



St. Louis Aging Out Initiative

What is the St. Louis Aging Out Initiative?

A two pronged approach to bring about both system change as well as affect change at the individual level:

SYSTEMIC

Systemic change requires involvement of multiple partners at the state and local levels. The Aging Out Steering Committee comprised of community and state partners, meets monthly to examine critical issues facing youth and develop plans for change.

PROGRAMMATIC

The second part of this project is an innovative program unlike any other in the area that delivers direct service to youth through age 25 regardless of their residence or continued placement in Children's Division custody. The program uses Peer Advisors and the "Nothing About Us Without Us" motto to develop leadership and empower youth.

Who Developed the St. Louis Aging Out Initiative?

- *Commerce Bank (Norman J. Stupp Foundation)*
- *Daughters of Charity Health Care Foundation*
- *Deaconess Foundation*
- *Express Scripts Foundation*
- *Incarnate Word Foundation*
- *Lutheran Foundation*
- *Missouri Foundation for Health*
- *St. Louis Mental Health Board*
- *Trio Foundation*

Structure

ROLE OF FUNDERS

- Commissioned original focus group
- Chose lead agency
- Created governance structure and partnership with Epworth
- Submitted joint application to Robert Wood Johnson Foundation with Epworth

ROLE OF EPWORTH

- Designed and implemented program
- Hired and trained Peer Advisors (former foster youth)
- Recruit participants
- Monitor progress toward established outcomes

Program

DESIGN

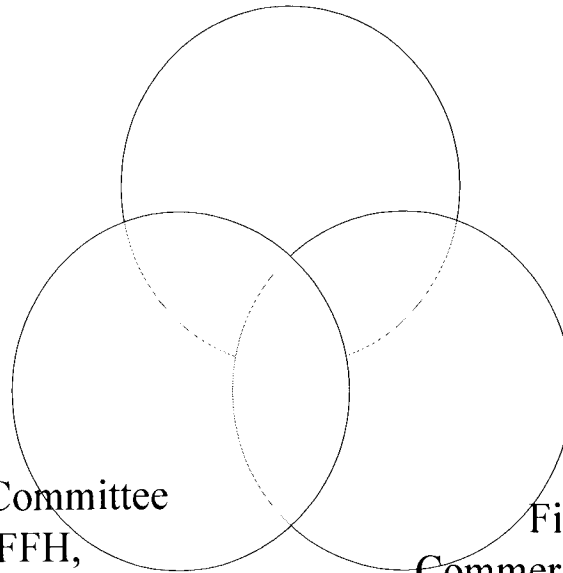
- “Nothing About Us Without Us”
- Monthly individual meetings
 - Monthly support meetings (G2G’s)
 - “Aging Out Advisory Board
 - Peer Advisors
 - Staff support at court and FST meetings
 - Youth Driven Training for Staff and Foster Parents
 - 24 Hour Resource Helpline

OUTCOMES

- 60% of participants will achieve a HSD or GED
- 85% of youth will demonstrate at least three out of five self-advocacy behaviors:
 - Speaking in court on their own behalf
 - Leading their Family Support Team meetings
 - Securing a job
 - Identifying and navigating health providers
 - Opening a bank account
- 100% of participants will receive exit binders with social security card, birth certificate, family health history, and immunization record.

Aging Out Project Governance

Oversight Committee
Incarnate Word, Lutheran, Trio



Communications/Advocacy Committee
Daughters of Charity, MFFH,
Mental Health Board

Fiscal Review Committee
Commerce, Deaconess, Express Scripts

Where are we now?

Systemic

- The Governor and DSS proposed Medicaid extension in Dec. 2006 and it passed in May 2007.
- Now proposing the Governor appoint a blue-ribbon task force to develop a three year agenda for youth aging out of foster care.

Programmatic

- 44 youth enrolled
- Aging Out Youth Board Created
- First youth prizes given for improved academic performance
- More than 30 agencies trained in the St. Louis Aging Out Initiative.

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- Finalist for a matching grant submitted to the Robert Wood Johnson

Foundation

- Funders and Agency meet quarterly to review progress
- Funding committees meet as needed

Community Members

- Residential Placement Providers
- Court Appointed Special Advocates
- Children's Division
- Metropolitan St. Louis area School Homeless Coordinators
- Medical Community Members
- Legal and Advocacy Services
- Local Colleges
- Employment Assistance Programs
- Gang Specialists
- Area Homeless Shelters



How Can You Be Involved?

- Contact Epworth to receive a presentation at your agency
- Refer youth to the St. Louis Aging Out Initiative
- Refer youth leaders who have aged out of foster care for Peer Advisor positions
- Contact Epworth to help identify key issues and partner with legislative initiatives

For additional information or to find out how
you can get involved, please contact:

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24-Hour Resource Helpline
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