



**SHASTA COUNTY
INDEPENDENT
LIVING PROGRAM**

**PROGRAM BULLETIN
March 2009**

Experiential Group: Our next experiential group will focus on transitioning out of foster care. It's almost graduation time and many youth will be moving out or leaving for college. The transitioning class will cover housing, college, boundaries with friends and family, money issues, roommate issues, how to manage your free time and more. The class will take place at Howell Hall in the Downtown Mall on March 26th from 4-6:00pm. **Please make sure that youth are picked up on time.**

Foster Youth Garden: It is great to have continued support for the Foster Youth Garden. Last month we asked for donations for this year's garden. Victor Youth Services volunteered to buy the seeds for the garden and start them at their greenhouse. Gretchen, who works for Victor Youth Services, and some of their youth, have graciously offered to plant and tend to the seedlings until they are ready to be transplanted. Scott donated some of the supplies and the labor to build the fence around the garden and he also donated the labor and supplies to build a sturdy greenhouse for us. We may possibly have a donation of some fruit trees for the garden coming from the Rotary. We are extremely grateful to everyone for their support in helping the garden to continue. With the economy continuing to struggle our youth will need the vegetables even more this year. We are planning on planting the garden on April 24th. We will have a BBQ that afternoon for all youth who attend and help plant this season's crop. Succession planting will continue after our initial crops are planted. Save the date and come out and plant some vegetables.

ILP Pizza Night: ILP Pizza Night will be cancelled for this month due to a scheduling conflict with Round Table Pizza for the use of their room. For some reason the room is being heavily booked this month. We will resume ILP Pizza Night next month.

Foster Youth Thoughts: At our last ILP group the foster youth discussed learning to set boundaries with their biological family when they age out. In working with youth, through ILP, we have found that 80%-90% will seek a relationship with at least one of their biological parents and some siblings after emancipating from foster care. I was impressed with the youth's insight on the subject and wanted to share some of their broad comments.

- While many of the youth wanted a relationship they did not want their biological family to live with them; if they had their own apartment. When asked what they would do if a biological parent had no where else to go and begged to stay with them; most youth said they would stand firm and offer to help their parent get to the shelter but that they would not let them stay in their apartment.
- Most of the youth said they would not feel comfortable allowing a biological parent to watch their own child, if they had children.

Over the last few years, ILP staff has watched emancipated foster youth, who felt obligated to biological parents or siblings, allow family members to move in only to end up getting evicted due to the bio-families behavior, criminal background, or breaking HUD or property manager rules. It helps youth to start the discussion about their interaction with biological family members before they emancipate.

Financial Aid: The California Chaffee Grant Program gives up to \$5000 annually of free money to ILP youth and former ILP youth to use for college courses or vocational school training. Talk to an ILP worker for more info or go to <http://www.chafee.csac.ca.gov/default.asp> ILP caseworkers are available to assist youth with scholarship applications, FAFSA forms and accessing Chaffee Grants. If you are a foster youth who is interested in attending Shasta College, next year, talk to your ILP caseworker or Barbara S. at 242-7702. Barbara is the Foster Youth Liaison for Shasta College.

ILP Services: Teens 16 and up that are in placement are entitled to ILP services. If you know of a youth that has not been referred aged sixteen or up, who lives in a foster home or group home please contact ILP. ILP serves teens placed from other counties as well as Shasta County teens. In order for ILP to serve foster care youth, ILP requires a current Transitional Independent Living Plan completed by the youth with his or her county social worker or probation officer. The TILP is the responsibility of the county social worker or probation officer and should be completed every 6 months, starting at age 15.5. Former foster youth aged 16 to 21, who were in placement at 16 or older, can call Shasta County ILP for support in the areas of employment, housing, connecting with community resources and more. Contact ILP to determine eligibility.

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