

ATTACHMENT C

CHAFEE FOSTER CARE INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM

Report on the specific accomplishments and progress made toward meeting each of the program purposes:

- 1) Help youth make the transition to self-sufficiency.
- 2) Help youth receive the education, training and services necessary to obtain employment.
- 3) Help youth prepare for and enter post-secondary training and education institutions.
- 4) Provide personal and emotional support to youth through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults.
- 5) Provide financial, housing, counseling, employment, education and other appropriate support and services to former foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age.

Describe the extent to which the funds and services assisted youth 18-21 in making the transition from foster care to self-sufficiency.

SFY 2001 marked the growth in federal CFCIP funding for Independent Living (IL) services from \$17,889 to \$636,879 and the beginning of major program expansion as shown in the service data below.

Contracted IL services are available statewide to all CWS foster youth, age 12 – 18, and to former CWS foster youth through age 21. The number of youth served under these contracts **increased by 138%** from SFY2000 to SFY2003.

Beginning August 2003, the **Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment** tool became the standardized assessment tool used by the IL program for initial and ongoing assessment of progress for participating youth. The assessment takes into account youth, caregiver and service provider perceptions of how a youth is doing in various life skill domains.

IL service providers can use **up to 10% of contract funds for housing assistance** for former CWS foster youth, in the form of an **emergency grant or rent support** (rental deposit and/or short-term rent payment assistance for up to 6 months; requires a contractual agreement between youth and IL provider that includes a plan to help youth work towards meeting their rental obligations on an ongoing basis without provider assistance).

Youth served:	SFY00	SFY01	SFY02	SFY03
Age 12 – 15	38	58	115	98

Youth served in SFY 2003	Oahu	Maui	East Hawaii	West Hawaii	Kauai	State Total
Age 12 –15	27	31	23	11	6	98
Age 16+ in foster care	50	25	28	24	17	144
Age 18-19, in transitional apartments	8	9	17	11	7	52
Age 18-21, receiving IL services/support & higher education board payments	24	8	10	11	4	57
Age 18 – 21, receiving IL services/support, no higher education board payments	13					13
TOTAL (duplicated count)	12222	73	788	57	34	364

Youth served in SFY 2002	Oahu	Maui	East Hawaii	West Hawaii	Kauai	State Total
Age 12 –15	33	25	27	25	5	115
Age 16+ in foster care	45	52	29	35	13	172
Age 18-19, in transitional apartments	5	3	10	29	5	52
Age 18-21, receiving IL services/support & higher education board payments	13	10	1	33	4	61
TOTAL (duplicated count)	96	90	67	122	27	400

Youth served in SFY 2001	Oahu	Maui	East Hawaii	West Hawaii	Kauai	State Total
Age 12 –15	17	8	20	6	7	58
Age 16+ in foster care	36	14	18	25	9	102
Age 18-19, in transitional apartments	0	5	0	18	4	27
Age 18-21, receiving IL services/support & higher education board payments	4	4	7	10	4	29

Youth served in SFY 2000	Oahu	Maui	East Hawaii	West Hawaii	Kauai	State Total
Age 12-15	14	4	4	6	10	38
Age 16-18	35	22	2	25	7	91
Age 18-19, in transitional Apartments	2	2	0	5	3	12
Age 18-21, receiving IL services/support & higher education board payments	6	0	0	3	3	12
TOTAL (duplicated count)	57	28	6	39	23	153

The number of former CWS foster youth, age 18-21, attending post-secondary training/education on a full-time or part-time basis, who were provided **State-funded higher education board assistance** (up to \$529 a month), has also increased:

SFY 2004 (preliminary as of 7-1-04):	105	average monthly
SFY 2003:	75	
SFY 2002:	48	
SFY 2001:	51	
SFY 2000:	43	

[Source: Management Services Office/Research Staff - Committee on Projections]

In 2001 the law was amended so that an **IL contract service provider** can be the **intermediary** for a youth. As a result, more youth today receive continued IL support while they attend higher education – from 12 in SFY 2000 to 57 in SFY 2003.

CWS foster youth must apply for the higher education board payment within 1 year of high school completion.

A **1-year hiatus or break is permitted** at the beginning or some time during the age eligibility period, age 18 –21, allowing the former CWS foster youth to discontinue and return, and still be eligible for this higher education board payment benefit.

Higher education board payments are currently provided under the Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR) governing foster care and permanency assistance. New administrative rules for CWS are being drafted including two rules that will establish

	FFY99	FFY00	FFY01	FFY02
# of youth exiting foster care due to emancipation	118	121	139	138
% of youth exiting due to emancipation who were age 12 or younger at entry	21.2	15.7	15.1	19.6
% of youth exiting due to emancipation who were older than 12 at entry	78.8	84.3	84.9	80.4

- ? Contracted for **Hoomaka Mentoring Services** on Oahu to provide personal and emotional support for CWS foster and former foster youth, age 12 - 21. The program matches the foster youth with an **adult volunteer mentor** from the community. The program also provides a **maximum \$275 a month “living supplement”** (stipend) to enrolled foster youth. A determination of the living supplement amount is made based on submission by the youth of a monthly budget.

