

Title: Preparation for Adult Living: Supervisor Training and Empowerment Program (PAL-STEP); Site Visit Report

Award #: 90CW1132

Cluster: Training of Child Welfare Agency Supervisors in the Effective Delivery and Management of Federal Independent Living Service for Youth in Foster Care

Grantee: University of Houston

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SUMMARY

To reinforce the abilities of youth in foster care about to transition to an independent life and enhance their chances of success, the University of Houston collaborated with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) and the University of Texas at Arlington to produce a training curriculum for supervisors in child protective services (CPS) across Texas. This collaborative project, Preparation for Adult Living: Supervisor Training and Empowerment Program (PAL-STEP), focused on providing CPS supervisors with:

- The skills and knowledge they would need to guide and direct adolescents in foster care
- The tools to share that knowledge with other CPS caseworkers by imparting the four core principles of the training: positive youth development, collaboration, cultural competence, and permanent connections

PAL-STEP training included both a 1-hour web-based training and a day of live training led by PAL-STEP staff and former foster youth hired by the TDFPS. Youth trainers presented some of the curriculum content and shared their experiences about life in the foster care system. They recounted some common concerns: aging out of care, loneliness, being gay and lesbian in foster care, and separation from siblings. Subsequent evaluation results showed that the participation of these young people, who also discussed resources and answered questions, was the most highly rated aspect of the training.

PAL-STEP staff and youth trained 154 child welfare supervisors during the 3-year project. All trainees received a *Participant's Handbook*, a *Trainer's Manual*, and a CD containing a *Supervisory Took Kit* of teaching strategies. These materials were posted on the project website, and more were distributed through conferences and other requests. A revised curriculum was presented to foster parents and caseworkers, and a total of 233 participants were trained.

Evaluation revealed that the training was very well received, and participants experienced a significant increase in knowledge. Interviews with supervisors after they returned to their workplaces indicated that they were using both formal and informal means to share their knowledge with caseworkers, although they were challenged by high caseloads and excessive work demands.

Changes in practice have occurred due to the PAL-STEP training. Supervisors initially had perceived youth in a negative way, asking, "How can we fix them?" They now ask, instead: "How can we do a better job for them?"

This curriculum will become a part of the State's CPS Supervisory Certification Program.

Reprinted from *Children's Bureau Express*, "A Youth-Driven Curriculum for Supervisors" (<http://cbexpress.acf.hhs.gov/>).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Abstract *(adapted from the online Compendium of ACYF Funded Programs)*

The purpose of the project is to develop, deliver, evaluate, and disseminate a training curriculum for Child Protective Services (CPS) supervisors with the intent of increasing knowledge and skills for culturally responsive delivery and management of Federal independent living services for youth in foster care. The project objectives include the development of a training curriculum designed in two parts. A web-based training will be developed to present theoretical material. The web-based training will be prerequisite to a 1-day face-to-face training delivered by a training team made up of a youth who has graduated from an independent living program and a university faculty member. The training and evaluation will take place in the largest regions in Texas, Dallas/Fort Worth, Houston, and El Paso.

The University of Houston, the grantee for this project, has over 35,000 students. The university is the largest urban university in Texas. The Graduate School of Social Work is the only graduate school of social work in Houston and has approximately 600 students enrolled in the M.S.W. and Ph.D. programs. Within the the University of Houston Graduate School of Social Work, the Office of Community Projects is the administrative unit that houses and manages a majority of the community service projects and activities that link expertise within the Graduate School of Social Work to the broader human service community, including the Protective Services Training Institute and the Child Welfare Education Project, a title IV-E Training Funded Program. Through these two programs, the Graduate School of Social Work faculty and staff have collaborated with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services to increase the knowledge and skills of supervisors and caseworkers in Child Protective and Adult Protective services in Houston and across Texas. The University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work also is a partner in this project.

Need for This Service *(adapted from information and materials provided by the grantee during the site visit and from information included in the Program Announcement)*

Youth represent approximately 30 percent of the nation's foster care population with approximately 20,000 young people aging out of foster care annually. Often these youth have no permanency connections, little employment history or stability, lack of a high school diploma or GED, and an overall lack of independent living skills. Given these facts, these young people face numerous challenges, including crime (as victims or as perpetrators), homelessness, early parenthood, juvenile prostitution, mental and physical health issues, drug/alcohol abuse, and poor social support systems.

