young people age 14 to 21 (by race and ethnicity) placed in their own neighborhoods and communities (data not available)

Policies Currently in Effect	Policy Nuances, Related Practices, and Other Information	Advocacy and Systems Change Goals and Efforts
According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3, Section 4.4.2 re: Placement of the Child Out of the Family Home, "Attempts should be made to find a placement in the same neighborhood or school district unless such placement would place the child at risk." Furthermore, this section states that if a family foster home is selected as a child's placement option, the home should be "in close proximity to the family home and where the child may be maintained, if possible, in the same school setting. (To minimize disruptions to the child's life)." (Accessed 6/12/11 from: http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch03/chp3sec4.pdf)	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff, a barrier to placing young people in their neighborhoods and communities is a shortage of resource families, especially within certain ethnic and cultural groups.	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff, efforts supporting community-based placements that are supported by DHS but not documented in policy include the following: - To support children remaining in their school of origin, the statewide School Placement Committee has been formed, representing the DHS CWS, the State Department of Education, the foster parents association, the University of Hawaii law school, youth, and the family courts. For more information about the Committee, see the policy goal re: ensure that young people remain in the school that they are enrolled in at time of removal and placement changes. - The Kokua 'Ohana program works with local churches in Native Hawaiian communities to encourage Native Hawaiian families to foster children in their own community. This effort has also been extended to other cultural groups. - The 'aha process was implemented initially to discuss Native Hawaiian involvement in the child welfare system and has been expanded to other island communities. One objective of the process is to recruit additional foster homes in those communities to promote engagement and community-based placements. For more information on the 'aha process, see the section re: provide accessible services that are racially and ethnically equitable, free of bias and provided by culturally competent staff.

Goal: Provide older youth with options for re-engaging birth parents or relatives who are safe resources.

Policies Currently in Effect	Policy Nuances, Related Practices, and Other Information	Advocacy and Systems Change Goals and Efforts
The DHS CWS Procedures Manual does not specify policies providing older youth with options for re-engaging birth parents or relatives who are a safe resource. However, the Manual does address the involvement of family members in the case and maintenance of family ties while a child or youth is in care and upon exiting care through family conferencing, as follows. Notably, while the purpose of all family conferencing is generally to engage family members in the case, policy does not explicitly state that these conferences should be used as a mechanism to re-engage youth with birth parents or relatives who may be a safe resource. **Involving Family Members in the Case** DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3, Section 4.7.3 re: Conferencing outlines the use of family conferencing to involve family members in a case. The policy states, "Involvement of the extended family and significant others may have the potential to help in the overall success of services for the family. One of the ways a CWS social worker can involve the family is to have conferences for family members only." The policy outlines the use of both 'Ohana Conferencing and Other Types of Family Conferencing. (Accessed 8/30/2011 from: http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch03/chp3sec4.pdf) **Reunification with Parents** Reinstatement of parental rights can be requested by a child, the child's guardian ad litem, the child's attorney (if any), or the DHS. - For a child to make this request, she/he MUST be at least 14 years old and have been in permanent custody for at least twelve months. The child cannot have been adopted or under a legal guardianship. - The court has discretion to order a trial home placement ; a motion for reinstatement does not mean a trial home placement or reinstatement will automatically occur. - A parent whose rights have been terminated CANNOT move for a reinstatement of parental rights under this section. (HRA 587A, as summarized in a fact sheet at: http://ittakesanohana.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Law-Changes-H.R.S4.pdf)	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - DHS contracts with EPIC 'Ohana to provide 'Ohana Finding, an extensive search for family members and other kinship support for children and youth entering foster care or who have lost connections with parents, siblings and extended family while in foster care. Additionally, the 'Ohana Connections Program helps nurture and support those renewed family connections. In 2009, Hawaii applied for and was granted a Federal Family Connections Grant to expand 'Ohana Finding and 'Ohana Conferencing in the state. For more information about 'Ohana Conferences, 'Ohana Finding, and the 'Ohana Connections Program, please see the policy goal re: mandate that all young people leave foster care to their family, legal guardian, adoptive parent, or are discharged to a permanently committed, caring adult. - Youth Circles allow young people to invite parents, siblings, and other relatives, and support family reconnection if the young person desires it. For more information on Youth Circles, see the policy goal below re: young people lead the development of their case planning. - Within the child welfare community, practice sometimes lags behind policy. It can take time for practitioners to understand the value of birth family connections, and this can create barriers for individual young people.	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - The 'Ohana is Forever statewide conference (held annually since 2007) focuses on the voice and needs of youth transitioning from foster care. This conference engages the broader stakeholder community and increases their awareness of youth needs, including family connections. - Child Welfare Services (CWS) has supported the Hawaii Foster Youth Coalition since the early 2000's and the Youth Circle process since 2004. The Coalition and Youth Circles help empower youth to identify their needs and advocate for themselves, including addressing the need for family connections. - The support of the Hawaii Youth Opportunities Initiative HI H.O.P.E.S. youth leadership board furthers the Department's efforts around family connections. The media training and youth-adult partnership training provided by the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative and the collaboration with the community partnership boards continue to support these goals as well. In addition, HI H.O.P.E.S. is engaged with the DHS Director to increase her awareness of and support for the needs of transitioning youth.

***Goal*: Make all efforts to place siblings together; when not possible require and facilitate quality visitation among siblings unless safety is an issue.**

Systems Indicator: For all young people age 14 to 21 (by race/ethnicity) who have one or more siblings in care, the number and percent placed with at least one of their siblings.

Policies Currently in Effect	Policy Nuances, Related Practices, and Other Information	Advocacy and Systems Change Goals and Efforts
Sibling Co-Placement DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3, Section 4.4.2 re: Placement of the Child Out of the Family Home states: "Unless the case situation warrants otherwise, separation of siblings is not recommended. Placement of siblings in the same home presents the following advantages, among others: i. Siblings provide support for each other and decrease the anxiety children may experience as a result of the removal from the family home. ii. Arranging medical care is easier, and a common medical provider may be obtained. iii. Visitation is easier to arrange for all the children, and visitation between siblings need not be facilitated." DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3, Section 4.4.2 further states that, when placing a child outside of his or her home, "the placement options below are listed in order of preference: i. Placement in a home that can accommodate the child and any siblings, with family if possible, unless the case situation indicates that such placement should not be effected. ii. Placement with an appropriate member of the child's extended family. iii. Placement with an appropriate adult or family who is known to the child, and has a positive relationship with the family, such as those persons who are considered by the child and family to be hanai relatives. iv. A family foster home licensed, approved or certified by the department, in close proximity to the family home and where the child may be maintained, if possible, in the same school setting. (To minimize disruptions in the child's life.) v. An Institution for children, such as a group home, licensed and approved by the department which has a program that will meet the child's needs.	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - Hawaii contracts with EPIC 'Ohana to provide 'Ohana Finding and the 'Ohana Connections Program. In 2009, Hawaii applied for and was granted a Federal Family Connection Grant to expand family-finding and family group decision making in the state. The aim of these programs is to increase family placements, which in turn could lead to greater support for sibling co-placements. For more information about 'Ohana Conferencing, 'Ohana Finding, and the 'Ohana Connections Program, please see the policy goal re: mandate that all young people leave foster care to their family, legal guardian, adoptive parent, or are discharged to a permanently committed, caring adult. - The Kokua 'Ohana Program and the 'aha process have enhanced the state's ability to provide visits with parents and siblings, when siblings are not placed together. For more information about Kokua 'Ohana Program and the 'aha process, see the policy goal re: access to supports and placements that permit young people to remain in their neighborhoods and communities. - Placing all members of large sibling groups together may be challenging. For example, some siblings have different fathers and may be placed with their fathers or paternal relatives. Also, adolescents may be placed	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - In late 2010, the HI H.O.P.E.S. youth board of the Hawaii Youth Opportunities Initiative identified sibling connections as one of two top priority issues. Board members developed presentations and handouts and are currently scheduling presentations to key stakeholders (DHS, Family Court, GALs, caregivers). - HYOI is working with DHS to track sibling connections through the case review process (short-term) and to include ways to record sibling groups and visits in the new database system currently under development. - Hawaii's PIP2 (2010) provides ongoing focus in this area.

separately from younger siblings.
- Current economic conditions and staff reductions within CWS have impacted the state's ability to support sibling visitation as much as is desired.

- Family Programs Hawaii raises the resources to operate and sustain Project Visitation. The State of Hawai'i First Circuit Family Court and DHS created Project Visitation to provide monthly visits and special events for siblings separated by the foster care system. Project Visitation seeks to minimize the trauma of family separation by preserving sibling relationships through visits. By bringing brothers and sisters together in a fun and safe environment, Project Visitation volunteers give these children the opportunity to create family memories they otherwise would not have. Project Visitation currently operates on Oahu and in the Kailua-Kona area of Hawaii Island.

vi. An emergency shelter home, while a determination whether the child will require continued placement is made or while a more permanent and appropriate placement is being sought."

