

City of Life
Strategic Plan To Meet the Needs
of Foster Youth Aging Out of the System



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Strategic Planning Objectives

The City of Life and Family Services of Metro Orlando (FSMO) are dedicated to ensuring a successful transition for youth who turn 18 in foster care. These youth are a valuable resource for the community. Employers and the community need to invest to ensure these youth become productive workers and contributors to our future. This plan is designed to help the community identify the needs of older and former foster youth, document the goals necessary to meet those needs, identify the resources already dedicated to meeting those goals, and develop a plan to accomplish those goals not yet met by the community.

Organizational Background

About City of Life:

City of Life is a 501(c) 3 corporation made up of a volunteer board and two full-time employees dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of young people, especially foster youth, age 13 and older as they make transition to adulthood.

About Family Services of Metro Orlando:

Family Services of Metro Orlando is a private, human service organization dedicated to protecting children and strengthening families.

Strategic Plan Team

Representatives of several agencies and former foster youth began to meet in July 2006 to develop this plan. Team members included: Alan Abramowitz (DCF); Karim Bouris (CSC); Pat Buffa (City of Life); Stacy Dano (FSMO); Cara Dobrev (Legal Aid –GAL Program); Howard Friedman (9th Judicial Circuit); Carole Gerlasch (Workforce Central Florida); Gerry Glynn (City of Life); Virginia Goren (City of Life); Denise Hogan (City of Life); Shirley Johnson-Delgado (Orange County Schools); Greg Kurth (FSMO); Paul Maiden (UCF- City of Life); Pamela Mann (CSC); Karen Miller (Sunnyside); Richard Radin (Great Oaks Village); Mimi Rollins (9th Judicial Circuit); Phil Scarpelli (Kids Hope United); Pam Tonello (Workforce Central Florida); Maura Smith (9th Judicial Circuit); Shannon Stafford (Osceola County GAL); Sara Jane Turner (Great Oaks Village)

Strategic Plan

Education

Strengths and Weaknesses: Foster youth perform below age appropriate academic levels. Children in foster care, regardless of academic ability, lose approximately four to six months of academic progress every time they change schools. Because youth in foster homes move frequently, they are significantly impacted academically unless special effort is made to reduce the harm.

Our community currently does not have sufficient recourses to ensure that all youth in foster care receive the highest level of appropriate services available. Additional resources must be identified to create a model of advocacy, and provide for and train qualified advocates to implement the model. For youth with disabilities, qualified advocates are needed to ensure the youth are properly identified, evaluated, and provided the appropriate services by highly qualified teachers and therapists. For youth not identified with a disability, advocates, appropriate procedures and training for case managers are needed to ensure enrollment in school, protection of child's confidential foster care status, and provision of available guidance and behavioral interventions.

Goal: Foster youth shall attain the same educational success as general population¹.

Objective: There will be ongoing training on the educational legal rights of foster children for Case Managers, DCF attorneys, Judges, Guardians Ad Litem, foster parents and others to have an understanding of educational options for foster youth.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Use Dependency Court hearings to Facilitate as a way to educate each participant on their rights and obligations regarding the education of foster youth	Judges (Juvenile) and Magistrate	October 2007
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have a training at each annual 9 th Circuit Court Improvement Conference on the educational rights of foster children	Legal Aid Society (Sarah Koren)	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Include in case management training and other professional Development the educational rights of foster children	FSMO (Karen Norton and Sharon Graham)	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame

¹ Our ultimate goal is every foster youth obtain a high school degree or equivalent degree as appropriate. However, our five year goal is to bring foster children up to the level of the general population.

Revise bilateral agreement with foster parents to include educational advocacy and foster parents role in minimizing educational disruptions.	FSMO (Amy Kryzan & Barbara Direnzo)	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Conduct training with foster parents on educational rights of foster children	Legal Aid (Sarah Koren)	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Develop internet resources on educational rights of foster children.	Legal Aid (Sarah Koren)	April 2008

Objective: Movement of foster children between schools should be minimized to ensure academic success.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Strengthen the interagency agreements to include procedures to minimize movement even if a child moves foster homes.	DCF (Barbara Direnzo) / OCPS (Shirley Johnson Delgado) / Osceola School Official	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Capture data on number of children who transfer schools while in foster care or upon shelter.	DCF (Barbara Direnzo) / OCPS (Shirley Johnson Delgado) / Osceola School Official	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Minimize changes of placement that do not correspond with school breaks.	CMOs / Judges (Juvenile) / Legal Aid / Osceola GAL / FSMO (Stacy Dano)	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame

Upon a transfer between schools, the child should be provided an advocate and tutor to minimize the harm of the transfer.	Legal Aid/ Osceola GAL/ CSC	October 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Develop a practice that when a child is transferring schools, the CMO shall file and provide notice to the court, GAL, Attorney for the child and parents.	FSMO (Beth Lewis)	April 2008

Objective: Provide academic support to foster children who are having difficulty.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have tutors for any foster child in need	Osceola GAL / CSC	October 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Ensure educational records for the last two years are included in each judicial review report.	Judges (Juvenile) / Magistrate / DCF Legal / GALs	January 2008

Goal: Foster youth should attain their individualized educational/career path goals.