In 2004, Texas had over 27,000 children in foster care, 4,974 of whom were between the ages of 14 and 20 years, and most of whom were living in nonrelative homes. Youth comprised 9.8 percent of the foster care population who left Department of Family and Protective Services care and had averaged 8.7 placements while in foster care compared to the State average for the entire foster care population of 3.2 placements. Youth who transition from the Texas foster care system face the same challenges as those exiting on the national level, including homelessness, drug/alcohol abuse, mental and physical health issues, education and employment deficits, poor social support systems, juvenile prostitution, early parenthood, and crime.

Three major themes for improving the lot of these transitioning youth emerged during focus groups conducted with representative samplings of these young people:

- More youth-focused practice is in order.
- There is a need for increased collaboration and better communication with youth.
- Youth in the child welfare system have many unmet needs, including the need for permanent connections.

Goals of Project (*adapted from information and materials provided by the grantee during the site visit*)

The goal of the Preparation for Adult Living: Supervisor Training and Empowerment Program was to maximize the successful transition to independent living for youth in foster care and to enhance their chance of success. Recognizing that training of supervisors is key to the transfer of policy to practice, the project developed and fieldtested curriculum and provided extensive training to child welfare supervisors. The major goals of the curriculum were:

- To provide CPS supervisors with the skills and knowledge needed to ensure that adolescent youth in foster care make a successful transition to independent living.
- To provide CPS supervisors with the tools to transfer their knowledge of the four core principles of the training (positive youth development, collaboration, cultural competence, and permanent connections) to those they supervise, enabling those CPS caseworkers to help foster youth successfully transition to independent living.

SITE VISIT HIGHLIGHTS

The site visit took place on August 31, 2008, and consisted of a day-long meeting with Maria Scannapieco, University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work, and Kelli Connell-Carrick, University of Houston Graduate School of Social Work, Co-Principal Investigators for the Preparation for Adult Living: Supervisor Training and Empowerment Program (PAL-STEP) grant. Also present were Teresa Buehler, Curriculum Consultant and Developer; Karen Davis, Project Trainer; Cache Steinberg, Project Evaluator from the University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work; Pam Walker from the Harris County Youth Service Center, a transitional center for youth up to age 26; and Claudia Cardenas, a former foster youth who is now employed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services as a Youth Specialist. With the exception of the site visitor, all participants in the meeting were members of the PAL-STEP Advisory Council as well as members of the project team.

The meeting consisted of a very thorough presentation by team members on the following topics:

- Project development
- Curriculum development
- Implementation of the training
- Evaluation
- Dissemination of curriculum
- Lessons learned and keys to success
- Expansion of the curriculum and next steps

Information shared during this meeting is incorporated throughout the following sections of this report.

LESSONS LEARNED

Unique and Innovative Features (*adapted from information and materials provided by the grantee during the site visit*)

- This is a youth-driven curriculum, driven by the experiences shared by youth during the focus groups. Special emphasis has been placed on helping supervisors get in touch with the experiences and the needs of real transitioning youth. Participant feedback indicated that the voice of the youth was one of the most important and effective aspects of the training.
- Given the appropriate tools, supervisors will make both formal and informal attempts to transfer the knowledge they gain in training to the caseworkers in their units.
- The Preparation for Adult Living: Supervisor Training and Empowerment Program (PAL-STEP) training was designed to be only the first step of the project's impacting the State's foster care system. As a second step, supervisors who participated in the training were expected to go back and transfer their learning to the caseworkers in their units. Toward that end, participants in the training were given hard copies of the PAL-STEP *Participant's Handbook* and the *Trainer's Manual*, as well as a CD which contained all the materials necessary to provide this training. "Teach them How to Fish," a film shown during the training, also presented material to supervisors on how and why to transfer the learning to the caseworkers in their units.
- The curriculum had a "teach back" component where participants actually taught some of the content to other participants. The trainer would present the segment first in order to role model for the participant. In this way, supervisors had the experience of training on the material in a safe setting so they would be more comfortable training their caseworkers.

Challenges (*adapted from information and materials provided by the grantee during the site visit*)

Project staff report few challenges in implementation, perhaps because, at the time of project development and implementation, Texas was placing statewide emphasis on improving services to transitioning youth. This project complemented the statewide

effort, resulting in willing participation from partners and stakeholders in focus groups and on the Advisory Council. This climate also helped to overcome the usual challenge of overworked supervisors getting time out of the office to attend the training.