(Accessed 6/12/2011 from: http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch03/chp3sec4.pdf)

Sibling Visitation

According to DCS CWS Policy Manual Chapter 3, Section 4.6.4, "Visits should be arranged between children and their parents and any siblings in the family home. For a child under court supervision, visitation is part of the family service plan that is ordered by the Family Court. Visitation will not be opposed by the department unless the safety of the child is threatened by contacts between the child and parents." Furthermore, Policy 4.6.4 states that "Visits should be arranged for siblings if placed in different homes."

According to DCS CWS Policy Manual Chapter 3, Section 4.3.4 re: Identifying a Prospective Permanent Family, "Areas to be addressed with the prospective permanent family" include, among others, "Their willingness and ability to maintain family and cultural connections."

(Accessed 6/26/11 from: http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch03/chp3sec4.pdf)

According to Policy Directive PA 2005-6, "Visits shall occur in the least restrictive, most home-like setting or natural family events… and not at CWSB offices unless a closely supervised, structured, and monitored environment is warranted to maintain the child/dren's safety."

(Accessed 12/18/2011 from: http://ittakesanohana.org/2011/02/dhs-policy-announcements/)

According to Hawaii Revised Statutes 587A-3, the guiding principles for children in foster care, the Department, or an authorized agency shall ensure that a child in foster care "has supervised or unsupervised in-person, telephone, or other forms of contact with the child's parents and siblings while the child is in foster care, unless prohibited by court order."

(Accessed 1/6/2012 from http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrscurrent/Vol12_Ch0501-0588/HRS0587A/HRS_0587A-0003.htm)

Systems Indicator Data

For all young people who have one or more siblings in care, the number and percent placed with at least one of their siblings.

Year	Percent placed with all siblings in care
SFY2008	96%
SFY2009	93%
SFY2010	95.8%
SFY2011	91%

Source: Hawaii's CQI reviews for DHS/CWS for Fiscal Year 2011 (7/1/2010 – 6/31/2011)

According to DHS staff:

- These data are currently collected in case notes and will be collected in the new Shaka online information system. The new system is expected to improve data collection for this indicator.

- These data are reviewed regularly in order to determine whether policy goals are being achieved. These particular data are not examined by race/ethnicity.

Goal: Provide individualized assessments that are racially and ethnically equitable, free of bias and provided by culturally competent staff.

Systems Indicator: Number and percent of public and private child welfare agency staff receiving training in racial equity.

Policies Currently in Effect	Policy Nuances, Related Practices, and Other Information	Advocacy and Systems Change Goals and Efforts
Family Assessment *Purpose* As stated in DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3, Section 1 re: Family Assessment, "The goal of family-centered intervention is to empower the family to remedy the safety issues present in the home. The family assessment is crucial to this approach. It is important that as an agency we share common beliefs and attitudes toward the assessment of families. Some of these basic beliefs are: 1. Problems that affect individuals are usually symptomatic of underlying family problems; 2. A family's problems are not created by a single individual, they originate within the family system; 3. Family participation in the assessment process allows them to identify their own strengths and needs and enhances the likelihood of case success. 4. The assessment should focus on the strengths of the family, which will guide the treatment planning and identify opportunities for the family and the social worker. Family assessment is integral in determining the appropriate response to a report of abuse or neglect and the subsequent delivery of timely and appropriate services to children and families. Competent, accurate assessments lead to an intervention that appropriately addresses the family's needs and resolves the safety issues in the family. Family assessment is an ongoing process which evaluates and identifies: 1. The current level of family functioning; 2. The current risk to the child(ren); and 3. Family strengths and service needs. The assessment is used to determine an agency response to a report of abuse or neglect, ensure the safety of the child or children at risk, and to develop a plan that will address the safety issues that brought the family to the attention of the department."	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - Hawaii uses a differential response system to respond to reports in the most relevant and responsive way possible. Differential response is an intake process that assesses each report to CWS to determine the most appropriate, most effective, and least intrusive response that can be provided by CWS or community partners to a report of child abuse or neglect. The cornerstone of the differential response system is an assessment by CWS whether a report or case situation presents a safety or risk concern. If a case presents a safety concern, CWS will always conduct an investigation and take action to protect the child. If the report does not present a risk concern, families will be offered voluntary services case management or family strengthening services with a community provider. - Hawaii's differential response system was part of the state's 2004 PIP and its 2010 PIP2. The 2004 PIP states that one strategy for diversion is differential response: "Foster care discharge data show that about two thirds (2/3) of the children discharged annually from foster care return home. The median length of stay in foster care prior to reunification is 3.1 months. One of our primary strategies for improvement involves changes to our intake, case assignment and case planning processes that should help to prevent the removal and placement of those children whose time in	

Sources of Information

As stated in DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3, Section 1, "There are six basic sources of information which should be used when conducting a family assessment:

A. Face to face interviews of family members, individually and as a group;

B. Information gathered by a single individual; they originate from family members through activities such as ecomaps and genograms;

C. Observations by the social worker of the family members and their interactions with other family members, the social worker and others;

D. Written documentation about the family members such as agency records, case records, school records, arrest and conviction records;

E. Information provided by collaterals such as the reporter, other agencies, extended family members and others involved with the family; and

F. Evaluation of the family members by a qualified examiner, such as a psychologist, psychiatrist, physicians and others."

Elements of the Assessment Process

DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3, Section 1 further states that the elements of the assessment process include assessing the following:

A. Identification of the safety issues;

B. Family strengths;

C. Family behavior and social functioning;

D. Emotional patterns;

E. Educational and cognitive patterns; and

F. Family interaction and relationships.

Risk Assessment

According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3, Section 1, "Assessment of risk begins at the point a report of abuse or neglect is made and continues throughout the entire CWS intervention and service process. In order for the intervention and casework services to be effective, risk assessment must be considered throughout the duration of the case." The Manual goes on to outline the responsibilities of the social worker performing a risk assessment, including, among others:

– "Determine the safety of the home;

– Assess all areas of risk and all children at risk of abuse or neglect;

– Interview the child(ren) separately from the caregivers and ask the child or child(ren) if they have been harmed;

– Visually examine the children in the home for evidence of harm…

– Be alert for especially severe risk factors, such as:

foster care is less than 100 days. With all due concern for the safety of children at risk, our intent is to divert as many cases as possible from formal entry into the CWS system."

- Prior to differential response, there were over 4,000 children in care; now there are approximately 1,000.

- Although Hawaii has a relatively small population, cultural diversity is a defining characteristic of life in the State. The population is so diverse that all child welfare staff must have cultural awareness and the ability to adapt interactions and services appropriately.

- The Overarching Cultural Principle of the Hawaii Child Welfare Services Family Partnership and Engagement Practice Model is the following: "Children and families are to be engaged within the context of their own family rules, traditions and cultures."

- Part II of the CWS mandatory new hire training includes two days of training from representatives of varied cultures. All new hires at CWS are required to participate in this training, and existing staff may also participate. In addition, supervisors provide on the job training when appropriate to the case.

a. Previous reports of abuse or neglect;

b. Serious substance abuse;

c. A non maltreating caregiver who cannot protect the child;

d. Injuries to the head, face, neck or genital area.

– Be aware of risk factors which interact to increase the risk to a child."

– Examine the frequency, duration and severity of the risk factors;

– Determine the overall risk to the child or children using the family and risk assessments;

– Document clearly the risk to the child or children;

– Use the assessment as the basis for the case plan."

(Accessed 9/6/11 from:
http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch02/chp2sec1.pdf)

Assessment Tools

According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3, Section 2 re: Assessment Tools, "A complete and competent assessment requires interviewing, assessment, data collection and analytical judgment skills as well as training. The instruments assist the worker to effectively, thoroughly and consistently collect and organize the known facts about the family. The information documents the worker's findings but cannot replace worker judgment and first hand knowledge of the family, which is essential to determine the safety or risk of the family home." The primary tools used for assessment are the *Child and Family Assessment Matrix Part 1, Child Risk Assessment Summary*, and the *Family Safety Assessment*.

Furthermore, according to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 4, Section 4.16.1 re: Independent Services, "The following independent living services are provided to foster youth and former foster youth," including, "An individualized assessment of the youth's independent living knowledge base, skills and needs."

(Accessed 9/5/2011 from:
http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch03/chp3sec4.pdf)

Systems Indicator Data

Number and percent of current DHS professional staff trained in racial equity

Percent: 100%

Source: Preliminary information
According to DHS staff

- CWS maintains records of staff participation in DHS-sponsored trainings, including cultural competency. These data are not reviewed on a regular basis.

Goal: Provide accessible services that are racially and ethnically equitable, free of bias and provided by culturally competent staff.