Objective: All Foster care children over 13 shall have an educational/career plan developed as required under Florida Statutes.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Provide each 16 year old or older foster youth with career interest inventories	CSC / City of Life	October 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Ensure a component of the professional development training include training on the statutory obligation to provide an education/career plan for 13 or older foster youth.	FSMO (Karen Norton & Sharon Graham)	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame

Add to Orange and Osceola County Interagency agreements compliance with the requirement all 13 year old foster youth have a education/career plan.	OCPS (Shirley Johnson Delgado)/ Osceola County Schools	October 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Develop an agreement with Osceola County schools and DCF on foster kids	Osceola County Schools / DCF Legal (Barbara Direnzo) / Osceola GAL	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have Osceola County designate a foster care liaison for each school	Osceola County Schools / DCF Legal (Barbara Direnzo) / Osceola GAL	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Juvenile Court should mandate compliance with the requirement of education/career plans in judicial eviews	Judges (Juvenile) / Magistrate	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Data will be collected on compliance with the mandate for education/ career plans	FSMO (Stacy Dano)	January 2008

Objective: The community should have educational advocates for foster youth.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Design a program and seek funding similar to Hillsborough program.	City of Life/ Legal Aid/ GALs / Orange and Osceola County Schools	October 2009

Jobs

Strengths and Weaknesses: The Chapin Hall Discussion Paper, published at the University of Chicago in 2002, followed the progress of a representative sample of foster youth through age 21. The paper reported that 25%-30% of the youth had never received help in job interviewing skills, household budgeting, tenants' rights and responsibilities, and other necessary life skills. The report concludes that youth are discharged from foster care, "on their own at a relatively early stage in transition to adulthood" and that more assistance is needed with the process.

One of the facts that emerged from the competitive market analysis of local service care providers is that currently Central Florida is lacking providers to address the needs of aging-out foster care youth and/or homeless youth. Where the needed services do exist, there is no comprehensive access to these services or assistance for youth to access them. Family Services of Metro Orlando provides services for these youth up to age 18. For youth who are in school, Orange County Public Schools and Seminole County Public Schools provide some services in educational and career planning. However, such support decreases as youth exit the public school system, and generally, significant services are not provided to out of school youth. Recent federal budget cuts have significantly impacted Central Florida's employment resources. Last year alone Orange County had to cut \$4.3 million in funding for employment programs resulting in decreased services for youth and adults at One-Stop Workforce Centers as well as previously sub-contracted agencies.

Foster care youth run the risk of being "out on the streets" upon turning 18. Foster care youth are more likely to have risk-factors that detract from their ability to be successful in achieving employment goals. These risk factors include poverty, low literacy skills, lower high-school graduation rates, poor/absent support system, experience with homelessness/as a runaway, substance abuse, and mental health issues. In addition to personal barriers, the macro-economic environment in Central Florida also makes it difficult for these youth to successfully transition to independence. This is due in part to the preponderance of low wage jobs that do not provide a living wage (20% of Florida jobs pay less than \$8.23 an hour) and the costs of setting up an independent living situation (apartment, deposit, etc.) that are often beyond the financial resources of recently aged-out foster care youth and homeless youth (*Working Poverty: Low Wage Workers in Florida*, Research Institute on Social and Economic Policy, Florida International University, 2005).

Goal: Before foster children leave foster care, the children should have the skills to obtain, maintain and succeed in a job.

Objective: All foster children under 16 will have the chance to participate in volunteer opportunities.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Partner with high schools to provide foster youth opportunities to participate in extracurricular volunteer groups	City of Life / United Way	October 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Partner with churches to provide opportunities for foster youth	CSC / First Congregational	April 2008

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Identifying volunteer opportunities for foster youth	City of Life / United Way	October 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Educate foster parents on the importance of volunteer opportunities as a building block to job success	FSMO (Amy Kryszan)	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have residential treatment centers or other therapeutic environments provide volunteer opportunities for foster youth.	DCF (Alan Abramowitz)	April 2008

Objective: All foster children shall have a career and life planning portfolio before their 17th birthday.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Contents of this portfolio to include: 1. a resume 2. copy of educational/career path goals 3. transcript of course history 4. four year and beyond plan 5. social security card 6. certificates of awards 7. photo identification 8. Copy of birth certificate 9. letters of recommendation 10. completed job applications 11. list of school and community activities 12. work/volunteer history	CSC	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
This requirement of career and life planning portfolios before a 17 th birthday will be enforced through the IL court	Judges (Juvenile) and Magistrate	October 2007

Objective: Every foster child should have had a job by their 17th birthday.²

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Identify and partner with employers willing to hire foster youth	CSC / Workforce Central Florida	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Train foster parents on this expectation that every foster youth should have a job by their 17 th birthday.	FSMO (Amy Kryszan)	April 2008

Objective: Develop internship programs for 15 year old and older foster youth.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Provide each foster youth with career interest inventories.	City of Life	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth identify their career goals utilizing their interest inventories	City of Life	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Identify internship or shadowing opportunities in the careers of their interest	City of Life / County Alliances & SCORE	October 2008

Objective: Every foster youth shall have job soft skills training by their 17th birthday.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Foster parents will be trained on job soft skills with individual trainers who will go to foster homes	FSMO	October 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Enhance job soft skills programs at group home	CSC and FSMO	January 2008

² Jobs include seasonal work, internships, significant volunteer experience or leadership experience.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Implement mandatory youth jobs skills training for every foster child 15 years and older	FSMO and Junior Achievement	April 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Implement Connected by 25 Soft Skills Curriculum or similar curriculum	CSC & CMOs	April 2008

Objective: Expand the number of foster children entering trade or vocational jobs.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Expand relationships with Workforce Advantage Academy or other coop programs in the schools	City of Life (Pat Buffa) and OCPS (Michael Painter)	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Identify trades in need of workers in central Florida	Workforce Central Florida / County Alliances / Voc Tech Centers	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Expand foster children's knowledge of trade possibilities	City of Life & Orange County Schools / Voc Tech Centers	January 2008

Adult Connections

Strengths and Weaknesses: Mentoring is an essential component in the transition from foster care to independence. A mentor can serve as a critical adult role model to achieve employment retention, attain educational goals and promote community involvement and good citizenship. No such mentoring system exists for older foster youth or former foster youth in Central Florida. Family Services of Metro Orlando has begun to address this problem through a mentoring program but not all children receive mentors. Big Brothers/ Big Sisters and other mentoring programs tend to serve younger children.