To address the challenge of helping supervisors transfer their knowledge to their caseworkers once they returned to the office, the curriculum was designed to be as user-friendly and accessible to supervisors as possible. Extensive information, including the *Trainer's Manual* and the *Participant's Handbook*, PowerPoints, and other training materials, sample case notes, and additional relevant information was distributed, both in hard copy and on CD, to participants in the face-to-face training and was put on the project website. The curriculum also included opportunities for supervisors to practice the knowledge and skills gained during the training so they would feel more comfortable and familiar with the material when training their caseworkers. Despite all of this attention to enabling supervisors to transfer their learning to their caseworkers, preliminary evaluation results indicate that the challenges of high caseloads and excessive work demands that many supervisors face when they return to the office prevent them from providing formal training to their staff.

There also were challenges in involving youth as partners in the curriculum development, as members of the Advisory Council, and as trainers. Former foster youth need a great deal of support as they participate in a project such as this one if they are to feel comfortable as members of the team. Project staff met with the youth partners before and after planning and curriculum meetings and prior to all trainings to determine their level of comfort with the process, to reassure them of the importance and value of their participation, and to discuss any concerns they may have had regarding their participation in the training.

Successful Strategies and Keys to Success (*adapted from information and materials provided by the grantee during the site visit*)

- Youth specialists (former foster youth who have been hired by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services in each region) were involved in each training. They presented some of the content and shared their own experiences in the foster care system. They also discussed regional community resources available for youth, and supervisors were given the opportunity to ask them questions regarding their experiences in out-of-home care. Evaluation results have shown that youth participation has consistently been the highest-rated aspect of the training.
- In a further effort to help supervisors get in touch with what it means to be a youth in foster care, the training also incorporated three digital stories of youth discussing issues of aging out of foster care, loneliness, being gay and lesbian in foster care, and separation from siblings.

OUTCOMES

Summary of Activities and Accomplishments (*adapted from information and materials provided by the grantee during the visit*)

- **Focus Groups:** In preparation for developing the curriculum, project staff conducted focus groups with foster youth, former foster youth, foster parents, and Independent Living caseworkers and supervisors in the Houston and Dallas regions. Among the issues the youth identified during the focus groups were the desire to be respected as individuals and to be involved in decision-making about their lives, the need for more skill building opportunities while still in foster care, the importance of having a permanent connection with a support person or network, and the need for earlier planning and preparation for independent living.
- **Review of the Literature:** A review of the literature on the issues facing youth aging out of foster care, their transition to independent (or interdependent living), and on adult learning theory also was conducted in preparation for curriculum development.
- **Advisory Council:** The project built upon existing partnerships between the University of Houston, the University of Texas at Arlington, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, and the Protective Services Training Institute, along with established relationships with human service agencies working with transitioning youth. One of their first steps in developing the curriculum was to establish an Advisory Council comprised of representatives from each of those organizations as well as foster parents, foster youth, and former foster youth. The Advisory Council continually reviewed the curriculum, suggested revisions, and made improvements until the final version was approved.
- **The Curriculum:** The curriculum was designed in two parts:
 - A web-based training, approximately 1 hour in length, was developed to present theoretical material such as normal adolescent development and the impact of maltreatment on adolescent development. This course also introduces the four core principles of positive youth development, collaboration, cultural responsiveness, and permanent connections that were identified in the literature review as being vitally important in working with transitioning youth. It also includes a case example that applies the concepts in a practice setting so participants can see how this philosophical shift operates in practice. Finally, it provides information on Chafee and the resources available to youth through that program. Completion of the web-based training is a prerequisite to participating in the 1-day face-to-face training.
 - The 6-hour face-to-face training is a follow-up to and a continuation of the web-based training and is delivered offsite by a training team comprised of a former foster youth and a university faculty member. The curriculum includes six modules: 1) Status of Youth, 2) Positive Youth Development, 3) Collaboration, 4) Cultural Responsiveness, 5) Permanent Connections, and 6) Working with Youth. It is designed to enhance participants' understanding of the unique needs of transitioning youth and to empower them to transfer the knowledge they gain during this training to the caseworkers in their units. Toward that end, it is infused throughout with information on adolescent development and includes strategies for working more effectively with youth. It imparts the message that, "A positive youth development approach by caseworkers requires personal and professional commitment to building strong positive relationships with young people, sharing program planning and decision-making with them,

helping them to develop, and supporting them in becoming happy, connected, and contributing citizens.”¹