Policies Currently in Effect	Policy Nuances, Related Practices, and Other Information	Advocacy and Systems Change Goals and Efforts
DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3 re: Casework Services reflects an emphasis on cultural competence, respect, and family empowerment throughout multiple stages of the casework process, including the following; **Family Service Plan** DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3 Section 4.6.1 re: Establishing Tasks/Services for the Parents as part of the Family Service Plan states that "Recommended tasks/services to the parents should be culturally sensitive, language appropriate, intellectually compatible and not overwhelming." **Concurrent Permanency Planning** DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3 Section 4.3.2 re: Concurrent Permanency Planning states, "All services are provided within the framework of the family strengths based model and cultural competency and with the belief that a child needs a stable committed family and supportive relationships for healthy growth and development. The provision of services is culturally sensitive and respectful of the family's lifestyle and dynamics with a goal to empower the family to develop their own choices and plan for themselves and their children. Concurrent permanency planning is to be provided within the broad scope of services to families and children to nurture, enhance and sustain connections with the natural support systems for the family within their community and culture." **Permanency Planning** DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3 Section 4.3.4 re: Identifying a Prospective Permanent Family, "Areas to be addressed with the prospective permanent family" include, among others, "Their willingness and ability to maintain family and cultural connections." **Adoption Planning and Process** DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3, Section 4.4.2 re: Placement of the Child Out of the Family Home (subsection re: Selection of a Home) states that "the cultural, ethnic, or racial background of the child… may be considered as factors when making a determination of placement that is in the best interest of the child."	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - The 'aha process brings together members from particular cultural communities and DHS to create a two-way exchange that informs the community about DHS and informs DHS about the community. The first 'aha in 2008 brought together participants from all the islands in a single meeting to help DHS develop strategies to work together for the sake of the children. Participants discussed strategies to seek out relatives, preserve cultural connections, provide more culturally appropriate and effective services, and recruit, retain and support foster and adoptive families. It was implemented initially to discuss Native Hawaiian involvement in the child welfare system and has been expanded to other island communities including with the Micronesian, Marshallese, Chuukese, Filipino, Samoan, Tongan and other communities. - A diversity resource list is maintained by Family Programs Hawaii (a DHS-contracted service provider) that provides information about services available by county/region. - Through a federal grant in the early 2000's, DHS contracted with a Native Hawaiian organization to begin engagement with that community to develop Native Hawaiian placements for Native Hawaiian children. - Hawaii uses a differential response system to respond to reports in the most relevant and responsive way possible. For more information on Hawaii's differential response system, see the policy goal re: provide individualized assessments that are racially and	

ethnically equitable.
- The CWS practice Family Partnership and Engagement Practice Model has seven values, including the following:

• Value: Culturally Competent
• Principle: We have a responsibility to understand and provide services to children and families within the context of their beliefs, values, race, socio-economic class, ethnicity, history, culture, religion and language.
• Our practice: Incorporates cultural strength and values into our work; Enlists support from within the family's culture and community

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Furthermore, according to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3 Section 4.12.3 re: Special Considerations in Adoption Planning, "The department shall not delay or deny to any person the opportunity to become an adoptive parent, on the basis of race, color, or national origin of the person, or of the child involved. However, the cultural, ethnic, or racial background of the child and the capacity of the adoptive parent(s) to meet the needs of the child of such background may be considered as factors when making a determination of placement that is in the best interest of the child."

According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3 Section 4.12.5 re: Adoption Process, steps in preparing the child and adoptive family for adoption include, among others, "Emphasize the child's ethnic/cultural needs with the child and family."

(Accessed 7/6/2011 from:
http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch03/chp3sec4.pdf)

Reasonable Efforts

According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3, Section 4.5.3 re: The Court's Role in Reasonable Efforts, when evaluating the service goals for a child in out-of-home care, "The court may take the following factors into consideration when making the findings," including, among others:

- "Coordination of services: The court should determine that the family had a chance to succeed because the services were offered in a manner that was not overwhelming or confusing. There also needs to be proof of adequate monitoring of utilization of the services by the family.

- Accessibility of services: The department needs to demonstrate that all efforts were made to encourage the family to participate in services, and that all efforts were made to find and refer a family to appropriate services."

(Accessed 6/26/11 from:
http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch03/chp3sec4.pdf)

Goal: Collect and analyze outcome and administrative data to identify racial disproportionality and disparate outcomes for children and youth of color.

Policies Currently in Effect	Policy Nuances, Related Practices, and Other Information	Advocacy and Systems Change Goals and Efforts
No policy exists requiring the Department to collect and analyze outcomes and administrative data to identify racial disproportionality and disparate outcomes for children and youth of color.	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - Over the past 10 years, DHS has been engaged in major efforts to identify racial disproportionality in services and outcomes, trying to find solutions, and partnering with communities to address the issue. This work has addressed children in care and exiting care, and continues currently. - In 2006, Casey Family Programs initiated a research project with DHS around disproportionality. A study of disproportionality in the state examining all children in care, by race and geographic area, revealed a disproportionate number of Native Hawaiians in care. This finding motivated DHS to develop strategies to address this issue, including initiating the 'aha process in 2008. Since then, the focus on Native Hawaiians has been expanded to other ethnic communities. - It is important to note that in Hawaii, native Hawaiians are referred to as the "host culture" and not an ethnic or racial group. Additionally, because of high rates of intermarriage, the boundaries between these communities can be relatively fluid. - The AFCARS categories are less relevant for Hawai'i's population than for most other U.S. states. Therefore, a policy requiring data to be examined through this lens would not be as helpful for Hawaii. However, as documented throughout this matrix, the disproportionate number of Native Hawaiians/Part Hawaiians in care is a major focus of the Department and its partners.	

Goal: Ensure that young people remain in the school that they are enrolled in at time of removal and placement changes, providing transportation if needed. If a school change is in their best interest, provide immediate enrollment in, and records transfer to, a new school.

Systems Indicator: For young people age 14 to 24 (by race/ethnicity), average number of school placement changes experienced while in care (data not available)

Policies Currently in Effect	Policy Nuances, Related Practices, and Other Information	Advocacy and Systems Change Goals and Efforts

Transportation to School of Origin
According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 4 section 4.4.1 re: school bus fare or private car mileage, "The department shall provide for the following when the need has been established by the department and to the extent that funds are available," including, among others, "School bus fare or private car mileage—available when free school transportation is not available and for the months school is in session. Car mileage is to be paid to the foster parents at the current state mileage allowance rate."
 	
(Accessed 1/18/2012 from:
http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch05/chp5sec4.pdf)
 	
Transfer of Educational Records
According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3 section 3.2.1 re: Components of a Case Plan, "for each child in out-of-home care the case plan shall include at a minimum… the health and education records of the child," including, among other things, "an assurance that the State/Tribal agency has coordinated with appropriate local educational agencies (as defined under section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) to ensure that the child remains in the school in which the child is enrolled at the time of placement; or… if remaining in such school is not in the best interests of the child, assurances by the State/Tribal agency and the local educational agencies to provide immediate and appropriate enrollment in a new school, with all of the educational records of the child provided to the school."
	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff:
	- In addition to reimbursing foster parents for car mileage, another method through which the Department funds transportation to school of origin is to fund public bus passes, provided that the child is old enough and that public bus service is available.
	- Data around school placement stability are not currently tracked by DHS, but will be tracked in the new Shaka online information system, which will begin implementation on 1/1/2012.
	
	- Barriers that sometimes prevent young people from continuing to attend their school of origin following placement include:
	  • Safety concerns, especially when remaining in a school of origin would make a child accessible to parents or siblings with whom they have a dangerous relationship.
	  • For children with special needs, the most appropriate foster home or resource caregiver is sometimes located so far away that they cannot attend their school of origin.
	  • A child may be placed with relatives who do not live near to the school of origin.
	  • Even when a child is placed on his or her island of origin, due to the large size of some of the Hawaiian islands, the commute to their school of origin could be two hours
		According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff:
		- A statewide School Placement Committee has been formed, representing the DHS CWS, the State Department of Education, the foster parents association, the University of Hawaii law school, youth, and the family courts. The committee is examining policy and practice around school stability. The Committee was formed several years ago, but its activities have increased since passage of Fostering Connections in 2008. The Committee is funded by DHS. A focus of the Committee is developing plans and criteria that can be used in determining whether remaining in her/his school of origin is in a child's best interest when entering care. Currently, a preliminary draft of the criteria had been developed. The task force is still meeting, has developed guidelines and procedures, and is doing staged implementation with one school complex, the Roosevelt school complex.

or more.

(Accessed 8/9/11 from: http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2011/testimony/HCR183_TESTIMONY_HUS_03-28-11_.PDF)

Goal: Make tuition waivers to public or private schools available to young people formerly in foster care up to age 24.

Systems Indicator: Number and percent of young people (by race/ethnicity) receiving tuition waivers for post-secondary education up to age 24.