Goal: As early as possible but no later than 17 years old, every foster child shall have a meaningful connection to an adult

Objective: Help the youth identify positive adults who can help them in their transition to adulthood.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Include identification of positive adults as part of the soft skills training on networking.	CSC & CMOs & Junior Achievement	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Help the foster youth identify positive adults with whom foster children had connections before they entered the foster care system such as family friends or adult relatives	Guardians Ad Litem and CMOs	April 2008

Objective: Strengthen biological family's capacity to help if the child chooses to pursue family as a placement or as adults to support them after they are 18.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Identify funding to provide counseling and support to biological families when a child identifies them as a resource in transition to adulthood.	City of Life	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Train family members who have been identified as a resource for a foster child transitioning to adulthood a. Develop a specialized curriculum for family members identified b. Create support network including case workers to support and monitor these relationships	City of Life / FSMO	October 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have Independent Living Court address the issue of counseling and visitation with family members to explore viability of the plan before the child turns 18	Judges (Juvenile) / Magistrate/ Guardians ad Litem	January 2008

Objective: Create a Big Brothers / Big Sisters and Online mentoring program to recruit, train and support mentors for older foster youth.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Identify funding to support Big Brothers/ Big Sisters and Online Mentor Programs for older foster youth	City of Life and County Alliances	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Create an online mentor for older and former foster youth	CSC / UCF	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Create opportunity for youth to meet adults who can become mentors (mentor fair)	FSMO (Deadra Martin) and Big Brothers/ Big Sisters	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Recruit groups who will provide mentors, for example, Central Florida Mentoring Network, Kiwanais, Toastmasters, Junior League, Junior Achievement, UCF Service Clubs, and senior groups (RSVP)	City of Life / Big Brothers- Big Sisters	October 2008

Objective: Have former foster youth function as mentors to foster youth.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Work with the local Youth Advisory Board (or Youth Shine) to develop former foster youth who can mentor transitioning foster youth	FSMO and CSC	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Fund and provide an incentive to former foster youth to perform these duties.	City of Life, FSMO and CSC	April 2008

Objective: Prepare foster youth to handle negative influences of any relationship.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Provide a specialized curriculum for all foster youth to help them understand and handle negative influences of any relationship	CSC (Pam Mann & Gertie Williams)	October 2008

Goal: Identify, train and evaluate a corps of individuals who will specialize in working with older and former foster youth.

Objective: Have an organization pilot a group of case workers who specialize in older foster youth.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Identify and train case managers who will work in addition to the family case managers to support the older foster youth	FSMO and new contract provider	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Ensure these case workers have reasonable workloads to help older foster youth and former foster youth succeed	FSMO and new contract provider	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Allow flexibility to match kids / caseworkers personalities	FSMO, CMOs and new contract provider	January 2010

Objective: Have youth participate in the hiring and evaluation case workers.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Create a 360 degree evaluation of case workers	FSMO, CMOs and new contract provider	October 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame

Create a youth friendly evaluation form to allow youth to evaluate case workers	Youth Advisory Council	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have youth participate in the hiring and evaluation of the case workers	FSMO, CMOs, new contract provider and Youth Advisory Council	October 2008

Youth Empowerment

Strengths and Weaknesses: Youth should be planned *with* rather than *for* when considering optimal program design strategies. The most important reason for involving youth, where youth issues are being addressed, is that their inclusion increases the chance of success (*Moving Young People from Participants to Decision Makers – Points of Light Institute*). The importance of a strong and capable youth voice cannot be over emphasized (*The Community Collaboration Manual – the National Assembly of National Voluntary Health and Social Welfare Organizations*).

Central Florida has not had a Youth Advisory Council for foster youth until recently although there is mandate by federal law for such councils. The Youth Advisory Council experience should be empowering and involve youth in a positive supportive environment where they have opportunities to build positive self esteem, learn and use decision making skills and have meaningful, socially responsible roles. In addition, the experience should support the acquisition of leadership and employment skills and practice for career development. Youth Advisory Council opinions and suggestions should be given true consideration and weight. Youth are not as likely to stay invested if they do not feel respected, valued, supported and appreciated by the adults with whom they are involved.

Not many foster youth have a voice in their case or court process. As foster youth get older, it is critical for them to know that their voice is being heard.

Goal: Develop a structure to empower youth to participate in foster care decision making at the macro and micro levels.

Objective: Establish a foster youth organization (Youth Advisory Council or Chapter of Youth Shine).

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Work with other successful foster youth organizations to develop a foster youth organization.	FSMO and CSC and Sunnyside	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Create systems to maintain contact with former foster youth.	Youth Advisory Council, United Way, FSMO	October 2008

	(Melanie Oyler)	
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Identify funding for the organization.	City of Life	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Identify staff to support the youth in their participation in activities.	Youth Advisory Council	October 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth organization participate in training of case workers.	FSMO (Karen Norton)	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth organization participate in County Alliance Meetings.	County Alliance	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth organization participate in monitoring this strategic plan and draft the next strategic plan.	Youth Advisory Council	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth organization provide leadership in evaluating the programs developed to help youth transition to adulthood.	FSMO	January 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Train 17 year old prospects for leadership.	Youth Advisory Council	October 2008

Goal: Ensure foster youth are participating in court and case planning.

Objective: Every foster youth should have an opportunity to participate in court hearings.

Action	Person	Time Frame
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	Responsible	
Create a system to have the court track the data of foster youth participation in court hearings.	Legal Aid / Osceola County GAL	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Allow foster youth to participate in hearings by phone when necessary to avoid school absences.	Judges (Juvenile) / Magistrate/ FSMO	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Every foster child should be offered transportation to court.	FSMO / CMOs	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Ensure all GALs and AALs are trained about the child's rights to participate in hearings.	Legal Aid/ Statewide Office of GAL and Osceola GAL	January 2008

Objective: Foster children should have a system to express issues or concerns about services, court hearings, case plans, etc.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Create an ombudsman to handle foster children's concerns about services, court hearings, case plans, etc. (possibly in Youth Shine or other independent entity- or a FSMO youth grievance committee).	Alan Abramowitz and FSMO	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Foster youth should have a phone number to call to address concerns about services, court hearings, case plans, etc.	CSC / 211	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Create an alternative dispute resolution system to resolve conflicts between foster youth and their care providers including addressing normalcy disputes. (Review	Alan Abramowitz	January 2009

group home grievance systems and apply to non-group foster youth?)		
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have a foster youth exit interviews when there is a change in placement.	FSMO	April 2008

