

What's Happening in my Region?



TEEN CONFERENCE: CONTINUED FROM COVER

Youth were able to stay in a different set of UTA dorms this year. Through that experience, the youth were able to have a real-life college experience. They also attend a booth fair where they received helpful information. Youth and staff were able to have a fun-filled evening at Six Flags Over Texas. The best thing about the conference were the t-shirt everyone had on at Six Flags. Check Out MY S.W. A. G (Show the World All My Greatness)! Once again, the Teen Conference was an overall great success for the youth that attended!



Region 1

Region 1 youth just helped with the 6th annual hub city beach party in Lubbock. The beach party is put on by Foster a Life, a non profit organization that grants wishes to the youth in the Lubbock area. All proceeds from the party are used to grant wishes of the youth. Wishes granted include: senior rings and pictures, football camps, drivers education and more. Youth in Amarillo participated in campus tours of Amarillo College, West Texas A&M University, Frank Phillips College, and Clarendon College on Aug. 11th and 17th. Jade Arias, foster care alumni, is starting a West Texas Chapter of the Foster Care Alumni of America. If you know someone who may be interested in joining FCAA, contact Jade at 806-676-4161.

Lakya Lewis (806) 741-3225
Youth Specialist

Region 2

I hope everyone had a great summer. In July Region 2 held a Regional conference that was a huge success with 49 youth attending. The youth had the opportunity to hear from different speakers, and hopefully started thinking about their own future plans. I want to wish everyone a happy school year and remember life is what you make of it.

Danna Davis (325) 691-8202
PAL Coordinator

Region 5



Region 5 celebrated all our graduating seniors with a Graduation Reception. Some youth received DVD players, televisions, and even laptops. Youth and staff also participated in the three-day University of Arlington Conference. With many informative workshops going on (some facilitated by Youth Specialist), we got a chance to have some fun in the sun at SIX Flags Arlington! On July 13th, we rocked the mic with the "All Eyes on Me" Regional Teen Conference which focused on making the right choices for your lives. Some of our special guest speakers were an inmate and correctional officer from the Texas Criminal Justice System, a lady from HIV early Intervention, and many more. Our star speaker of our conference was NFL Defensive Back from the Baltimore Ravens, Mr. Danny Gorrer. He presented all of us with inspiring words and great pictures and autographs. What a wonderful way to end an already great day!

Shaneka Odom (409)951-3368
Youth Specialist

Region 3

Region 3's foster youth/alumni group, Change for Today and Tomorrow (C4t2), was talking about that car wash yeah; the fundraiser was a success! Region 3 hosted the State-wide Teen Conference at the University of Texas at Arlington, which was filled with workshops and great guest speakers to help prepare youth for independent living. Region 3's Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) staff hosted an awesome graduation party for our high school seniors, and they walked away with great independent living item gifts-from luggage bags filled with goodies to gift cards; thanks PAL and congratulations Class of 2011.

Zophelia Conley (214) 331-7898
Youth Specialist

Region

On July 23rd, 2011 the Houston Alumni and Youth Center hosted the annual college and career fair which was the best one yet! There were over 80 youth participants who got the chance to meet many representatives from various colleges and places of employment. The success of this event can't go without the mention of our two lovely staff, Sherri Lee (Employment Coordinator) and Evelyn Johnson (Educational Specialist) Thanks for all your efforts because youth got a lot of helpful information to prepare them for the future.

M. Gabriela Valladares (712) 884-3300 ext.124
Youth Specialist

Region 7

Region 7 kicked off the summer with a graduation celebration for our graduating seniors, congratulations class of 2011!! We attended Teen Conference at UT Arlington and had a great time participating in workshops, hearing from amazing speakers and riding the rides at Six Flags! Coming up we have our regional conferences at Texas State University, let us know if you would like to take part in these events!

Meagan LeLeux (512) 388-6225
PAL Coordinator



Region 10

Get your thinking caps back on Region 10! It's time for the fall semester of school. We are proud to announce that 29 graduates crossed the finish line this summer! Several are going on to college in various areas around the state - we support them in all their endeavors! Region 10 also hosted our very own Teen Conference which focused on team building. Look out for invitations in the mail for our Youth Advisory Board (YAB). Step out and speak out about changes you'd like to see in foster care.

April McWilliams (915) 521-3871
Youth Specialist

Region 8

Taking over the local university, the BCFS Pal Youth Center partnered with UTSA to host an exciting and experiential regional conference. Independence Day 2011 had many guest speakers, performances, career workshops, and career booths with hands-on demonstrations on specific job tasks. Regional youth and alumni musicians participated in the first BCFS PALaPALooza!! event where local bands played and artwork from the Art Institute was displayed. YAIA leadership council held a Basketball Tournament of youth and alumni versus staff. State PAL will host a Minute to Win-It activity after the popular game show. Upcoming events include: The reoccurring Hair-A-Thon to educate caregivers on hair maintenance for children of color and provide hair styling services to youth in care. The new program Le Mademoiselle & Les Ambassadeurs Continuum & Debut to provide children of color with a ceremony that honors their rite of passage into young adulthood. Please contact R8 Youth Specialist for more information about events.