Policies Currently in Effect	Policy Nuances, Related Practices, and Other Information	Advocacy and Systems Change Goals and Efforts
Hawaii does not offer tuition waivers to young people formerly in foster care. However, according to the DHS Higher Education and ETV Interim Procedures, the state provides the Higher Education Board Allowance Program and Education and Training Voucher Program (ETV) to current and former foster youth pursuing post-secondary education. (Accessed 8/30/11 from: http://hawaii.gov/dhs/protection/social_services/child_welfare/ILP) According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3 section 4.14.2 re: Payment Beyond the Age of 18 After the Legal Status Terminates, "For any child who pursues higher education, he/she must apply for financial aid. Application should be made in his/her senior year of high school or at the time of acceptance to the college or vocational school. Eligibility for higher education payments will be considered ONLY after all efforts to secure financial assistance is made by the student. The amount of board payments will then be determined by the type and amount of financial aid the student is able to secure. When the child is 18 years old and is not in school, the case can be closed. If the child wishes to return to higher education between the ages of 18-22, the case can be reopened for higher education payment." (Accessed 8/30/11 from: http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch03/chp3sec4.pdf) **Higher Education Board Allowance Program** The Higher Education Board Allowance Program is a state-funded program designed to help former foster youth complete their education and training goals and make a successful transition to self-sufficiency by providing additional financial support for post-secondary education and training. According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 5 section 5.2 re: Higher Education, Permanency Assistance payments can be made to young people age 18+ who are enrolled in school in the form of High Education Board Allowance payments if "the person is twenty-one years old or younger and attending an	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - The University of Hawaii system does not grant waivers. Scholarships are provided based on need. - Clarification of age eligibility requirements for Higher Education Board Payments: applicants must be at least 18 years old and under 27 years old to receive the benefit; however, initial application must be filed before the end of the student's 21st year. - Policy states that young people who were adopted after their 16th birthday are eligible for ETV. Additionally, young people who enter into legal guardianship at age 16 or older are eligible for ETV as a matter of practice. - DHS has developed a youth portal called ShakaTown as part of the new Shaka online information system. ShakaTown was launched on 1/1/2012. One objective of ShakaTown is to facilitate current and former foster youth's access to important documents and resources. Among other things, youth are able to create an account and complete Higher Ed and ETV applications online. Prior to the portal's launch, a memo dated 3/28/2011, from the Director of the Department of Human Services to the House Committee on Human Services the Department described the planned portal as a "secure, password-protected web-based application that will be a vital and interactive link between the youth and the Department designed to provide information and support and to facilitate a transition to successful	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - A collaborative of programs that serve youth leaving foster care put on Better Start workshops three times per year at community colleges to help young people fill out FAFSA applications and get information and deadlines. Better Start also reaches out to foster parents for these workshops and provides a quarterly newsletter to resource caregivers that includes information about the workshops.

independence as an adult. Through [the portal], youth will have access to court orders, medical history and other documents provided by the Department, as well as the ability to upload their own documents, complete applications for higher education benefits, contact the assigned worker, and receive messages from the Department."

- In the past, a barrier to young people accessing ETV and Higher Education Board Payments has been difficulty accessing applications and required paperwork. The ShakaTown youth portal now provides young people access to these materials online.

- Other barriers to young people accessing ETV and Higher Education Board Payments tend to be typical of the developmental stage of adolescence—e.g., forgetting to complete the necessary paperwork and failure to properly plan ahead in order to meet deadlines.

- Monthly reports are developed by DHS documenting participation in the Higher Education Board Allowance and ETV Programs, as well as geographic distribution of ETV usage. Data in these reports are partitioned by race and ethnicity.

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accredited institution of higher education on a full-time basis." Furthermore, the Manual state that "Former youths who reached the age of majority and did not attend or dropped out of an institution of higher learning and for whom permanency assistance was terminated, are eligible to request re-initiation of permanency assistance if they are 21 years old or younger and now enrolled in an institution of higher learning on a full-time basis."

(Accessed 8/30/11 from: http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch05/chp5sec5.pdf)

Benefits

According to the DHS website, "Higher education board allowances are equivalent to the prevailing foster board rate…. A student may receive a maximum of 60 months of benefits between the ages of 18 and 27 years."

Eligibility

Individuals may be eligible for the high education board allowance if he/she was:

- "In foster care placement under the placement responsibility of the Department of Human Services pursuant to Chapter 587, Hawaii Revised Statutes, until:

  • The age of 18 years was attained;

  • Legal guardianship or permanent custody was awarded to an individual(s); or

  • Adoption was finalized.

- Applicant must be at least 18 years old and under 27 years old. Initial application must be filed before the end of the student's 21st year.

- Accepted to attend / or attending an accredited institution of higher education.

- Part-time attendance is allowable for one [1] academic year. Part-time attendance means carrying the number of courses equivalent to one half of the number of courses the school considers as full time.

- Each student who applies for the higher education board allowance benefit must apply for federal scholarships and financial aid using the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Applications for other scholarships should also be filed.

- Maintain a satisfactory level of performance in accordance with school and federal financial aid guidelines and be making satisfactory progress toward the completion of the program. In general, this means a "C" or 2.0 grade point average.

- Scheduled breaks – vacations, intersession: To be eligible to receive higher education board allowance payments during scheduled breaks in class attendance longer than three [3] weeks the student must participate in activities that will enhance community involvement, life skills, knowledge or employment

readiness….

- Participation with an ILP purchase of services provider is required on a monthly basis for all students receiving higher education board allowance payments. The focus of these contacts shall be supporting the student's progress with education / training, may include the provision/referral to other needed services including tutoring. This requirement may be waived in the following situations:

  ● The student is participating in regular support or guidance sessions with appropriate staff at the institution of higher education, and written documentation of this participation is provided to the Department on a regular basis.

  ● The student is over 21 years of age, has completed at least two [2] years of post secondary education/training at a satisfactory or better grade performance level, and continues to receive satisfactory or better grades."

(Accessed 8/30/2011 from: http://hawaii.gov/dhs/protection/social_services/child_welfare/ILP)

According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 5 section 5.5.2 re: Higher Education, "Examples of institutions of higher learning are community college, 4-year university or college, private business schools, vocational schools specializing in specific skill areas such as beauty/cosmetology, electronics, cooking, etc."

(Accessed 8/30/2011 from: http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch05/chp5sec5.pdf)

Educational and Training Vouchers (ETV)

The Education Training Voucher (ETV) program awards grants to current and former foster youth to help pay for college or specialized education. ETV grants are funded by the federal government and administered by states.

Benefits

According to the DHS website, "ETV awards shall be provided only to the extent that federal funds are available for this purpose. ETV awards are issued to assist the student with expenses that are not covered by other sources and should not be requested for expenses that can be covered by existing programs, grants or organizations.

In accordance with Federal requirements, the award shall not exceed $5,000 per year per youth. The usual amount of the ETV will be approximately $2,000 per year due to the limited amount of Federal funds available and the number of youth applying for these benefits. In exceptional circumstances, the award may exceed $2,000 with documentation of the youth's extreme need and approval of the CWS

Section Administrator."

Eligibility

In order to be eligible for ETV in Hawaii, participants must have been:

- "In foster care placement under the placement responsibility of the Department of Human Services pursuant to Chapter 587, Hawaii Revised Statutes, until:

  • The age of 18 years was attained;

  • Legal guardianship or permanent custody was awarded to an individual(s); or

  • Adoption was finalized.

- Student must be at least 18 years old and under 22 years old. If adopted, adoption was finalized after 16th birthday. Youth participating in the ETV program on their 21 birthday shall remain eligible until age 23, provided they remain enrolled in a full time post-secondary education or training program; and are making satisfactory progress in their course of study.

- Accepted to attend / or attending an accredited institution of higher education.

- Part-time attendance is allowable for one [1] academic year. Part-time attendance means carrying the number of courses equivalent to one half of the number of courses the school considers as full time.

- Maintain a satisfactory level of performance in accordance with school and federal financial aid guidelines and be making satisfactory progress toward the completion of the program. In general, this means a "C" or 2.0 grade point average."

(Accessed 8/30/2011 from:
http://hawaii.gov/dhs/protection/social_services/child_welfare/ILP)

Geist Foundation Scholarship Program

According to the Geist Foundation website, "Since 1995 more than $2.5 million has been awarded in college scholarships to students currently or formerly in the foster care system. As a result of financial assistance from the Geist Foundation, hundreds of students are able to attend vocational schools, community colleges, and public and private universities both here in Hawai'i and on the mainland United States."

Eligibility

According to the Geist Foundation website, "You are eligible for a Geist Scholarship if…"

- Hawaii is your primary residence

- You plan to attend a two- or four- year college, university, graduate school, or vocational school.

- You must plan to enroll at least half-time (equivalent of 6 or more credits per

semester)

- You can provide verification of foster care status within the State of Hawaii.
- Youth who have been legally adopted or reunited with their birth families before the age of eighteen are not eligible for support under this program

Renewal

Participants are required to renew eligibility for the scholarship annually by submitting the following:

- A completed application form
- A progress report statement written by the participant
- Evidence of maintaining a 2.0 GPA or higher (or explanation of a lower GPA in the above-noted progress report statement)
- Most recent official college transcript

(Accessed 1/18/12 from: http://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org /doc_bin/scholar_app /2009/Geist_2009-2010.pdf)

Systems Indicator Data

Number and percent of young people (by race/ethnicity) up to age 24 received tuition waivers for post-secondary education in the last fiscal year:

Number: 0

Percent: 0 %

Tuition waivers are not offered in Hawaii

Goal: Provide other supports for post-secondary education (e.g., books, computers, school supplies, partial tuition payments, campus support groups, Education Training Vouchers, housing).

