



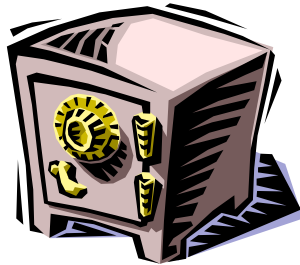
News and Notes

Youth Alternatives Foster Care Program

State Budget Crisis Resolved

Good news was reported on the state budget crisis. Governor Baldacci's office announced that the expected 3 million dollar budget shortfall was, in fact, not occurring. The governor's office revealed that 5 million dollars in tax revenues had been found in a safe in a custodian's closet at the capital. It is unclear at this time, how this money ended up in the safe and who was responsible. Governor Baldacci's spokeswoman reported that a budget audit will be

announced within the week to see if any other revenue can be recovered.



Mike Tarpinian, President of Youth Alternatives, Inc. reported that this is "great news for the foster care system." "Foster parent salaries will not change" and

may, in fact "be increased." The Legislative Committee that oversees the Foster Care System will be meeting shortly to determine how to spend this newfound revenue. Mike Tarpinian, reported that he will be advising this committee for the Legislature. He anticipates requesting that foster parents be able to access funds for housekeepers to free up time to spend with their foster children. In addition, Mr. Tarpinian asked that some (continued, page 3)

Youth Alternatives, Inc.

Volume 2 Issue 4

April, 2005



YA All Stars

© Welcome to Charlie C, and Alicia F, to YA foster homes.

Always laugh when you can. It is cheap medicine.

~Lord Byron

Study Suggest Foster Parents Usually Right

A study recently published in the child welfare journal, Fostering, suggests that courts, DHHS workers, and other professionals should listen to the foster families with whom they work. Susan Portland, a doctoral candidate in child development, interviewed 500 foster parents across the United States. She spoke with families a

month after accepting a placement and then every six months, thereafter, until permanency was achieved. In addition to interviewing the foster parents, Ms. Portland interviewed every member of the child's treatment team, including but not limited to the child's DHHS worker, GAL, and individual therapist. Ms. Portland focused

on the child's permanency plan. She discovered that foster parent's assessment of the possibility of the child and biological parent(s) reuniting was correct 93% of the time versus 66% of the time for DHHS workers, 57% of the time for GALs and 21% for individual therapists. The results suggest (continued on page 3)

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Training Corner

May Trainings

Trainings from YA:

To register for YA trainings email: registration@youthalternatives.org or call 874-1175

- 5/12 TCI Refresher 8:30-4:30
2nd Floor Conference Room
- 5/18-20 TCI 3-Day Training
2nd Floor Conference Room
- 5/19 First Aid 9-12
4th Floor Conf Room
- 5/19 First Aid Challenge 12:00-12:30
4th Floor Conf Room
- 5/19 CPR 1-4:30
2nd Floor Conf Room
- 5/19 CPR Challenge 4:30-5
2nd Floor Conference Room

Trainings from other sources:

DHS Trainings: FMI or to register call 287-9355 or register online at www.maine.gov/dhs/setu/registrationprocedures.htm

- 5/3 Aggressive Adolescent Behavior Management 9-4
DHHS Portland
- 5/4 Managing Change 9-4
DHHS Augusta
- 5/5 Child Management 9-4
DHHS Augusta
- 5/17 Working with Clients with Schizophrenia 9-4
DHHS Portland
- 5/18-19 Grief, Loss, and Separation 9-4
DHHS Augusta

Transdisciplinary Workshops, Inc. For more information call Barbara Freethy at 207-846-8643 or email: transdis@verison.net

- 5/20 Odd Girl Out: The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls 8:00-3:30
Harraseeket Inn, Freeport



Weekend TCI Training!

Finding it difficult to take your 3-day TCI training during the work week? There is a 3-day TCI scheduled for one Saturday a month over 3 months:

- April 30, 2005
- May 21, 2005
- June 11, 2005

8:30-4:40 at Youth Alternatives. Please contact Sarah Dowling (874-1175, x 255) for more information or to register.

April Vacation Events

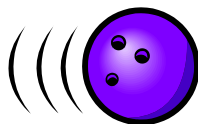
Cross Agency Roller Skating

April 19, 2005 10- Noon
Happy Wheels in Portland
RSVP by 4/12 to Jen at 1-877-505-0545



YA Annual Bowling Party

23 April 2004
10-Noon
Big 20 Lanes
Route 1
Scarborough



Keeping Track of Trainings

As therapeutic foster parents, you (primary and secondary parents) are required to have 48 hours of training over your two year licensing period. YA requires that you received 40 hours of training each year if you are the primary parent and 20 hours, if you are the secondary. When it come time to renew your foster care license, you will be asked to provide documentation that you have met your training requirements. Without this documentation, you will not be given a new license.

At YA, we also require you to furnish us with copies of your training certificates. They are kept in individual foster parent files and document that you have completed your yearly training requirements. Traditionally, this has meant that when foster parents are renewing their foster home license, they

could contact their YA case manager for copies of their training certificates. This practice, however, was never intended to take the place of foster parents keeping track of their own training certificates. All foster parents should keep their original documents and provide YA with photo copies. ***Please do not solely rely on YA to keep track of your training certificates!*** We are being asked more and more frequently to provide copies of trainings. While we would like to be able to easily and quickly provide this service, it is becoming more challenging for us. With our paperwork requirements increasing dramatically, the foster care staff cannot realistically always be able to provide copies to foster families. Ultimately it is every foster parent's responsibility to maintain their own training records.