Objective: Every older foster youth should participate in educational/career plan design, case plans, independent living plan or other plans for their future.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Courts should enforced foster children's rights to participate in planning meetings.	Judges (Juvenile) / Magistrate	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Conduct periodic file reviews of CMOs to ensure compliance with youth participation in planning meetings.	FSMO	April 2008

Objective: Every foster youth with a master trust account should participate in how their trust account is spent considering age and maturity level.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Train Case Workers on the foster youth's rights to participate in decisions on how his or her trust account is spent.	FSMO / DCF (Janice Perez)	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Courts will enforce the child's rights to participate in decisions on how his or her trust account is spent in review hearings.	Judges (Juvenile) / Magistrate	January 2008

Objective: Older foster youth should participate in decisions regarding placements.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have case workers, GALs and judges inquire of the youth who they identify as	FSMO, Legal Aid, Judges (Juvenile) / Magistrate /	January 2008

possible placements.	Osceola GAL	
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Normalcy

Strengths and Weaknesses: In August 2005 a memorandum on normalcy was issued from the DCF Secretary encouraging normalcy for foster youth. In 2007, new regulations of DCF were promulgated further mandating normalcy for older foster youth. Many DCF staff, Community Based Care staff, foster parents, and group home staff have either not received these or require further training on how to implement the concept of normalcy. A survey was sent to case managers, group home staff, foster parents and foster youth in May 2006. Of the foster parents surveyed 86% stated they were not aware of the August 2005 Normalcy memorandum from the Secretary. 92% of staff stated they were aware of the memorandum but only 25% of those stated they had trained foster parents regarding normalcy. 54% of the foster youth stated that they did participate in school activities, and 42% stated they participated in out of school activities. Only 4% of the foster youth indicated that they had a driver's license and were allowed to drive. The foster youth were also surveyed regarding their social lives, 71% indicated they had attended school events in the past and 54% indicated that had been on an overnight trip without their foster parent/caretaker. However only 15% indicated that they were allowed to go on dates and 37% stated they do the same things that their peers do.

When staff and caregivers were asked why they did not follow the suggestions in the memorandum or implement a plan for normalcy they stated they needed further training on what they could do within the scope of the law. Foster parents indicated they did not feel they had the authority to make decisions regarding, dating, overnight stays, etc.

Goal: Give Foster Youth the normal experiences of other adolescents.

Objective: Provide Kids Club, YMCA or Boys/Girls Club, Boys Scouts Membership to all foster youth who are interested.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Negotiate a deal with community clubs or the County to provide memberships for foster youth.	City of Life (Pat Buffa) / Alan Abramowitz	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Provide membership to community clubs as part of court experience.	Mimi Rollins/ Judges (Juvenile) / Magistrate	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Develop relationship with Boys Scouts.	City of Life(Pat Buffa) / GOV	April 2008

	(Richard Radin)	
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Objective: Ensure foster youth are given the opportunity to participate in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities in school.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Identify funding sources to pay fees for extra curricular activities in schools.	FSMO/ City of Life	October 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Negotiate contracts with school vendors to provide services for foster youth (school photographers, class rings, graduation supplies, yearbook suppliers, uniform providers)	OCPS/ Shirley Johnson-Delgado and Legal Aid/ Sarah Koren	January 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Negotiate schools admission to extra-curricular activities	Shirley Johnson-Delgado	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Facilitate tuxedo rental and prom dress (donate lightly used clothes – closet location)	City of Life and CSC	January 2008

Objective: Provide Library Cards for all Foster Youth.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Negotiate a deal with the Library System for library cards for foster youth.	City of Life (Gerry Glynn)	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Provide library cards as part of court experience.	Mimi Rollins & Judge (Juvenile) / Magistrate	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame

Have Case Management Organizations participate in the library card program.	City of Life (Gerry Glynn)	January 2008
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Objective: Foster youth should have access to cultural or enrichment activities (YMCA, Opera, Science Center, Art Center, Music).

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Identify funding sources for special training/lessons or other cultural or enrichment activities.	City of Life and FSMO	October 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Encourage use of master trust account for these activities.	FSMO and DCF (Janice Perez)	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Identify arts outreach opportunities.	City of Life	January 2008

Objective: Foster youth should have opportunities to have age appropriate contact with peers including dating.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Provide training to foster parents and case managers about DCF's on foster youth's rights to age appropriate contact with peers.	FSMO	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Provide education about positive and negative peer relationships to foster youth	FSMO	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Educate caretakers on liability and their authority when approving age appropriate activities.	FSMO	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame

Develop email system to communicate with foster parents	FSMO and City of Life	July 2008
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Objective: Allow foster youth to get internet access and email addresses with appropriate adult supervision and controls.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Educate foster youth about foster youth peer to peer website.	FSMO	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Develop system of providing youth training and access to a uniform provider with a uniform email system.	First Congregational Church and CSC	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Work with foster parents to encourage foster youth access to information technology in a responsible way.	FSMO	October 2008

Objective: Ensure foster youth have access to religious services of their choice and appropriate religious foods.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Educate foster parents about foster children's rights to religious freedoms.	FSMO	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Foster children's rights to religious freedoms will be reviewed in court hearings.	Judges (Juvenile) / Magistrate	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Pursue more linkages with religious community to provide transportation and other support	FSMO	July 2008

Objective: Foster youth should participate in summer activities.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Identify funding sources and free services for foster youth to participate in summer activities.	City of Life and FSMO	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Negotiate preferential treatment of foster youth in summer school programs.	FSMO	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Negotiate summer camp options for foster youth.	FSMO	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Identify funding for supplies, lunch, uniforms, transportation and other items for foster children participating in summer activities.	FSMO	July 2008

Objective: Have all foster youth register to vote and selective service as part of 18 year old experience.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have Case managers incorporate voter and selective service registration as part of 18 year old transition check list	FSMO	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have Court review voter registration and selective service registration as part of 17 year old reviews.	Judges (Juvenile) and Magistrate	January 2008