Policies Currently in Effect	Policy Nuances, Related Practices, and Other Information	Advocacy and Systems Change Goals and Efforts
See previous policy goal for information about partial tuition payments through the Higher Education Board Allowance, ETV, and scholarships from the Geist Foundation.		

Opportunities to Achieve Economic Success

Goal: Make Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) available to all youth currently or formerly in care age 14 to 24, with developmentally-appropriate financial literacy training and asset purchases such as vehicles and security deposits on housing.

Systems Indicator: Number and percent of young people age 14 to 24 (by race/ethnicity) that have an IDA account.

Policies Currently in Effect	Policy Nuances, Related Practices, and Other Information	Advocacy and Systems Change Goals and Efforts
No policies exist making IDAs available to all youth currently or formerly in care age 14 to 24.	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - Lee Dean (Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Services Assistant Program Development Administrator, Independent Living Programs) and Kayle Perez (Child Welfare Services Branch Manager) sit on the CP Hui, and are integral members of the HYOI site team. Therefore, the Department is engaged with the IDA program offered through Opportunity Passport™ and is aware of its enrollment, savings, and asset purchase data. - Data associated with the Opportunity Passport™ program and the topic of IDAs are frequently discussed within the Department, and efforts are underway to bring this issue to a higher priority when possible. However, it is not possible for it to be a top priority at this time.	

Systems Indicator Data

Number and percent of young people (by race/ethnicity), age 14 to 24, that had IDA accounts through the Opportunity Passport™ program in November, 2011.

Number: 75 (percent unknown - no denominator available)

Of the 75 young people with IDAs, the racial/ethnic breakdown is as follows:*

- Asian 15%
- Caucasian 11%
- Latino or Hispanic 1%
- Pacific Islander 28%
- Other 45%

*Of the 75 young people with IDAs, 42 or 56% are Hawaiian/Part Hawaiian.

Source: Hawaii MIS IDA

Goal: Mandate that all youth leaving care, age 14 to 21, receive necessary documents upon exiting including, at a minimum, their Social Security card, a certified birth certificate or green card, and a government-issue photo ID.

Systems Indicator: Number and percent of young people age 14 to 21 (by race/ethnicity) that receive from the child welfare agency all needed documents for personal identification prior to exit from foster care (Social Security card and birth certificate) (data not available)

Policies Currently in Effect	Policy Nuances, Related Practices, and Other Information	Advocacy and Systems Change Goals and Efforts
There is not policy specifying that the Department provides young people with hard copies of critical documents upon leaving care.	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - The Department provides hard copies of critical document to young people leaving care as a matter of practice. - One objective of the new ShakaTown youth portal is to facilitate current and former foster youth's access to important documents and resources. Young people are able to store and access electronic copies of critical documents on ShakaTown. Due to the newness of ShakaTown, currently only a limited number of young people are storing their documents on the portal, and information about this feature is still being disseminated throughout the field. For more information about ShakaTown, please see the policy goal re: make tuition waivers to public or private schools available to young people formerly in foster care up to age 24. - Security is a concern related to ShakaTown. Efforts are currently underway to ensure that critical documents stored on the portal are completely secure. Furthermore, DHS is developing strategies to educate young people about the importance of keeping them secure and private (e.g., not sharing their ShakaTown passwords). DHS staff who work with youth, Independent Living providers, financial literacy training providers, Youth Circles staff, and resource caregivers are being targeted to	

provide this information to young people.

- DHS does not collect data around young people's receipt of critical documents upon leaving care, and DHS staff are not aware of the degree to which young people are being provided with these documents in practice.

- For young people in care, the Department covers the cost of replacing missing documents. If documents need to be replaced when the young person is no longer in care, the young person must either pay for them him/herself, or ask the Department to pay. Anecdotally, young people who have left care have been able to get the Department to pay for document replacement, though such requests are handled on a case by case basis. Most young people do not know how to go about securing replacement documents on their own.

- If a young person in care needs a Green Card, the Department will generally assist him/her in securing it, though such requests are handled on a case by case basis.

- Securing critical documents for young people born in other countries is a particular challenge for the Department. Obtaining vital statistics documents from other countries can be extremely difficult and resource-intensive, and getting the documents interpreted can pose an additional challenge.

Goal: Allow young people to remain in care and custody up to age 21 with continued legal advocacy and permanency planning.

Systems Indicator: Of those eligible, the number and percent of young people age 18 to 21 (by race/ethnicity) who are in care and custody (data not available)

Policies Currently in Effect	*Policy Nuances, Related Practices, and Other Information*	*Advocacy and Systems Change Goals and Efforts*
No mechanisms were identified for extending custody beyond a young person's 18th birthday. **Foster Care Payments Beyond Age 18** According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3 section 4.14.2 re: Payment Beyond the Age of 18 After the Legal Status Terminates, "For children who have not graduated by the age of 18, payment will continue as long as the child remains in placement and is in high school and is to graduate within a year (or by the age of 20, if the child is a special education student.) The department will continue to have contact with the foster parent after the child is 18 years old and will require proof of school attendance." **Financial Support for Higher Education** DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3 section 4.14.2 also states, "For any child who pursues higher education, he/she must apply for financial aid. Application should be made in his/her senior year of high school or at the time of acceptance to the college or vocational school. Eligibility for higher education payments will be considered ONLY after all efforts to secure financial assistance is made by the student. The amount of board payments will then be determined by the type and amount of financial aid the student is able to secure. When the child is 18 years old and is not in school, the case can be closed. If the child wishes to return to higher education between the ages of 18-22, the case can be reopened for higher education payment." For more information about financial support for post-secondary education, please see the Policy Goal regarding other supports for post-secondary education. (Accessed 8/30/11 from: http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch03/chp3sec4.pdf)	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - A bill will be introduced to the 2012 legislative session to establish a task force to look at extending foster care to age 21. The bill states that the "task force shall consider and identify (1) The requirements of federal Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008; (2) What supportive programs and policies could best achieve desired results for young people including how to build on supports and services already in place for young people currently in and aging out of care, how to structure supports and services that are appealing and appropriate for young adults [etc.]…; (3) Key design features such as who will be eligible, what will be the appropriate case management requirements and delivery, what will be the placement options, how will judicial oversight be structured, and what are the net fiscal impacts of design decisions." - In practice (though not in policy) young people are eligible to receive Independent Living Services up to age 27. This is not reflected in the section of the DHS CWS Procedures Manual about Independent Living Services, which is somewhat outdated. - The Department will serve young people who elect not to receive Independent Living and other services from the Department initially, but come back at a later wishing to receive services after all.	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - In a conversation with Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative staff on February 1, 2012, the Director of DHS expressed her interest in extending foster care in Hawaii. The Jim Casey staff offered technical assistance for a fiscal analysis of the extension.

Independent Living Services

According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3 section 4.16 re: Independent Living Services, "Independent living services include a range of activities and services that are provided to assess and facilitate the development of knowledge and skills necessary for the foster youth's or former foster youth's successful transition to self-sufficiency. Independent living services shall be directed at achieving or maintaining self-sufficiency. Services are designed to provide assistance in areas such as completing high school, career exploration, vocational training, job placement and retention, learning daily living skills including budgeting and financial management, substance abuse prevention and preventive health activities including but not limited to nutrition education, smoking avoidance, and pregnancy prevention."

Benefits

According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3 section 4.16, "The following independent living services are provided to foster youth and former foster youth:

1. Identification of youth age twelve years and older who are likely to remain in foster care until they are eighteen years of age;

2. Referral to an appropriate independent living services provider;

3. An individualized assessment of the youth's independent living knowledge base, skills and needs;

4. A developmentally appropriate, strengths based, individualized independent living transition plan that is based on an assessment of the youth."

Furthermore, the Manual states that "Services on behalf of foster youth age fifteen through eighteen years, and former foster youth, in addition to the above also include, but are not limited to:

1. Counseling and supportive services related to:

a. Educational support and assistance in completing high school and obtaining a high school diploma or equivalent;

b. Sexual activity; contraceptives; prostitution; drug and alcohol use; smoking; gang membership; peer pressure; truancy; and running away;

c. Health, hygiene and medical insurance;

d. Money management; household budgeting, and banking services;

e. Building knowledge about community resources and how to access them, such as, clinics, housing assistance and transitional living arrangements;

f. Development of job readiness in accordance with the individualized independent living plan…

- Young people currently and formerly in care are eligible for Youth Circles during the same period when they are eligible for Independent Living Services, though Youth Circles are generally not offered to youth age 12-14 for developmental reasons. The Independent Living and Youth Circles programs serve many of the same youth and routinely cross-refer young people.
- A community network of support exists for young people formerly in care in Hawaii, including service providers that serve populations not strictly limited to (but including) the child welfare population. Child welfare service providers frequently draw on these supports. For example, these supports include safe places for youth on the run.