- **The Training:** In their application, the grantee projected training 100 supervisors in the Dallas/Fort Worth and Houston areas of Texas during the life of the grant. As of July 2008, they also had taken the training into central Texas and the panhandle and had delivered 12 sessions of the training to 154 child welfare supervisors. The training is designed to strengthen the supervisors’ ability to guide caseworkers in providing effective delivery and management of independent living services. To ensure the transfer of knowledge to their caseworkers, each trainee received a *Participant’s Handbook*, a *Trainer’s Manual*, and a CD containing a *Supervisory Took Kit* of teaching strategies to use in training their staff.
- **Supervisory Took Kit:** The Preparation for Adult Living: Supervisor Training and Empowerment Program (PAL-STEP) *Supervisory Toolkit* is a CD that contains the entire curriculum, samples of agency documents that were altered to show how the four core principles can be integrated into current practice, and various other resources relevant to the transitioning youth population, including information on adolescent development and on gay, lesbian, transgendered, and bisexual youth. The toolkit is designed to provide supervisors with the tools they need to transfer the knowledge gained during the training to caseworkers when they return to the office. Each participant in the training is given the CD. The toolkit also is on the PAL-STEP website where supervisors and caseworkers can access it at any time.
- **Web site:** The project also launched its own website at www.palstep.com. It is on this site that supervisors access the online course that is a part of the PAL-STEP curriculum. The entire supervisors’ toolkit also is available to supervisors on the website, as is the complete membership of the Advisory Council.

Evaluation (adapted from information and materials provided by the grantee during the visit)

- The comprehensive evaluation of the PAL-STEP training sought to answer four questions:
 - Did the training engage participants?
 - Did participants increase their knowledge of the four core principles of working with adolescents in foster care?
 - Did supervisors transfer their knowledge to caseworkers?
 - Did practice change?
- To assess engagement, participants were asked to complete a course evaluation at the end of the day-long training. Participant knowledge of the four core principles was measured before and after the web-based training. A random sampling of supervisors who had participated in the training and the caseworkers in their units were interviewed to determine if and how the knowledge gained in the PAL-STEP training was transferred from supervisor to caseworker. Change in practice was evaluated in two ways. De-identified service plans completed by caseworkers whose supervisors attended training, completed before and after the training, were compared to those of caseworkers whose supervisors did not

¹ Nixon, R. (2005). *Promoting Youth Development and Independent Living Services for Youth in Foster Care*. In *Child Welfare for the 21st Century: A handbook of practices, policies and programs*. Mallonu G. and Hess, P., Eds. New York: Columbia University Press.

- attend. Changes in practice also were assessed in the interviews with training participants and the caseworkers in their units by asking respondents what changes had occurred following the training.
- Preliminary evaluation findings indicate that the training was very well received. Participants rated the web-based component positively and their ratings of the day-long training were even higher. Over half of the participants stated that including the youth's perspective was a powerful element of PAL-STEP. Many specifically noted that having a former foster youth involved in the training and sharing his/her experience was important. Others commented that the videos of youth telling their stories were important. Many also reported that the mix of interactive and other training techniques was a strength of the training, specifically mentioning the group discussions, peer feedback, handouts, and the CD containing the *Supervisors' Toolkit*.
 - The pretest/posttest indicated a significant increase in knowledge about the four core principles following the web-based portion of the training.
 - Interviews with supervisors and their caseworkers revealed that supervisors were using both formal and informal means to transfer the knowledge they had gained during the training. Some reported discussing the training and the four core principles in unit meetings. One had given her caseworkers copies of case vignettes and other information from the training manual. Others reported sharing the information with caseworkers in more informal ways. For example, one supervisor conveyed the concept of positive youth development by routinely asking caseworkers, "What does the youth want to do? What does the youth think is going on in the home? Would the youth feel safer if we take custody of him/her?"
 - Supervisors reported that barriers to formal knowledge transfer fell into two categories: Workload and a belief that caseworkers would learn better in a workshop setting with a professional trainer.
 - Preliminary analysis of case record documentation of caseworkers whose supervisors attended the training and caseworkers whose supervisors did not attend suggest that both groups' documentation reflected increased incorporation of the four core principles, with no statistically significant difference between the two groups. Supervisors and caseworkers also reported increased attention to the four core principles in day-to-day practice.
 - Case record reviews and interviews with caseworkers and supervisors reveal that many changes in practice have occurred and that those changes could be attributed, at least in part, to the PAL-STEP training. However, it also is evident that all caseworkers, even those whose supervisors did not participate in the training, are increasingly incorporating the four core principles in practice.
 - The project trainer reported seeing a real paradigm shift among participants over the course of this project. Supervisors were initially framing youth in a negative way, asking, "How can we fix them?" They are now increasingly asking instead, "How can we do a better job for them?"
 - The State Department of Protective and Family Services had begun focusing on improving services and supports for foster youth and transitioning youth when this grant was awarded. Many of those State initiatives also incorporate the four core principles. While there is evidence of a shift in the child welfare philosophy relative to youth in and transitioning from foster care, both at the system level and at the individual supervisor and caseworker level, the challenge is to