Hoomaka Mentoring Services, Oahu only:	January 2003 – March 2004 (end of contract)
Youth, age 12 – 18, referred	22
Youth, age 12 – 18, actively participating	17
Youth, age 19 – 21, referred	2
Youth, age 19 – 21, actively participating	8
TOTAL, AGE 12 – 21, ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING	25
Youth matched with a mentor	16 of 25
Enrolled mentors matched with youth	7 of 10
Case closed before being matched	4
Youth awaiting a match	5

During this period:

- 15 youth graduated from high school
 - 1 from community college
 - 1 from the University of Hawaii (UH)
 - 6 attended mainland colleges, which made it challenging to maintain the mentoring relationship; 2 girls will be returning to Hawaii to attend UH

The program shared their observations on lessons learned and improvement needs:

- ? Need to improve worker awareness and familiarity with the service and

- ? Money, food and basic living expenses, independent living skills, along with housing seem to be critical needs. A lot of activity at the beginning of 2004 centered on assistance with financial aid. Struggling with the question of how to meet the growing requests for “living supplements” and direct assistance as more youth enter the program, financial resources decrease, and student needs continue to rise.
- ? The **Hawaii Foster Youth Coalition (HFYC)** also provides **transitional assistance for exiting foster youth, age 18 –24**, including a **one-time yearly “mini-grant” of up to \$250.**

HFYC is a **youth advisory board** to the child welfare system. HFYC provides opportunities for leadership development through the creation and maintenance of local chapters (foster youth networks) throughout the State. Foster youth and former foster youth participate as advocates, advisors, trainers, and peer mentors. HFYC has **85 members** (foster youth and former foster youth) statewide. They provided **outreach** and served as **peer mentors** to **112 foster youth** in SFY 2004.

HFYC sees a need for a one-stop center or source of information for transitioning foster youth of resources and supports available to facilitate/ease transition.

We have involved foster youth, through HFYC, seeking their insights and experiences, and suggestions for improving the system and their active involvement in youth advocacy, outreach and peer mentoring.

Foster youth were keynote luncheon speakers at the August 2002 CFSR kick-off conference and shared what they would like to see improved:

- ? A say in staff hiring and staff training. [**A representative from HFYC was invited to participate in a panel to review nominees for the new Director of DHS. As part of PIP, they will be represented in a policy group for training. Beginning July 2004, foster youth/former foster youth will participate as co-trainer with a foster parent in the New Hire Core Training module, “Teamwork with Foster Parent and Youth.”**]
- ? A say in case planning and decisions that affect their life. [Note: **Changes in state law and CWS procedures permit youth, age 16 or older, to participate in case planning decisions that affect them.**]
- ? The ability for foster youth to obtain a driver’s license. which they view as

involvement activities in which foster youth have leadership responsibilities in planning, including the annual Foster Youth Conference.]

At the September 2002 foster parent conference, HFYC communicated to foster parents and caseworkers the **need for foster parent and community involvement in helping foster youth develop independent living skills**. They highlighted the need for:

- ? Foster parent assistance in life skills preparation by involving youth in daily activities like budgeting, meal planning and preparation, shopping.
 - ? Continued emotional and financial support post-discharge.
 - ? Housing and employment assistance as they prepare to transition out of foster care.
- ? **Youth Circle Ohana Conference:** Beginning July 2004, the Ohana Conferencing service provider, EPIC, will offer group conferencing and decision-making services to **help CWS foster youth, age 16 and older, develop a transition plan** for independent living and emancipation from State custody, through “youth support circle” process.
- ? Beginning July 2004, **Education and Training Vouchers (ETV)** of up to **\$5,000 a year** towards the total cost of attendance at an accredited institution of higher education is available to approved former CWS foster youth applicants.

Applicant must be a former CWS foster youth who is currently participating in the CWS higher education board payment assistance program or would have been eligible for the program but did not apply within 1 year of high school completion.

For continuing eligibility, the youth must maintain a satisfactory level of performance and be making progress towards completion of the postsecondary education or training program.

Youth who are participating in the ETV program on their 21st birthday shall remain eligible to continue receiving ETV assistance **up to age 23**, provided they remain enrolled in a full-time postsecondary education or training program and are making satisfactory progress.

transition planning. This would allow eligible former CWS foster youth to continue to receive EPSDT benefits through age 21 provided they continue to meet the income and asset eligibility criteria.

Youth, age 19 – 21, with income higher than 100% FPL up to 300% FPL and who meet the eligibility criteria, would be eligible for EPSDT benefits, but must pay a monthly premium.

- ? DHS sponsored the annual graduates luncheon at the Governor's mansion acknowledging and highlighting the rite of passage and educational achievements of foster youth who successfully completed high school.