Goal: Have foster youth learn money management skills through accessing their allowances

Objective: Have all foster youth accessing their allowance each month.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
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Increase the allowance available to foster youth and ensure a uniform amount.	DCF and FSMO	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Educate foster parents regarding their obligation to provide regular allowance to foster youth.	FSMO	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Provide foster youth with money management education.	FSMO	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Enforce foster children's rights to an allowance through Court reviews.	Judges (Juvenile) and Magistrates	January 2008

Objective: All 16 year old foster youth will have a bank account.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Inform foster youth about banks who will provide accounts for them.	FSMO	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have Courts enforce an expectation that all foster youth will have a bank account by their 16 th birthday.	Judges (Juvenile) /Magistrate	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Case managers will take foster youth to banks/credit unions to open accounts	FSMO / CMOs	January 2008

Goal: Have foster youth provide feedback on normalcy.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have an annual survey of foster youth.	City of Life and Alan Abramowitz	April 2008

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Include foster youth's input about normalcy as part of quarterly FSMO reviews.	FSMO	July 2008

Housing

Strengths and Weaknesses: Affordable housing is a problem in Central Florida for most low wage workers. It is especially difficult for youth aging out of foster care. These youth have not been provided the skills to find or manage a home or apartment. They face landlords who will not rent to young adults without a co-signor or a credit history. Foster youth also rarely have sufficient funds for the security deposits or money to purchase furniture and supplies once they find a place to live. Most foster youth spend months or years living at friend's houses and often turn to their abusive families for shelter because they have no where else to go. Nationally, half of former foster youth report being homeless within a year of leaving foster care.

Over the past few years, Central Florida has provided some transitional housing opportunities for foster youth. Covenant House (a homeless shelter for young adults and run away youth) has provided scattered apartments with supervised case management. Orange County opened Scholars House located on the GOV campus for former foster youth continuing with their education. Seminole County opened a transitional home for former foster youth and Park Place has just opened a home for former foster youth at Sunnyside Village in Osceola County. Additionally, Westgate and Starwood Resorts offer jobs with housing to former foster youth willing to work at the resorts. This progress does not meet the housing needs of the number of youth who turn 18 in Central Florida.

Goal: Ensure every former foster youth has housing opportunities and can avoid homelessness.

Objective: Every foster youth at age 18 shall have a place to live.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
At 17, every foster youth shall have three places identified to live when they turn 18.	FSMO	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
At 17 ½ every foster youth shall have specific plans for payment and agreements for their housing for when they turn 18.	FSMO	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame

Ensure every foster youth has alternatives until their housing is stabilized and be able to verbalize the alternatives.	FSMO	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Courts will enforce the obligation that foster youth have three housing alternatives in 17year old review hearings.	Judges (Juvenile) /Magistrate	January 2008

Objective: Expand the use of Subsidized Independent Living as a transition tool for 17 year old youth.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Ensure these youth in subsidized independent living have specialized home maker supports (home visiting program).	FSMO	July 2008

Objective: Ensure foster youth have access to appropriate start up kits.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Pursue donors to support start up kits for foster youth moving into their own apartments.	First Congregational Church and CSC	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Identify suppliers for start up kits (Gifts in kind; CSC; Salvation Army).	CSC	July 2008

Objective: Expand the list of housing (scattered) opportunities for former foster youth.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Ensure youth in scattered housing have specialized home maker supports (home visiting program).	Orange County / City of Life	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame

Work with Housing developers to access special government funding opportunities for additional scattered housing.	City of Life	January 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Develop a network of apartment complexes willing to work with foster youth aging out of foster care with no credit history and no adult to co-signers.	City of Life	July 2008

Objective: Expand the transitional (aggregate) housing (Scholarship housing/ Seminole Village)

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Partner with community colleges and universities to create aggregate housing opportunities near educational institutions.	City of Life	January 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Work with Housing developers to develop low cost housing for former youth.	City of Life	January 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Provide the wrap around support to ensure success of the youth in transitional housing.	Covenant House / Orange County	January 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Create an aggregate house for former foster youth in Osceola County.	Sunnyside and City of Life	April 2008

Objective: Monitor the success rates of scattered versus aggregate housing.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Conduct an annual survey of the comparison on the success of former foster youth in scattered versus aggregate housing.	City of Life	July 2008

Transportation

Strengths and Weaknesses: Older foster youth and former foster youth need transportation to help provide normalcy, facilitate educational success and enhance job opportunities. Foster youth need to learn how to use mass transit resources as well as how to drive. They also need to learn the financial aspects of car ownership, insurance and maintenance.

Learning to drive is the biggest barrier for foster youth. This creates a barrier to many other adolescent activities. A child can not get a driver's license without an adult co-signor willing to assume liability for the youth driver. State law has changed to allow foster youth to get learner permits by exempting the adult liability. However, few foster youth get a learners permit or learn to drive while in foster care. They do not have access to cars or access to driver's education programs. The mass transit system in Central Florida does not meet their needs.

Goal: Improve the ability of foster youth to access services, jobs and school through better transportation resources.

Objective: Get Bus Transportation free for all foster children.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Negotiate with Lynx to get bus passes for foster youth.	City of Life (Pat Buffa)	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Provide training on mass transit - Regularly train foster youth on the usage of the mass transit system.	FSMO / New Contract Provider	January 2008

Objective: All foster care youth should learn how to drive.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
All foster youth should have a drivers learners permit before their 17 th birthday	FSMO / New Contract Provider	January 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
All foster youth should take drivers education - through the public schools (shorten intensive program).	FSMO / OCPS – (Shirley Johnson-Delgado) / Osceola County Schools	April 2008

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Negotiate deal with private drivers school to allow foster youth to take courses for free or at a discount.	City of Life	January 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Enforce the expectation that all foster children should be provided drivers education through IL Court.	Judges (Juvenile) /Magistrate	January 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Upon turning 18, every foster youth should acquire their drivers license within a month of their birthday.	FSMO	January 2009

Objective: Ensure transportation to support extra-curricular / co-curricular and other normalcy activities.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Negotiate on demand transportation service.	City of Life	January 2009

Foster Parent Development

Strengths and Weaknesses: There are not enough foster parents interested in caring for older foster youth. The foster parents who do commit to these youth have not been trained on the needs of these youth and obligations for assisting in the transition to adulthood. The Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting (MAPP) is the training offered to prepare families in fostering children. The current system of MAPP training to foster parents provides a limited foundation for the caring and development of older foster youth. The training provides an overview of the “Chafee Foster Care Independence Program” highlighting the purpose of the independent living programs for teens in foster care and the changes to the programs.