determine how much of the shift is due to this program and how much to other State-sponsored activities.

Dissemination *(adapted from information and materials provided by the grantee during the visit)*

Project staff presented at numerous national child welfare-related conferences and have published articles where they discussed the curriculum and its content. They also have distributed over 400 *Supervisory Toolkit* CDs. The toolkit, which includes the entire curriculum, PowerPoint presentation, and supporting materials, also is available on the website (www.palstep.com) in the hope that other States will use it to train child welfare professionals and others who work with youth aging out of foster care.

Finally, through another grant, project staff have revised the curriculum and presented it to foster parents and caseworkers. Both groups have responded positively to the curriculum content and the process.

Sustainability *(adapted from information and materials provided by the grantee during the visit)*

The grantee reports that this curriculum will become a part of the State's Child Protective Services (CPS) Supervisory Certification Program. Those supervisors who are not certified and who did not participate in the project will be required to attend the training as part of their requirements to achieve Supervisor Certification. Supervisors who are currently certified will be encouraged to attend the training as part of their certification renewal. The University of Houston Graduate School of Social Work and the University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work will continue to review and update course offerings in cultural competence, child welfare, and child development, and content from the PAL-STEP curriculum will be infused into appropriate courses. The CPS Training Institute, which is a collaboration between the University of Houston Graduate School of Social Work and the University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work, will continue to incorporate this material into inservice training for caseworkers.

ATTACHMENTS

- The Four Core Principles of PAL-STEP
- PAL-STEP Learning Objectives
- PAL-STEP Presentations and Publications

The Four Core Principles of PAL-STEP

Positive Youth Development: Positive Youth Development is a deliberate process by which youth are engaged in supportive relationships which enable them to develop the living skills and knowledge to maintain their emotional health needed to function on their own. Positive youth development requires not only a supportive environment, but also opportunities for leadership and the development of life skills. Foster youth who approach independence need a support system, formed deliberately and intentionally, based upon a thorough assessment of the adolescent, an assessment that is grounded in developmental theory and an understanding of the challenges of achieving self-sufficiency. A core component of positive youth development and an appreciation of adolescent development indicate youth need to be involved in decision making for their futures. Engaging youth as planners for their own lives is important because it embraces their ability to make decisions and affirms their capacity for self-sufficiency.

Collaboration: Collaboration helps to ensure that a full array of services is available to the youth during and after their transition from foster care. Child welfare supervisors need to acknowledge youth, at least in the short-term, move from *dependent* to *interdependent* living rather than to *independent* living. An important aspect of living interdependently is the assistance needed from collaborators who are committed to the functioning, well-being and needs of youth, and may include foster parents, community agencies and persons with whom the youth feels connected. Establishing collaborative relationships early, while the youth is still in care, can help make the transition more successful since supports will already be in place.

Cultural Responsiveness: Attention to cultural issues permeates all areas of this project to ensure that youth feel protected in their environments. Understanding and respecting culture is essential to developing a training curriculum so youth are provided culturally and developmentally appropriate interventions and support systems to promote their independence. Beyond the ethnic cultures, this project also explored other culturally relevant issues that impact the successful transition to independent living. They viewed adolescence as a culture and included curriculum content on gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered youth as well.