A Letter from Mike Tarpinian, President of Youth Alternatives, Inc.

Dear Colleagues:

As you know several of our programs were slated for cuts or elimination in the state budget over the next two years. (July 1, 2005 - June 30 2007) I had the opportunity over the past several months to meet and talk with legislators and leaders of state agencies about the wonderful services you provide to children and families. What became very clear to me early on was the tremendous respect individuals have for the work you do each and every day and that the proposed cuts were a reflection of balancing the budget and not on the work we do.

Last night after a long deliberation the Maine State Legislature passed the new two-year budget that restores almost all of the cuts that were originally proposed. The FIS

programs that serve over a 1,000 families a year will receive full funding over the two year period, Family Mediation has full funding for the first year and 50% funding for the second (plenty of time for us to work our magic), Foster Care had its five levels of care restored and the privatization of case management for foster care will be studied next year by a work group of which I am a member.

Lets take a moment to be grateful for the outcome. Not all services or funding were restored and some of our colleagues who serve other populations will be losing their jobs. And while all of this is good news

Lets take a moment to be grateful for the outcome.

for us, in order to continue to provide quality services to the over 6100 children and families who come to us for assistance we need to annually evaluate how we do the work that we do and ask ourselves are we getting the best possible outcomes. And, what have we learned in the past year that will inform us to change how we do our work that will result in improving the lives of children and their families? That will be our challenge and I am convinced that we are up to it.

Lastly, let me extend my heartfelt appreciation to all of you who in the mist of uncertain funding kept your eye on the ball and continue to provide quality services to those who come to us for assistance.

All My Best

Mike T

Budget Crisis, Study continued from Page 1

April Fool's!!!!

So the budget crisis is still with us but dealt with for this budgetary cycle, at least (see above letter from Mike Tarpinian). And no one has done a study which tells us what we already know: foster parents are the members of the treatment team that usually really have a handle on what is going on in their foster children's lives.

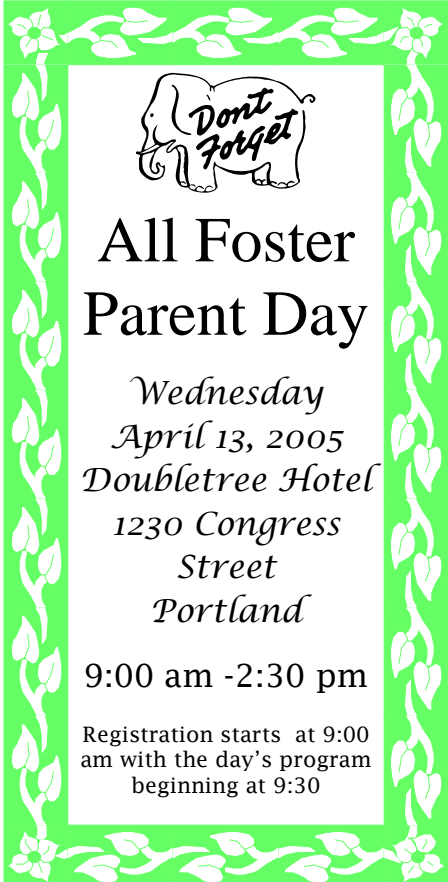
Please forgive my little editorial license in honor of April Fool's Day. Consider it a little wishful thinking. All of us at YA really appreciate and value the work of all of our foster parents. We really do wish that budgetary issues would not impact you, and that your contributions to your children's treatment team was

always taken with the seriousness and value it deserves.

While we cannot change the state budget or even change the minds of the people on your children's treatment team, we can tell you that we honor each one of you for the energy and commitment you bring to your role as professional parents. Later this month, we will gather together at All Foster Parents Day and the YA staff will have the opportunity to say thank you in person. Until then, thanks you so much for choosing to become a foster parent and choosing to work with us at Youth Alternatives!

Sarah Dowling

On behalf of the Treatment Foster Care Staff



Don't Forget

All Foster Parent Day

Wednesday
April 13, 2005
Doubletree Hotel
1230 Congress Street
Portland

9:00 am - 2:30 pm

Registration starts at 9:00 am with the day's program beginning at 9:30

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION FOR FOSTER PARENTS

Youth Alternatives

Main Office 874-1175
4th Floor Fax 874-1124

Treatment Foster Care Staff 874-1175

(Monday – Friday; 8:30 – 4:30)

Anne Archibald, Director ext. 227 cell 749-8791
Sarah Dowling, Placement Coordinator ext. 255 cell 632-7140

Case Managers:

		Cell Phone
Bart Donovan	ext. 244	831-3839
Eileen Dugan	ext. 243	632-7241
Beth Simmons	ext. 250	632-0251
Justin LaFontaine	ext. 245	632-3170
Jean Lamoureux	ext. 247	632-7454
Jennifer Russell	ext. 246	632-7448

(Note: All foster care staff is available by email. Example: aarchibald@youthalternatives.org)

Community On Call Pager 471-5268

For after hour support and assistance from Youth Alternatives

Children’s Emergency Services, DHS Hotline (800) 452-1999

For emergency and crisis support from DHS

Youth Alternatives, Inc.

Primary Business Address
One Post Office Square/PO Box 596
Portland, Maine 04112-0596
www.youthalternatives.org

Phone: 874-1175
Fax: 874-1124
Email: sdowling@youthalternatives.org