(The Senate Concurrent Resolution re: a task force for extending foster care was provided by EPIC 'Ohana staff on 1/10/2012 and is not available online)

2. Liaison with community resources and public agencies shall include linkage with the Department of Labor, Department of Health and other state and federal Departments and programs providing services designed to facilitate the youth's transition to self-sufficiency.

3. For youth interested in post-secondary education or training:

a. Assistance with accessing scholarship and financial aid resources; supportive and directive services regarding class attendance, participation, and course work; guidance to support and facilitate the youth's attainment of academic, career, and vocational goals;

b. Educational support and guidance for youth participating in the Department's higher education board allowance program, including regular meetings with the youth to review academic progress, career plans, and the youth's compliance with the terms of the higher education board agreement."

Eligibility

DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3 section 4.16 states, "To establish eligibility for services, the following conditions shall be met:

A. The foster youth or former foster youth shall be at least twelve years old and not older than twenty-three years of age; and

B. The foster youth is under the placement responsibility of the Department pursuant to chapter 587, HRS; or

C. The foster youth or former foster youth was under the placement responsibility of the Department pursuant to chapter 587, HRS, at the time that placement responsibility was awarded to another child-placing organization; or

D. The former foster youth was under the placement responsibility of the Department pursuant to chapter 587, HRS, at the time the former foster youth exited foster care because the age of eighteen years or older was attained."

(Accessed 8/30/2011 from:
http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch03/chp3sec4.pdf)

Ready access to comprehensive, coordinated health and mental health care

Goal: Extend Medicaid to young people up to age 21 who aged out of foster care with automatic enrollment and re-enrollment in Medicaid on an annual basis.

<u>Systems Indicator:</u> *Number and percent of young people (by race/ethnicity) with Medicaid up to age 21.*

Policies Currently in Effect	Policy Nuances, Related Practices, and Other Information	Advocacy and Systems Change Goals and Efforts
Young people up to age 21 who leave foster care are eligible for Medicaid benefits (MedQuest). According to the Hawaii DHS website, after leaving foster care, youth are eligible to receive individual medical coverage in accordance with the MedQuest (MQD) administrative rules. CWS Branch staff and Independent Living Program providers assist the youth in completing a new application for continued medical coverage prior to the youth leaving foster care. (Accessed 8/8/11 from: http://hawaii.gov/dhs/protection/social_services/child_welfare/ILP) According to the QUEST website, DHS has prepared and submitted amendments to its 1115 Demonstration Waiver and to its State Plan to the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. As stated in the 1115 Demonstration Waiver Amendment (most recent amendments were made in July 2011), foster children (ages 19 and 20 years old) receiving foster care maintenance payments or under an adoption assistance agreement are eligible for QUEST. Furthermore, according to the Med-Quest Division of DHS, foster children and children in subsidized adoptions up to age 21 may apply for Hawaii QUEST. (Accessed 8/9/11 from: http://medquest.us/PDFs/1115_Proposed_Amendments.pdf)	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff:: - ILP workers, HYOI, and Hawaii Foster Youth Coalition, and Youth Circles are sources of information about Medicaid coverage for youth leaving foster care. - As noted earlier, DHS has developed a youth portal called ShakaTown as part of the new Shaka online information system. It is planned that ShakaTown will contain information about Medicaid enrollment and re-enrollment, as well as links to the MedQuest website. For more information about ShakaTown, see the policy goal re: make tuition waivers to public or private schools available to young people formerly in foster care up to age 24. - A bill will be introduced to the 2012 legislative session to extend automatic enrollment in Medicaid up to age 26. DHS and EPIC 'Ohana will support the bill. - The Department has made the commitment to provide extended Medicaid coverage for young people and is in the process of figuring out how to go about it. The goal is that youth exiting care will be enrolled and automatically re-enrolled at least up to age 21 in the first year, and then adding a year each subsequent year (i.e., the 2nd year of the program youth would be re-enrolled up to age 22, etc.) up to age 26. MedQuest is working on the process	

for how to do that.

- Currently, barriers to young people enrolling and re-enrolling in Medicaid after age 18 tend to be related to their developmental stage— e.g, forgetting to complete paperwork in a timely manner, failing to plan ahead in order to meet deadlines.

- The MedQuest division of DHS pays community health centers to conduct outreach and enrollment. HYOI is working with one outreach worker from the Waikiki Health Center who also works with homeless youth and adults on Oahu. This service could be replicated at the other nine community health centers around the state.

- DHS expects social workers to enroll youth in MedQUEST prior to their 18th birthday and/or emancipation. After that, former foster youth are expected to re-enroll as does the general population.

Systems Indicator Data

Number and percent of young people (by race/ethnicity) with Medicaid up to age 21.

Number: 0

Percent: 0%

Automatic enrollment is not offered.

Goal: Require that young people lead the development of their case planning, including permanency planning and transition planning that addresses education and employment goals, and is finalized during the 90-day period immediately prior to leaving care.

Systems Indicator: Of those who aged out of care in the past fiscal year, number and percent of young people (by race/ethnicity) that have a permanency and transition plan that was developed under their direction.

Policies Currently in Effect	Policy Nuances, Related Practices, and Other Information	Advocacy and Systems Change Goals and Efforts
According to DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3, section 3.2.1 re: Components of a Case Plan, "for each child in out-of-home care the case plan shall include at a minimum…. "during the 90-day period immediately prior to the date on which the child will attain 18 years of age, or such greater age as DHS may elect under section 475(8)(B)(iii)…, a DHS social worker and, as appropriate, other representatives of the child provide the child with assistance and support in developing a transition plan that is personalized at the direction of the child, includes specific options on housing, health insurance, education, local opportunities for mentors and continuing support services, and work force supports and employment services, includes information about the importance of designating another individual to make health care treatment decisions on behalf of the child if the child becomes unable to participate in such decisions…." (Accessed 7/12/2011 from: http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch03/chp3sec3.pdf) Additionally, DHS CWS Procedures Manual Chapter 3, section 4.16.2 re: Independent living transition plan, states "An Individualized Independent Living Transition Plan (ILTP) for each foster youth age fifteen years of age or older, and for each former foster youth receiving services from the Department, shall be developed with the Department's worker and youth, and may include foster parents, and service providers when appropriate…. The primary focus of the plans will be: (1) For a foster youth, the programs and services available while the youth is in placement to prepare for the transition from foster care to self-sufficiency, including plans for the completion of high school, higher education and vocational training. (2) For a former foster youth, the services needed after discharge from foster care including plans to access programs, services and support needed to maintain	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - EPIC 'Ohana's Youth Circle program serves current and former foster youth in Hawaii who are transitioning out of the foster care system and into adulthood. The program provides a youth-driven process to celebrate their emancipation from foster care and to assist them in planning for their independence. Culturally sensitive, youth centered, and strengths based, Youth Circles bring together family and community support that the youth identifies to increase youth's ability to become self-determined and self-sufficient, and to develop a network of support from individualized, outcome-driven Transition Plans in areas such as housing, education, employment, health care and documents. - On a rolling basis, DHS provides EPIC 'Ohana with a list of youth in care who are approaching their 18th birthday. This allows EPIC to ensure that the young people get their transition plans within 90 days. EPIC 'Ohana tries to reach 100% of youth statewide who will be aging out for this purpose. EPIC 'Ohana sends letters to social workers and GALs to remind them that the youth need to have transition plans, and works with the Independent Living Program workers and try to engage young people to set up Youth	

eligibility for and successfully participate in the Department's independent living and higher education programs. The independent living transition plan shall be developed with the youth and contain: (1) An individualized assessment of the youth's independent living knowledge base, skills and needs; (2) Identification of the programs and services available while the youth is in placement to prepare for the transition from foster care to self-sufficiency, including plans for the completion of high school, higher education, and vocational training; (3) Identification of the programs and services available for the youth leaving foster care, including housing, education and employment needs and resources; (4) Measurable goals and objectives that can be used to determine progress." (Accessed 1/23/12 from: http://shaka.dhshawaii.net/greenbook/publishing12/ch03/chp3sec4.pdf)	Circles. If these efforts are unsuccessful, EPIC 'Ohana notifies the youth's case worker that he/she does not currently have a transition plan. - In partnership with DHS, EPIC 'Ohana is tracking the number of young people that are completing their transition plans and the source of that planning – Youth Circles, DHS or Independent Living Program. This tracking is a part of the new Shaka online information system that is up and running currently. - For over 25 years, the Department has mandated that each youth must have a written transition plan at age 15 that is shared with the court. This longstanding precedent provided a basis for complying with the requirement in Fostering Connections that young people must receive a transition plan within 90 days of leaving care. Currently, it is written into Independent Living Program and Youth Circle contracts that young people must have transition plans within 90 days of leaving care. - The degree to which policies around transition planning are enforced may vary depending on the judge and the judge's relationship with the young person. - Occasionally, youth pose barriers to completing their own transition plans in a timely manner. E.g., youth may have scheduling conflicts, be unresponsive, or not be emotionally ready.