Cheronda Tillman (210) 229-9200
Youth Specialist



Region 9

Region 9 has enjoyed their summer, graduates have already started on their path to a local college or university and we wish them the best! We also attended the Teen Conference at the University of Texas in Arlington!! We had about 25 youth that attended the Region 9 Conference in San Angelo on July 16th and about 50 youth that participated in the Region 2 Conference on July 21st in Early!! So much great information was shared at all three of these conferences, so if you have not participated or heard of any of these events and want to be a part of it, just call me.

Daniela Ontiveroz (432) 686-2297
Youth Specialist

Region 11

Region 11 has had an exciting Summer because of all of the Conferences available to the Youths. 11 Youths attended the Texas Teen Conference in Arlington, TX and 58 Youths attended the Regional conference at UTPA, which focused on college preparedness. The Youth Leadership council has started back up and is going strong with an average of 18 Youths attending the meetings. The Region 11 YLC is named Teens Advocating for Change Organization (TACO).

Kassandra A. Bishop (361) 878-3461
PAL Coordinator

My PAL'S

Hi my name is Shay I am 16 years old and I love to sing. My favorite colors are pink and purple. I like to listen to Chris Brown, Nikki Minaj, Lil Wayne, Keri Hilson, Keyshia Cole and Trey Songs. I'm in RIC right. I have been in CPS since 2007. This is my first RIC and my last. I'm outgoing and love to talk. I like R&B, rap, and Christian music. Well those are my favorite things. I love my family and friends. If you write back will always write back.

Sincerely, Shay <3

My name is Kadeziah, but people call me "Brooklyn". I live in Dallas and I like to write poetry and listen to music. My favorite artist are Nikki Minaj, Lil Webbie, Guccie, Lil Wayne, Bossie, Monica and Trey songs, oh yeah one more, Drake. A little about me is that ummm I like to shop, look nice, stuff like jewelry, oh yeah and I'm 17 years old. I also like Aeropostale, Polo, Vans and Levi. I can't really think of anything else feel free to write back. I would really like to see who's listening.

Sincerely, Kadeziah.

My name is Jim. I like to skateboard, play football, and basketball and anything that would give me an adrenaline rush. I broke both of my arms for doing some stupid. I have 5 brothers and 2 sisters. I'm 17 years old and I'm in CPS right now.

-Jim

What's up my name is Elizabeth but my friends call me Lizzy! I like to ride my bike and listen to music with friends after school. I play volleyball and I love it because its a great way to stay in shape and have fun at the same time. I would really like a pen pal because I like making new friends and its always good to have someone to talk to and to hear you out. Hope someone writes soon! Thanks for reading

-Lizzy

Hey, my name is Kelly and I would love a pen pal. I always get the News for Us! Newsletter and I thought it was time to write in and participate. A little about me: I like to dance, eat and sleep! Mostly eat! I listen to all kinds of music. I don't know what else to write, but I hope someone finds me interesting.

Peace,

-Kelly

Do You Want a Pen Pal?

Send your responses or new letters to:

News for Us! Editor
2525 Wallingwood Dr., Suite 1503
Austin, TX 78746

Don't forget to write your name and address on all materials you send in.

Thanks for your interest!

Texas REACH conference

What: Texas REACH conference for state agencies, community members, current youth and alumni of care, and institutions of higher education.

When: May 23rd & 24th 2012

Where: Dallas Community College

Why: Conference focus is to build bridges between youth who were in foster care with institutions of higher education and to support youth once they are enrolled in higher education to include vocational or technical colleges and trade or career schools.

How: Stay tuned! More information to come or you can contact your local PAL Staff or Youth Specialist.

We Want Your Feedback on the Newsletter!

Stories about youth in foster care?

Budgeting Tips?

Stories about youth who have left care?

Information about youth rights and policies that affect you?

Health care information?

Cooking Tips?

Let us know what you want! Take our survey online at: www.surveymonkey.com/s/RTFMCSZ



2525 Wallingwood DR.
Suite 1503
Austin, TX 78746
(512) 328-6860

Editors:

Kim Schenck kschenck@tnoys.org
Carina Moreno cmoreno@tnoys.org

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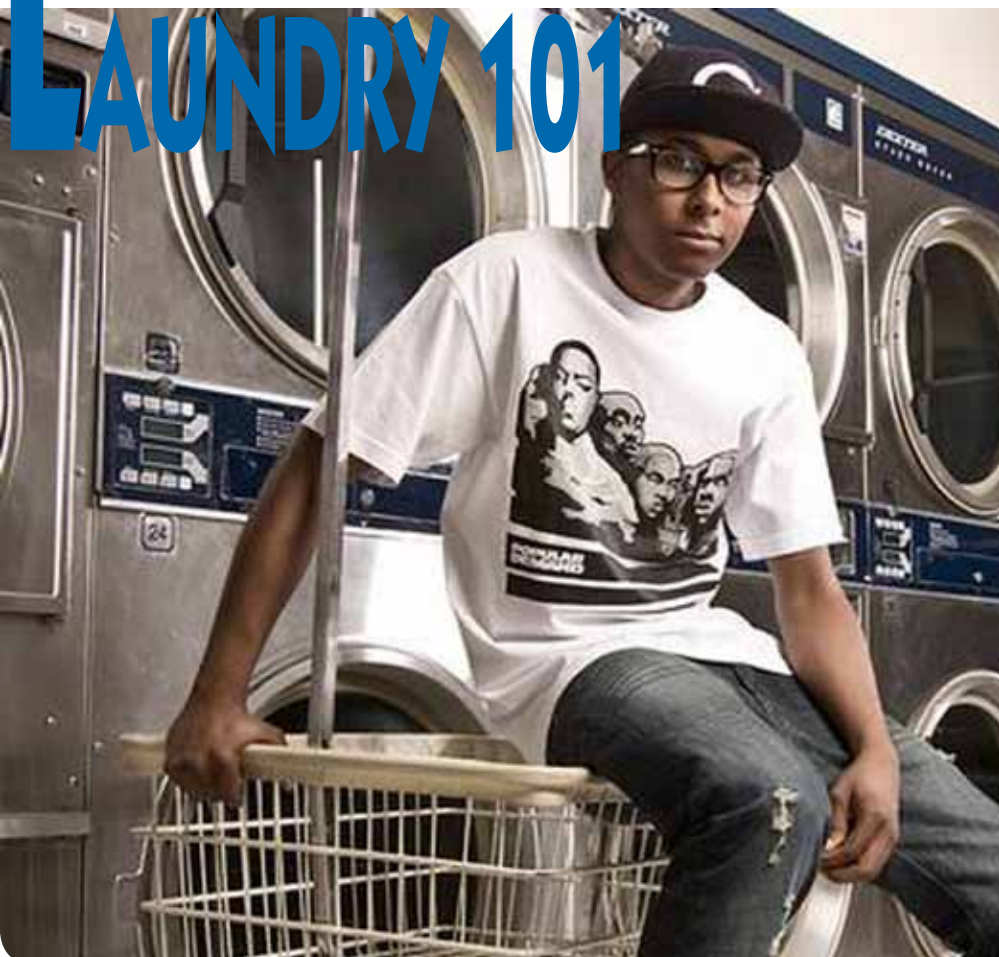
Texas Teen Conference: Check out my S.W.A.G 2011!

This year there was another tremendous Texas Teen Conference held at the University of Texas in Arlington on June 29th-July 1st. There were several workshops that the youth and adult sponsors were able to attend, such as a youth panel "My Child, Sex, My Reality, Finding Your Voice, Show Me the Money, Preserving Memories and the list goes on. Youth and staff provided input during the Fish bowl sessions. Peer leaders played a key role and were a big help throughout the whole conference. We also had the pleasure of hearing from a phenomenal comedian and motivational speaker, George Duvall, who related well to the youth that attend the conference as he was a former alumni of care. (Continued inside)



The Preparation for Adult Living Newsletter

LAUNDRY 101



*Purchase a good laundry bag, duffel or tote.

*Stock up on quarters.

*Sort and separate your light and dark colors. Dark colored clothing will bleed and ruin light colored clothing.

*All white clothes should be washed in hot water.

*All color clothes should generally be washed in warm water.

* Read the care labels in your clothing.

* Avoid wrinkles by removing clothes from the dryer as soon as they are done, fold or hang them up.

National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)

How Can You...

Leave a Legacy for your brothers and sisters in foster care? Improve your community? Use your experiences to really make a difference? It's easy as answering questions in an online survey. Your responses will be used to improve the quality of life for Texas youth. You can make a difference for yourself and others!

How Can You Get Involved?

All youth who are or were in Texas foster care at age 16 or older are invited to register with the NYTD: Access Granted website. Make sure your contact information is kept up-to-date! If you are selected to be part of the NYTD survey, take the survey!! This is your chance to help improve services and outcomes for youth in Texas. Those chosen to take the survey will be notified by email. So, keep your contact information up to date if you want to have your say when you turn 17.

What is NYTD?

The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) is a data collection system created to track independent living services and learn how successful states are in preparing youth to move from state care into adulthood. As part of a federal mandate, Texas will survey youth who are in foster care when they are age 17 and then conduct a follow-up survey for some of those youth at age 19 and the same youth at age 21. We will survey youth in foster care turning 17 October 1, 2010 thru September 30, 2011 within 45 days after their birthday.

Where Do I Go Next?

The NYTD: Access Granted Website

The NYTD: Access Granted website is where the NYTD Surveys will be posted. The website will also be a great source of information on what's happening in the Texas Youth community.

The NYTD: Access Granted website is here!!! Check back often for updates and contact information for questions at www.texasyouthconnection.org under the NYTD tab.

