

Connecting *YOUth* News

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A Charrette uses national and local experts, combined with community expertise to develop solutions & priorities.

Did YOU know?? Our Youth Advocates surveyed over 200 youth. Of those who said they had ever been homeless, 26 said they were able to stay with a friend or family, 11 had to sleep outside and 10 went to a shelter.



SUCCESS!!!

Dear Colleagues and Partners,

The Charrette meeting on October 30th was a huge success!! This meeting format provided a wonderful opportunity for learning, providing feedback, developing creative ideas, and networking with youth, staff, and stakeholders from around the state.

We are in the midst of processing the notes from the meeting. In the next month we will follow up with a report, but in the meantime please see the brief snapshot below and follow the link on page 2 to watch the short film that highlights participant responses to the Charrette -- captured at our video booth.

Sincerely,



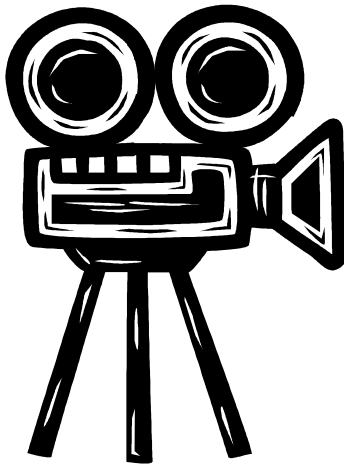
Jessica Trombetta, LCSW

NJ-DCF-Director of Adolescent Services

Snapshot of the Charrette Process:

- 116 unique community attendees participated in the Charrette
 - 75 Participated in the Housing Option fishbowl
 - 48 Participated in the Education and Training fishbowl
 - 45 Participated in the Permanency fishbowl
 - 39 Participated in the Specific Populations fishbowl
- 23 experts shared their experience, research and best practices
- 26 staff represented YARH Steering Committee membership
- More than 43 pages of notes
- **55 recommendations to improve policy, practice and results for youth in the child welfare system – Coming Soon!**

[Click here to watch a short video from the Charrette Video Booth!](#)



Comments or questions?

Get in touch with us!

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Connecting Youth Project Staff

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Lessons Learned at the Annual YARH Grantee Meetings:

Recently, project staff attended the annual YARH grantee meetings hosted by the Children's Bureau. All 18 grantees were given an opportunity to discuss successes and challenges within the planning process, allowing Connecting YOUth staff to learn a lot of great information that will continue to inform this process. Some of our favorite resources are:

- **Youth Demonstration Development Project (YDD)**- a review of the current field of research on youth development and successful transition to adulthood. <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/acf-youth-demonstration-development-project>
- **Permanency Innovations Initiative (PII) Project Resources**- information about the work to develop evidence. <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resource/pii-project-resources>
- **Joint FYSB/CB Information Memorandum (IM)** providing guidance on serving youth who run away from foster care. <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resource/fysb-im1401>

A Note from our Youth Advocate Shaquanna:

As adolescents, you are constantly seen as teens just trying to find their place in this big world, but trust me it is hard to do it alone. I have tried to fit into this world alone, and do it all alone, just because I did not want to ask for help at times. It is okay to ask for help. It does not mean you are corny, or there's something wrong with you. You just need someone to show you the way. Sometimes we need that extra push, or someone to pull things out of our way so that we can see clearly. When I have asked for help and advice on certain things, support came along with it. For the first time, I actually did not feel so alone. Having support strengthens your skills, abilities, and makes you strive even harder for your goals. It feels good to know that someone is there to push, and cheer you on to the finish line. Based on my experience, support systems are efficient. However, it is truly up to you to use the support that you helped build.

What's Around the Corner...

- Currently, Child Trends is analyzing data about youth from across multiple systems.
- Winter 2014: Youth Advocates will hold a series of focus groups to hear the perspectives of youth currently in care, as well as those who have recently aged out.
- Winter 2014: Project Staff will be reaching out to key stakeholders across the state to schedule focus groups as a follow up to the Charrette that was hosted on October 30th.

STAY TUNED!!!!