Systems Indicator Data

Number and percent of youth leaving care with a transition plan provided through the Youth Circle program (Fiscal Year 2011: 7/1/2010 – 6/31/2011).

Total number of eligible youth that turned 18 during last FY: 172

Total number of youth with a transition plan through Youth Circle: 139 (or 81%)

Total number of youth without a transition plan through Youth Circle: 33 (or 19%)

Of youth without a transition plan through Youth Circle (N=33):
- 4/33 or 12% were unresponsive

- 2/33 or 6% were incarcerated
- 3/33 or 9% unable to located
- 2/33 or 6% had transition plan provided by other service provider
- 9/33 or 27% declined
- 3/33 or 9% were on the run
- 1/33 or 3% of youth relocated
- 9/33 or 27% other reason

*percentages do not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Of youth with a transition plan through Youth Circle (N=139):
- 72 youth or 42% Hawaiian
- 100 youth or 58% other/not checked

*YC database does not require that an ethnicity is checked, this information is often missing and not entered.

- According to EPIC 'Ohana staff, this information is not limited to youth who obtained their transition plan within 90 days before emancipation as federal law requires. Rather, the information reflects 18 year olds who have received a transition plan by the Youth Circle program at any point before their emancipation. This will account for youth who, for example, received their transition plan 100 days prior to turning 18 years old. Youth Circle program staff is currently developing measures to ensure that all youth have an opportunity for a Youth Circle or a review process within the 90 day period before emancipation.

Goal: Implement NYTD Plus to find out from young people how they are doing after leaving foster care so that policy and practice can be improved.

Systems Indicator: Statewide response rate for the National Youth in Transition Database survey at most recent administration.

Policies Currently in Effect	Policy Nuances, Related Practices, and Other Information	Advocacy and Systems Change Goals and Efforts
Hawaii is currently implementing the NYTD survey, but not the NYTD Plus survey.	According to DHS and EPIC 'Ohana staff: - The NYTD survey is available in paper form for staff to administer to youth in person, and youth have direct access to the NYTD survey online through ShakaTown. For more information about ShakaTown, please see the policy goal re: make tuition waivers to public or private schools available to young people formerly in foster care up to age 24. - Hawaii is not currently implementing NYTD Plus. The Department would like to solicit routine communication with youth currently and formerly in care through a survey or communication tool that youth would take on a regular interval—e.g., youth would complete a survey annually around the time of their birthday, so that they are used to doing this before they get to age 17 and must complete NYTD. Items from NYTD Plus may be taken into consideration when developing such a tool.	

Systems Indicator Data

Statewide response rate for the National Youth in Transition Database survey at most recent administration.

Between April and September 2011, 43 out of the 51 eligible took the NYTD survey, (84% response rate). Rates of participation were similar between October 2010 and March 2011.

Source: preliminary information from DHS

PRACTICE PATHWAYS TOOL

OVERVIEW

Practice Pathways Tool Overview

The Practice Pathways Tool is a data-driven tool for improving practice at your site. It helps your site answer this question: "What are good practices that will achieve desired outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood?"

You can find additional details on how to use the Practice Pathways Tool tool in the user's guide section of the Practice Pathways Tool.

The tool is organized around the following seven outcomes that guide Jim Casey Initiative work and measure its impact on the lives of young people:

- Permanence—Every young person has an adult to rely on for a lifetime and a supportive family network.
- Education—Young people acquire education and training that enable them to obtain and retain steady employment.
- Employment—Young people support themselves by obtaining and retaining steady employment.
- Financial Capability—Young people manage their budgets and achieve their financial goals.
- Housing—Young people have safe, stable, and affordable housing and have access to transportation for work and school.
- Physical and Mental Health—Young people have access to insurance and to the appropriate services and supports that meet their physical and mental health needs.
- Social Capital—Young people have, sustain, and capitalize on a diverse network of connections to achieve their life goals.

Jim Casey Initiative staff, site staff, young people, and national experts developed the Practice Pathways Tool. They gathered data from site experiences, youth preferences and experiences, and national academic and experiential knowledge.

The tool is arranged into the following four categories for each outcome area, and can be customized for your site:

1. Practice Model Components outline the essential elements of good practice.

2. Practice Implementation Queries offer a series of probing questions designed to help you assess existing practice and successfully implement particular elements of the practice model.

3. Output Measures provide an outline of what the environment should look like and when you achieve good practice.

4. System and Youth Indicators provide data on young people and system indicators that demonstrate improvement.

Your site can integrate the tool into the work of youth leadership boards, community partnership boards, and self-evaluation teams. It will help assess existing practice and establish and communicate priorities among multiple stakeholders. Then your site can incorporate practice improvement goals into your annual implementation plan.

Your site can use the Practice Pathways Tool to collaborate with agency staff, caseworkers, private and public local

organizations, and other practitioners who use data for collaborating to make practice improvements.

Improving the outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood depends on effective practice by multiple partners. Effective use of the Practice Pathways Tool will accelerate practice improvements in all Jim Casey Initiative sites.

SITE-LEVEL LOGIC MODEL

SITE-LEVEL LOGIC MODEL

Vision: All young people leaving foster care will make successful transitions to adulthood.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

A set of strategies and activities will help create the conditions that are necessary in a community in order to improve outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT
- Youth Leadership Boards
- Young People as Effective Self-Advocates

PARTNERSHIPS & RESOURCES
- Community Partnership Boards
- Resource Development
- Young People as Partners

RESEARCH, EVALUATION, & COMMUNICATIONS
- Self-Evaluation Team
- Communication with Multiple Audiences
- Young People as Evaluators and Communicators

PUBLIC WILL & POLICY
- Agenda & Approach for Improving Public Policies and Systems
- Young People as Advocates for Improved Systems

INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES
- Opportunity Passport™
- Door Openers
- Young People as Decision Makers for Increased Opportunities

IMPROVED POLICY AND PRACTICE

Improved policy and practice will promote timely permanence and increase opportunities available to young people:

A PERMANENT FAMILY
- A family or committed, caring adult in his or her life when leaving care
- Subsidized legal guardianship and kinship care as options
- Placements in family settings rather than congregate care
- Placements in their communities
- Opportunities for safely re-engaging birth parents or relatives
- Connections to siblings
- Foster care available to age 21 with continued permanency planning

ACCESS TO RACIALLY EQUITABLE SERVICES AND SUPPORTS
- Individualized assessments
- Accessible services
- Data to identify and address racial disproportionality and disparate outcomes

A STABLE EDUCATION
- Continuous schooling upon entering care and while in it
- Tuition waivers for post-secondary education
- Supports for post-secondary education (ETVs, housing, etc.)

OPPORTUNITIES TO ACHIEVE ECONOMIC SUCCESS
- Developmentally appropriate matched savings
- Necessary personal documents (e.g., social security card, birth certificate, government-issued photo ID)
- Early and consistent work experience

A PLACE TO LIVE
- Variety of living options from age 18 to 21
- Priority access to safe housing options

ACCESS TO PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH CARE
- Medicaid to age 21 and beyond
- Comprehensive, coordinated health care when in foster care

OPPORTUNITIES TO SHAPE THEIR OWN FUTURE
- Youth-led case planning, including permanency and transition planning
- Access to competent legal counsel
- Leadership and community involvement opportunities
- Information on how all young people are doing after foster care (NYTD Plus)

IMPROVED YOUTH OUTCOMES

When systems are effectively supporting young people throughout their transition, they will have improved outcomes in the following areas:

PERMANENCE
Young people have adults to rely on for a lifetime and supportive family networks.

EDUCATION
Young people acquire education and training that enable them to obtain and retain steady employment.

EMPLOYMENT
Young people support themselves by obtaining and retaining steady employment.

FINANCIAL CAPABILITY
Young people manage their budgets and achieve their financial goals.

HOUSING
Young people have safe, stable, and affordable housing and have access to transportation for work and school.

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH
Young people have access to insurance and to the appropriate services and supports that meet their physical and mental health needs.

SOCIAL CAPITAL
Young people have, sustain, and capitalize on a diverse network of connections to achieve their life goals.

How do we know the strategies and activities are being implemented?
- A Core Strategies Rubric is used to assess sites' implementation according to a set of cross-site performance measures.
- Participant and site data are collected and reported with the Opportunity Passport™ Data System.

How do we track improvements in policy and practice?
- A Policy Matrix is used to assess sites' improvement according to a set of cross-site goals; communities can set additional priorities. The matrix summarizes relevant state policies and practices and provides a set of indicators to help the state determine how many young people are benefiting.
- The Practice Pathways Tool is used to assess and guide sites' improvement according to model practice components. The tool describes a set of effective practice components for each outcome area, poses a set of questions to assess and guide implementation, and provides measures to assess progress.

How do we track improvement in youth outcomes?
- A series of indicators related to each outcome area is used to measure progress over time. The data are collected directly from young people twice a year via the Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey.