Given the foster care youth’s need for a consistent responsible adult caretaker and the difficulties faced by teens as they transition to adulthood, foster parents need additional comprehensive training to deal with the various needs of adolescence. The current curriculum needs enhancements that focus on assessment of youth’s development and allows for a self-assessment of a foster parent’s readiness to address and support older foster youth. The final outcome to be achieved is that foster parents will be more deliberate in their interactions with older foster youth and include normalcy and communication skill building in their interactions.

Goal: Ensure foster parents understand their role as the “child’s parent” including their obligation to allow foster youth to have normal freedoms.

Objective: Develop a culture that foster parents fulfill the role of parents.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Recruit foster parents interested in working with older foster youth.	CMOs	October 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Train all foster parents on access to normal adolescent activities as part of MAPP classes and at least annually for any foster parent with older foster children.	FSMO/ CMOs	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth participate in foster parent training.	FSMO/CSC	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Train all foster parents to address normal adolescent behavioral issues, sexuality including sexual orientation and enhanced problems arising with teenage foster youth.	FSMO (Gerty Williams) / CMOs	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Develop system of peer to peer support amongst foster parents through the development of a mentor system and peer to peer webpage.	Winter Park First Congregational Church & Foster Parent Alliance	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Recognize foster parents who work well with older foster youth (recognition in the news media, thank you letters from leaders in the community and judicial recognition at court hearings)	City of Life, Judges (Juvenile) and Magistrate	July 2008

Objective: Enhance funding for foster parents who are willing to work with older foster youth.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Tie monthly funding to enhanced training by foster parents willing to work with older foster youth.	Alan Abramowitz/John Cooper	October 2010
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Identify sources for enhanced funding of foster parents willing to work with older foster youth.	Alan Abramowitz/John Cooper – City of Life	October 2010

Objective: Develop foster parents with the skills needed to support foster youth.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Access or develop virtual consultant for foster parents/ case managers to help understand normalcy – (Look at Kids Central web based training).	FSMO	April 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Ensure foster parents understand that the consequences for misbehavior should match the misbehavior – no more severe.	FSMO	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Ensure foster parents understand that youth can participate in normal activities including overnight visits, outings with peers.	FSMO	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Ensure foster parents understand the expectation that older foster youth should participate in normal activities of adolescence including extra-curricular, peer activities and work.	FSMO	April 2008
Action	Person	Time Frame

	Responsible	
Ensure foster parents understand their role in helping the youth plan for their future	FSMO	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Ensure foster parents understand the importance in spending time with the youth to develop trust relationships	FSMO	April 2008

Objective: Refer foster parents to alternative dispute resolution with the youth if the basis for a 30 day notice is a conflict with the youth.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Develop ADR system of referrals for foster parents and youth in a conflict that may lead to a 30 day notice.	FSMO	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Access 211 for ADR system when there is a conflict between foster parents and foster youth.	CSC – United Way	October 2008

Objective: Collect data on foster parents who have older foster youth to understand what works and doesn't work to retain foster parents committed to older foster youth

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Ensure foster parents help develop and monitor goals of the survey focusing on what works for retaining foster parents.	Judges (Juvenile), Foster Parent Association	April 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Provide annual survey of foster parents.	FSMO	July 2008

Objective: Review the process for foster parent evaluation and training program to ensure we are not losing good prospects through the process.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Send people through the foster parent recruitment and training process to ensure process is user friendly (secret shopper).	FSMO/ CMOs & recruit outside group such as Junior League	April 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Collect data on how many foster parents apply, how many are lost through evaluation, training or placement stages.	CMOs	July 2008

Data Collection

Strengths and Weaknesses: Developing a case tracking system is essential to maintaining contact and providing ongoing support services to older foster youth and former foster youth. A data collection and management information system will enable the community to determine the status (employment, housing, education, transportation, and mentor contact) and needs of all emancipated youth residing in Orange and Osceola counties. The data collection and management system will also enable the community to conduct process, impact and outcome evaluation of all services provided to emancipated youth. No such data collection system exists in Central Florida. However, there are models in other communities.

Goal: Create a data collection system that will permit stakeholders to monitor progress on improving services for foster youth.

Objective: Conduct an initial assessment of the progress of foster youth.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Contract with someone to conduct a survey of the needs and services provided to foster youth in Orange and Osceola County	CSC & City of Life	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Identify Funding for the initial survey on the needs and services provided to foster youth.	CSC & City of Life	July 2008

Objective: Create an ongoing data collection system to monitor progress of foster youth.

Action	Person	Time Frame
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	Responsible	
Purchase a system to collect data to monitor the progress of foster youth.	CSC	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Ensure all participants providing services and monitoring services collect the same data preferably using the same system.	FSMO	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Provide an annual report on the progress of data on how older and former foster youth are progressing.	Community Service & FSMO	October 2008

Life Skills

Strengths and Weaknesses: Most children learn life skills in their homes. They learn cooking, shopping, personal hygiene, money management, time management, dressing and other basic life skills by observing their parents or through individual instructions on a daily basis. Foster children come from dysfunctional families that lack these skills and are thwarted from learning these skills in the foster families and group homes. The foster families and group homes provide these youth all they need and often prohibit youth from experimenting in the ways many youth do in their own biological families. Some of these skills have been taught in public schools in the past but many of these programs have been eliminated from Florida schools as the schools focus on core courses necessary to pass the FCAT systems.

