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

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

HEY’s Partners Have Programs that Successfully Serve Foster Youth

- There are at least 17 organizations that have partnerships with the San Francisco Department of Human Services to provide employment services specifically to current and former foster youth.¹
- New Door Ventures helps at-risk youth in San Francisco get ready for work and life by providing jobs, job-readiness and a supportive community. About 35% of the youth who are served by their program have had contact with the foster care system.²
- San Francisco Conservation Corps offers young adults the opportunity to earn a high school diploma while gaining marketable job skills. In 2008, they served 25 current and former foster care youth.³
- MatchBridge and other agencies worked with the Mayor’s Office of Economic and Workforce Development to recruit employer participants for the City’s Summer Youth Employment Program. The pilot-initiative was funded to provide 450 jobs for San Francisco youth which was fully funded by Federal stimulus money. Agencies that refer foster youth are Jewish Vocational Services, Vietnamese Youth Development Center, Larkin Street Youth Services and others.⁴
70% of San Francisco county foster youth participate in San Francisco Human Services Agency’s Independent Living Skills Program (ILSP), a program that assists teenage and former foster youth to find housing, jobs and higher education.6

36% of San Francisco former foster youth utilize one-stop employment centers, also under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Human Services Agency.5

Jewish Vocational Services (JVS) will prepare 25 foster youth with disabilities for jobs in health care industry through the Youth Healthcare Careers Program in 2009.6

The $787 billion federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, or "stimulus", includes about $1.2 billion for youth employment and training, 16% of which is allotted to California. San Francisco continues to utilize this money to offer job training and internship programs to youth, foster youth being a target population.4

Works Cited

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