How do we know the strategies and activities are being implemented?	How do we track improvements in policy and practice?	How do we track improvement in youth outcomes?

Performance Measures

Youth Engagement

- Number and percent of Youth Leadership Board's goals met

Partnerships & Resources

- Dollar value of in-kind resources. Amount of non-Initiative financial support leveraged.

Research, Evaluation, & Communications

- Number and percent of Opportunity Passport™ Participant Surveys taken on time

- Number and percent of communications goals met

Public Will &Policy

- Number and percent of public will and policy goals met

Increased Opportunities

- Number of Opportunity Passport™ participants ever enrolled.

- Number and percent of Opportunity Passport™ participants currently enrolled

- Number and percent of Opportunity Passport™ participants currently enrolled by age, gender, and ethnicity

- Number and percent of Opportunity Passport™ participants who have an individual who supports them through the Opportunity Passport™ process

Systems Indicators

A Permanent Family

- Number and percent of young people (by race/ethnicity) who exit care up to age 21 with an enduring, permanent family relationship in one of the following categories: reunification with birth parents or relatives, adoption by relatives or non-relatives, legal guardianship with relatives or non-relatives, or planned, committed relationship with a caring adult

- Number and percent of young people age 14 to 21 (by race/ethnicity) who have ever been placed in congregate care settings, excluding emergency or temporary placement episodes not in excess of five days

- Number and percent of young people age 14 to 21 (by race and ethnicity) placed in their own neighborhoods and communities

- For all young people age 14 to 21 (by race/ethnicity) who have one or more siblings in care, the number and percent placed with at least one of their siblings

- Of those eligible, the number and percent of young people age 18 to 21 (by race/ethnicity) who are in care and custody

Access to Racially Equitable Services and Supports

- Number and percent of public and private child welfare agency staff receiving training in racial equity

A Stable Education

- For young people age 14 to 25 (by race/ethnicity), average number of school placement changes experienced while in care

- Number and percent of young people (by race/ethnicity) receiving tuition waivers for post-secondary education up to age 25

Youth Indicators

Permanence

- Number and percent of young people who have an adult in their lives who will always be there to support them

Education

- For young people not attending high school, the number and percent of young people with a high school diploma or GED

- Of those with a high school diploma or GED, number and percent of young people who are enrolled in or have completed education or training beyond high school (i.e., military, Job Corps, vocational education, two- or four-year college, apprenticeships, Americorps, technical certification, and employer-sponsored training)

Employment

- Number and percent of young people who participate in one or more work-related learning/work experiences (e.g., field trip to work site, job shadowing, paid or volunteer work in the school or community)

- For those attending high school, number and percent of young people who obtain one or more part-time jobs (e.g., after school or summer) or participate in an internship

- For those not attending school, number and percent who worked full time for a duration of six months or more

Financial Capability

- Number and percent of young people who have savings

- Number and percent of young people who cover their monthly expenses

Housing

- For young people in care, number and percent of young people who have a housing plan leading to safe, stable and affordable housing

- For young people out of care, number and percent of young people who report that their housing is: safe, stable (e.g., 6 months), and affordable

How do we know the strategies and activities are being implemented?	How do we track improvements in policy and practice?	How do we track improvement in youth outcomes?
■ Dollar amount saved by participants for their asset purchase ■ Number and percent of Opportunity Passport™ participants who participated in asset-specific training, by asset category ■ Number and percent of Opportunity Passport™ participants who purchased an asset, by category ■ Number and percent of the door openers that have been used, by opportunity area	**Opportunities to Achieve Economic Success** ■ Number and percent of young people age 14 to 25 (by race/ethnicity) who have a matched savings account ■ Number and percent of young people age 14 to 21 (by race/ethnicity) who receive from the child welfare agency all needed documents for personal identification prior to exit from foster care (social security card and birth certificate) **Access to Physical and Mental Health Care** ■ Number and percent of young people (by race/ethnicity) with Medicaid up to age 21 **Opportunities to Shape Their Own Future** ■ Of those who aged out of care in the past fiscal year, number and percent of young people (by race/ethnicity) who have a permanency and transition plan that was developed under their direction ■ Statewide response rate for the National Youth in Transition Database survey at most recent administration	■ Number and percent of young people who report that they have access to transportation for work or school **Physical and Mental Health** ■ For those out of care, number and percent of young people who have health insurance: for physical health only, with mental health benefits, and with dental benefits **Social Capital** ■ Number and percent of young people who have at least one connection in all social capital domains (family, school/work, neighborhood/community, peers) ■ Number and percent of young people who utilize connections to help them achieve their life goals ■ Number and percent of young people who have a strong relationship with someone in their family, school/work, neighborhood/community, or peer group that is sustained over time

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

OVERVIEW

Technical Assistance Overview

The Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative provides customized technical assistance based on your site's needs and available resources. Technical assistance includes information scans, skill building, cross-site learning, consultation, coaching, and facilitation. Quality technical assistance can help your site build capacity, leverage additional resources, and implement effective strategies to improve outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PRINCIPLES

The Jim Casey Initiative has found that technical assistance is more likely to make a difference in a site's ability to take action and improve results when it aligns with the following principles:

- Focused on the results sites are striving to achieve
- Demand-driven and co-designed with sites
- Builds local capacity, allowing sites to apply the knowledge and skills learned
- Builds on the wisdom and experience of the sites and people in the field
- Uses data to help sites make informed decisions
- Respects and responds to issues of race, class, culture, language, age, and power
- Appreciates different experiences, skills backgrounds, and perspectives
- Engages and empowers young people throughout the process

TYPES OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE TO YOU

- **Jim Casey Initiative strategy technical assistance.** Site liaisons work with your site to ensure you have the resources and training necessary to implement the core strategies: Youth Engagement; Partnerships and Resources; Research, Evaluation, and Communication; Public Will and Policy; and Increased Opportunities.
- **Peer learning.** The Jim Casey Initiative's expanding network of sites is its best resource. Site liaisons connect people and places facing similar challenges or trying to implement similar strategies. Sites connect with peers during formal opportunities, such as the Jim Casey Initiative's annual Convening, and informal opportunities throughout the rest of the year.
- **Local partner resources and other technical assistance.**

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROCESS

The chart on the following page can help you assess what type of technical assistance is appropriate for your site. It also describes the tools that are available in each step.

For a deeper look at the Jim Casey Initiative technical assistance process, ask your site liaison for the *Technical Assistance Guide.*

Technical Assistance Process at a Glance

IDENTIFY AVAILABLE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RESOURCES	ENGAGE IN RESULTS-DRIVEN CONVERSATIONS TO DETERMINE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS	IDENTIFY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPTIONS THAT LEAD TO DESIRED RESULTS	RECEIVE & MONITOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	EVALUATE RESULTS OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
HOW Talk with your site liaison about the technical assistance the Jim Casey Initiative provides. Refer to *Technical Assistance Guide**. Explore what other sites have done. (Network with sites at the annual Convening, and/or ask your site liaison to connect you to other sites.) Ask your site liaison to explore options. Ask around your own community (e.g., partnerships, young people).	Start with the end in mind: ■ What kind of help do we need? ■ What do we want to accomplish? ■ How can technical assistance help us achieve that end? Talk with your site liaison about needs and expectations, and develop a technical assistance plan. Talk with people in the community, including young people, about your needs, expectations, and plans for technical assistance.	Talk with potential technical assistance providers about need and desired result (e.g., site liaisons, community partners). Select a provider based on the following: ■ Ability to deliver the desired results ■ Adherence to Jim Casey Initiative's technical assistance principles ■ Resources required ■ Availability ■ Successful track record Prepare a learning contract to document expectations and share it with site liaison.	**How do we get the most out of our technical assistance experience?** Assign a key site contact to work closely with technical assistance provider and recipients. Orient the provider to your work. Make sure recipients are prepared. Pay close attention to quality during the technical assistance engagement. Be flexible, and allow for changes if necessary. Know that Jim Casey Initiative staff are available to provide additional support.	**How do we know we got what we wanted?** Get immediate feedback after technical assistance on quality and results: ■ Use evaluation forms ■ Debrief with provider and recipients Share results with your site liaison. Have your self-evaluation team track long-term results and impact of technical assistance.
TOOLS & RESOURCES ■ Jim Casey Initiative staff and site liaisons ■ *Technical Assistance Guide** ■ Local stakeholders	■ Jim Casey Initiative staff and site liaisons ■ *Technical Assistance Guide** ■ Technical assistance principles ■ Technical assistance plan ■ Local resources ■ Local stakeholders	■ Jim Casey Initiative staff and site liaisons ■ *Technical Assistance Guide** ■ Technical assistance principles ■ Technical assistance plan ■ Technical assistance learning contract	■ Jim Casey Initiative staff and site liaisons ■ Technical assistance principles ■ *Technical Assistance Guide**	■ Jim Casey Initiative staff and site liaisons ■ Technical assistance evaluation forms ■ *Technical Assistance Guide**

*The *Technical Assistance Guide* is available from your site liaison.