Independent living programs in foster care systems around the nation have developed model curricula on these topics. These curricula offer class room instructions on important life skills topics. However, youth often complain these classroom lectures are inadequate without experiential opportunities. Learning how to budget can be meaningless to someone who does not have access to any money including an allowance. Thus, children need opportunities to practice what they are taught in the classroom or be provided one-on-one instructions in their home.

Goal: Have foster youth develop the skills needed to succeed in foster care and on their own after turning 18.

Objective: Have foster youth develop an understanding of the responsibility of “care” providers.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Provide foster youth training on the role of case worker vs. foster parent vs. mentor vs. group process vs. foster youth vs.	New contract provider	July 2008

schools.		
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Objective: Have foster youth develop soft job skills.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Provide training to foster youth on 1) how to prepare for job interview (proper attire) 2) How to do a resume	CSC & City of Life	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Instill personal pride in showing up on time in foster youth.	CSC & City of Life	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Train foster youth on interpersonal skills (accept constructive criticism, how to respond to supervisor.	CSC & City of Life	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Train foster youth on proper phone etiquette.	CSC & City of Life	April 2008

Objective: Have foster youth develop the skills to rent, maintain and manage a home.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Provide hands on house cleaning skills .	Group Homes and Foster Parents	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Provide hands on home economics skills (respond to emergencies, how to clean, how to cook, how to do laundry).	Group Homes & Foster Parents	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame

Have all foster youth learn about time management.	FSMO/ New Contract Provider	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth understand the nutrition, shopping, meal planning, kitchen sanitation and cooking skills.	FSMO/ New Contract Provider	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have all foster youth learn about interpersonal networking.	FSMO/ New Contract Provider	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have all foster youth learn how to access resources, (211 resource, Homeless shelters, Food pantries, Public assistance, Aftercare services, Legal aid, Emergency medical care, Independent living services).	FSMO/ New Contract Provider	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have all foster youth learn advance phone skills (how to navigate phone system, how to leave an informative message, knowing when to call again, importance of the image of an outgoing message).	FSMO/ New Contract Provider	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have all foster youth learn internet Resources (jobs access to Myspace, image of email names, how to access internet for jobs, personal communications, safety of internet profiles).	FSMO/ New Contract Provider	April 2008

Objective: Have foster youth walk through a rental experience.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Partner with rental companies to allow foster youth to walk through a rental experience.	FSMO / New Contract Provider	July 2008
Action	Person	Time Frame

	Responsible	
Teach youth about Craig's list.	FSMO / New Contract Provider	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn the rights of leaseholders-look for tenant's rights (i.e. Landlords rights to access space).	FSMO / New Contract Provider	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have all foster youth learn about other cost of housing: utilities, phone, cable television, computer on-line access fees.	FSMP/ New Contract Provider	July 2008

Objective: Have foster youth learn the economics of staying in school.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Access the program form Junior Achievement on the economics of staying in school.	CSC & City of Life	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn the importance of post-secondary education.	CSC & City of Life	January 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn the benefits of technical education provided by public education programs or community colleges.	CSC & City of Life	January 2008

Objective: Have foster youth learn financial literacy.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn how to budget, money management and banking (how to write a check, balance a checkbook, dangers of overdrafts, importance of savings, learn Quicken or another computer program).	FSMO / New Contract Provider	July 2008

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn the dangers of credit and debit cards, bad credit score, pawn shops, check cashing, payday advance, sharing credit card or banking information, on-line credit information, phone solicitations, private post-secondary education loans, loaning assets to friends and family-liability of usage, borrowing assets that may be stolen.	FSMO / New Contract Provider	July 2008

Objective: Have foster youth learn the importance of managing clothes.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn the importance clothes have in leaving an image - difference of weekend and business week.	FSMO / New Contract Provider & CSC	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn how to get clothes altered or repaired.	FSMO / New Contract Provider & CSC	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn how to shop for clothes (retail versus upscale).	FSMO / New Contract Provider & CSC	July 2008

Objective: Have foster youth learn safety skills.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn the dos and don'ts of apartment living, (giving friends access to apartments, inviting other friends over) - Partner with college safety training.	FSMO / New Contract Provider & City of Life	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Partner with sheriff training to teach the dangers of walking at night, traffic skills, pedestrian.	FSMO / New Contract Provider	July 2008

	& City of Life	
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Objective: Ensure all foster youth are assessed on life skills and plans are developed to address their individual needs.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Ensure all foster youth receive an Ansell-Casey/ Daniel Memorial assessment.	FSMO / New Contract Provider	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Ensure foster parents are given the custodian pieces of Ansell-Casey to provide information.	FSMO / New Contract Provider	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Develop plans to address individual weaknesses of each foster child and share results of assessments with custodians and whoever will help teach the skills.	FSMO / New Contract Provider	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Court will enforce the obligations to provide assessments and develop plans to address weaknesses in reviews.	Judge (Juvenile) and Magistrate	January 2008

Objective: Ensure foster youth have knowledge of their legal rights.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn the ramifications for violations of the law (criminal, civil).	Legal Aid / new contractor provider	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn tenant rights.	Legal Aid / new contractor provider	April 2008
Action	Person	Time Frame

	Responsible	
Have foster youth learn about family Law (paternity, child support, marriage/divorce)	Legal Aid / new contractor provider	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn Independent Living Law	Legal Aid / new contractor provider	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn tax obligations	Legal Aid / new contractor provider	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn voting rights	League of Woman Voters / Legal Aid / new contractor provider	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn about car ownership (Insurance requirements, Drivers license requirement, registering vehicles requirement, ramifications of tickets)	Legal Aid / new contractor provider	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn the legal impact of alcohol or drug use or abuse.	Legal Aid / new contractor provider	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Add Webpage resources on Trainings on Legal Rights	First Congregational Church of Winter Park	October 2008

Health Services

Strengths and Weaknesses: Current research indicates that foster youth are more likely to have health problems than non-foster youth from similar socioeconomic backgrounds.