Permanent Connections: Youth need permanent connections, whether formal or informal, to ground them in a community and to provide them with support. Foster youth often lack both an emotional and a physical place to return to in times of need. It is important to assist youth who may age out of care and those who have already exited care, to establish such connections. Supervisors can help caseworkers talk with foster parents and caregivers prior to the youth exiting care to determine whether they are willing to be available to the youth. Other possible connections the youth may have should also be explored, including family members, friends, and community agencies that may serve as a resource. The task of finding, establishing, and in some cases mending, connections for youth in care and after they have left care is paramount to their successful transition to adulthood.

PREPARATION FOR ADULT LIVING-SUPERVISOR TRAINING AND EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM (PAL-STEP)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Participants will become familiar with outcomes for youth transitioning from foster care
2. Participants will develop an awareness of the need for integrating the Positive Youth Development framework in practice with youth.
3. Participants will be able to define and conceptualize the Positive Youth Development framework in service delivery to youth.
4. Participants will be able to identify 7 core youth needs for successful transition to adulthood.
5. Participants will create strategies for addressing the 7 core youth needs.
6. Through discussion and activities, participants will identify specific tasks for supervision within a Positive Youth Development framework.
7. Participants will gain an understanding of the importance of collaboration and recognize the supervisor's and caseworker's role in facilitating this process.
8. Participants will learn how to recognize, identify, and create opportunities for collaborative delivery of services to youth.
9. Participants will develop self-awareness in the delivery of culturally competent services.
10. Participants will create specific questions to be utilized by caseworkers to elicit information regarding a youth's culture.
11. Participants will identify and list the skills that accompany the supervisor role of Diversity Manager.
12. Participants will develop a working definition of permanency and gain insight into the meaning of permanency to youth.
13. Participants will create specific steps of permanency action in casework practice.
14. Participants will be able to identify the elements of a competent youth caseworker.

PAL-STEP

Preparation for Adult Living – Supervisory Training and Empowerment

Presentations and Publications

PRESENTATIONS	
Date	Title
May 2008	<i>Youth Aging Out of Foster Care – Training to Empower Work with Youth.</i> National Pathways to Adulthood Conference, Pittsburgh, PA. Presenters: Scannapieco, Connell-Carrick & Steinberg.
May 2008	International Social Science Conference – <i>Youth Aging Out of Foster Care – Training to Empower Work with Youth.</i> Presenter: Scannapieco.
May 2007	Southwest Title IV-E Roundtable – Presented PAL-STEP Training Curriculum overview to over 20 Universities. Presenter: Scannapieco.
September 2007	<i>Leaving Foster Care: How Child Welfare Workers Can Make a Difference.</i> 18 th Annual Family Preservation Conference, San Antonio, TX. Presenter: Connell-Carrick.
September 2007	<i>Youth in Transition: The Role of Caseworkers in Preparing Youth for Adult Living.</i> 20 th Annual National Independent Living Conference. Presenters: Scannapieco, Connell-Carrick & Painter.
March 2007	<i>Working with Youth in the Foster Care System.</i> Presentation at University of Houston Graduate School of Social Work Child Welfare Education Project Annual Meeting. Presenter: Connell-Carrick.
September 2006	<i>Working with Families Who have Adolescents Transitioning to Adulthood: Four Principles to Guide Your Practice.</i> 17 th Annual Family Preservation Conference. San Antonio, TX. Presenters: Scannapieco & Connell-Carrick.
June 2006	<i>Aging Out.</i> 10 th Annual Title IV-E Federal Region VI Roundtable, New Braunfels, TX. Presenters: Connell-Carrick & Painter.
May 2006	<i>Leaving Foster Care: What is Needed to Age Out Prepared for the Real World from the Perspective of Foster Care Youth and Parents.</i> Pathways to Adulthood Independent Living Conference. Portland, OR. Presenters: Connell-Carrick, Scannapieco & Painter.
February 2006	<i>Training Child Welfare Supervisors on Independent Living Skills for Foster Youth.</i> Research Seminar at the University of Houston Graduate School of Social Work. Presenter: Connell-Carrick.

PUBLICATIONS
Scannapieco, Connell-Carrick & Painter, <i>In Their Own Words: Challenges Facing Youth Aging out of Foster Care</i> in 2007 in <u>Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal</u> 24, (5), 423-425.
Scannapieco, Connell-Carrick & Steinberg (in press). <i>The Texas Training Project – Preparation for Adult Living Supervisory Training and Empowerment Program (PAL-STEP)</i> in <u>NSTDA Training and Development in Human Services</u> .