The increased prevalence of medical needs coupled with transition points or movement within the foster care system often results in reduced accessibility to healthcare services and lapses in continuity of care. The primary factors contributing to these problems are:

- Foster youth are not actively involved in their own healthcare and do not receive sufficient training about health related issues.
- Insufficient coordination and communication within the foster care system. (Medical history and records may not be available at transition points)
- Lack of Insurance coverage (Delays for Initial application or renewals of Medicaid)
- Insurance requirements and restrictions / HMO's
- Changes in Medicaid / HMO providers when a foster youth is moved to another geographical area.

To address the needs of foster youth it is essential that a minimum standard of care be established to include appropriate communication and coordination, healthcare service provision and adequate training to prepare foster youth to manage their own medical, dental, and mental health needs. Foster youth transitioning out of the system should have a health plan as part of their transition from foster care, undergo health screening and be provided health care education prior to leaving the system.

Goal: Have foster youth learn good health habits and how to access the health care system when needed.

Objective: Have foster youth develop good health, dental and hygiene skills.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth practice good health in their foster homes or group homes.	Group Homes and Foster Parents	April 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have all foster youth learn the dangers of body piercing and tattoos.	Group Homes and Foster Parents	April 2008

Objective: Have foster youth understand health insurance.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn how to access private insurance including the benefits from employers.	New Contract Provider	October 2008

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn how to access health insurance outside of employment.	New Contract Provider	October 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn about college health benefit programs.	New Contract Provider/ Valencia / UCF	October 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn about the Medicaid system.	New Contract Provider	July 2008

Objective: Have foster youth use the health care system prior to their 18th birthday.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Provide as many services to foster youth through Medicaid (EPSDT) services prior to 18th birthday	CMOs / Foster Parents	October 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have Court at review hearings inquire about the youth's access to medical services prior to their 18th birthday.	Judges (Juvenile) / Magistrates	October 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have all foster youth participate in their health care decisions starting at 13.	CMOs / Foster Parents	October 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn basic medical accessing skills including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) how to ask questions about diagnosis and treatment 2) When to go to the doctor 3) When too sick to go to school 4) When well enough to resume 	CMOs / Foster Parents	October 2008

regular activities 5) The importance of regular doctors' appointments 6) how to call consult nurses 7) how to access drug store usage including consults		
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn how to make and practice making medical appointments.	CMOs / Foster Parents	October 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn how to manage medications including the importance of medication compliance.	CMOs / Foster Parents	October 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have all foster youth develop a network of support when health problems arise or when chronic prior to their 18 th birthday to continue their care after their 18 th birthday	CMOs / Foster Parents	October 2008

Goal: Improve the mental health services and access by the youth

Objective: Expand the availability and access of mental health services.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Ensure consistent mental health providers even with changes of placement or provide mental health transitions when there is a change of placement.	FSMO / CMOs	October 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Find an agency to provide mental health services to foster youth at 17 ½ to ensure smooth transition to post 18 services.	FSMO, Lake Side Behavioral Health (Tom Greenman) and Park Place, CMOs	October 2008

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Work with Orange County Juvenile Justice Council to replicate services plan they develop.	Richard Radin & Tom Greenman	October 2009

Objective: Provide education to youth regarding mental health disorders.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Educate foster youth on the importance of maintaining mental health services, overcoming stigma of diagnosis, recognizing the progress and stages of treatment (differences of chronic, episodic or acute); dangers of drugs and alcohol.	NAMI / new contractor provider	July 2008

Objective: Provide access to activities for a healthy life style for foster youth.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Provide access to non-competitive healthy activities (hiking, biking, running).	CMOs / Track Shack Foundation / City of Life	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Ensure access to after-school or extracurricular activities	CMOs	April 2008

Objective: Provide sex education for foster youth.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn the effects of a decision to participate sexual activity - emotionally and physically	New contractor provider / Yellow Umbrella / Teen Express/ Planned Parenthood / BETA	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn about birth control	New contractor	July 2008

(male/female) – types, its availability, effectiveness, how to use it.	provider / Yellow Umbrella / Teen Express/ Planned Parenthood / BETA	
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Have foster youth learn about sexually transmitted diseases.	New contractor provider / Yellow Umbrella / Teen Express/ Planned Parenthood / BETA	July 2008

Disability Services

Strengths and Weaknesses: Our population of foster youth includes individuals who have disabilities that limit their ability to function independently. For youth with a developmental disability, comprehensive services are available through the Agency for Persons with Disabilities. These services begin at the time of approval and continue in to adulthood, supporting the individual’s efforts to live independently. However, early identification of the youth with developmental disabilities and application for services is crucial to arranging for services to be in place when the youth turns 18.

For youth who do not qualify for services through the Agency for Persons with Disabilities but still do not have the functioning to live independently there is currently a gap in services. Additional resources must be identified and alternative strategies implemented. Our community currently does not have sufficient resources to address this need and these must be developed.

Goal: Ensure any foster youth with a disability receives the services he or she needs to succeed in life.

Objective: Ensure foster children with developmental disabilities are provided appropriate services

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Identify foster youth with developmental disabilities as early as possible	CMOs	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Develop procedure to have applications for APD services filed as early as possible – ensure they qualify for Med waiver &	CMOs / FSMO / Legal Aid	July 2008

opportunity to appeal.		
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Train advocates / case workers about all available categories (brain injury, mental retardation) for APD services.	CMOs/ FSMO / Legal Aid	July 2008

Objective: Develop a strategic plan for a system of services for foster youth who don't qualify for APD.

Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Pursue Sheltered jobs, Identify supportive housing for foster youth with developmental disabilities but do not qualify for APD services.	City of Life/ DJJ / Covenant House / Coalition for the Homeless/ Goodwill/ Quest/ Center for Independent Living	July 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Work with youth with developmental disabilities to help them enhance skills earlier.	New Contract provider / Public Schools, SEDNET	July 2008
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Recruit and train specialized mentors / guardians to work with foster youth who have developmental disabilities but do not qualify for APD services.	City of Life / Big Brothers – Big Sisters	July 2009
Action	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Develop Case managers who specialize to work with foster youth with disabilities before and after turning 18.	CMOs	July 2008