

POLICY WEBINAR | FEBRUARY 2022

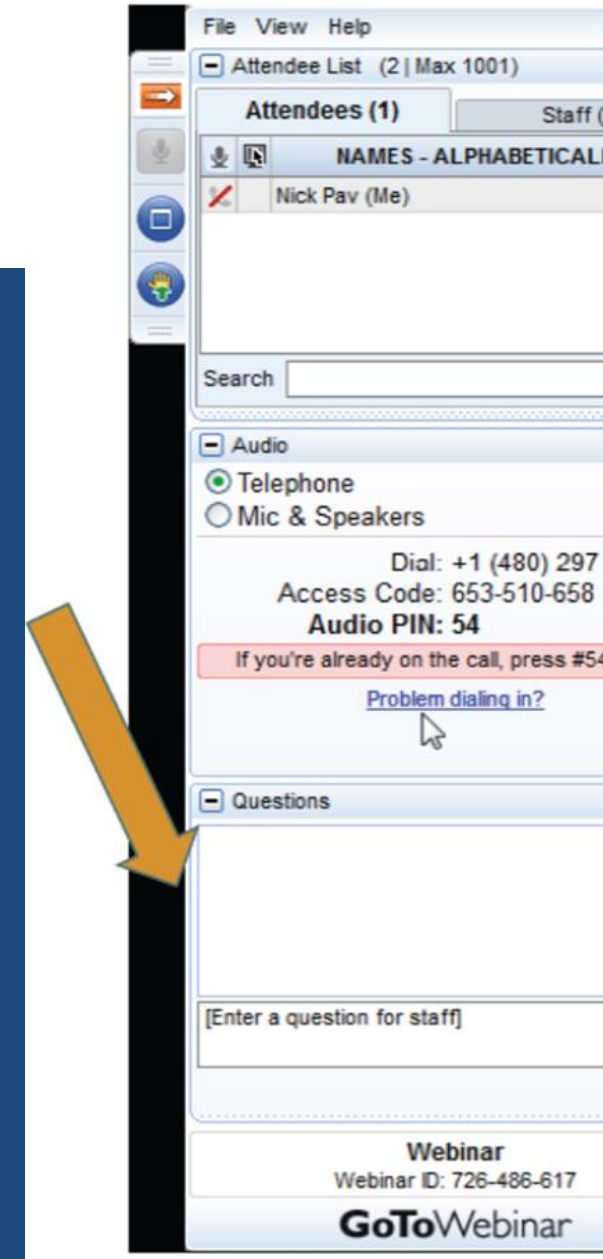
# Improving Outcomes for Expectant and Parenting Youth In Foster Care

ALLIANCE  
*for* CHILDREN'S  
RIGHTS



# LOGISTICS

- Webinar resources, including recording and supplemental materials, will be posted at <https://allianceforchildrensrights.org/resources/>
- All attendees are muted during webinar.
- Please submit questions using the “Questions” function on your GotoWebinar dashboard.



# AGENDA

- Expectant and Parenting Youth (EPY) Conferences
- Benefits Available to EPY in Foster Care
- Recommendations to Support Outcomes in EPY

**PRESENTERS**

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*Barbara Facher, MSW, Social Worker*

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*Shiré Wortham, MSW, Social Worker*

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*Vincent D'Averso, Mentor Program  
Director*



# EXPECTANT AND PARENTING YOUTH CONFERENCES



# PREGNANT AND PARENTING TEEN CONFERENCE MODEL

In 2004, the Alliance participated in a workgroup that analyzed how to better address the needs of pregnant and parenting teens in foster care, resulting in the Los Angeles Pregnant and Parenting Teen (PPT) conference model, now called Expectant and Parenting Youth (EPY) Conferences.

Los Angeles EPY conferences:

- are **completely independent of other child welfare decision-making** and conferencing
- are **voluntary and puts the youth at the center** and in the driver's seat throughout the process
- **require involvement of an expert in the issues and challenges of teen parenting**, with a deep knowledge of current available community resources



# SUPPORTING LINDA

# EPY CONFERENCES

- Youth in foster care expecting or parenting a baby are entitled to an Expectant and Parenting Youth (EPY) Conference.
- An EPY Conference is **voluntary** and utilizes a 2-Generation approach, designed to identify and discuss many issues related to pregnancy and parenting, including: child care, items needed for the baby, home visitation services, continuing education, funding, reproductive health, etc.
- **Goal:** To set the youth up for independence and parenting success, so that their children will never enter the child protection system.





# POTENTIAL EPY CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

## DCFS/Community Supports:

- Educational Consultant
- Independent Living Program (ILP) Coordinator
- Public Health Nurse (PHN)
- Wraparound
- Department of Mental Health
- Therapist

## Family Support Systems:

- Baby's other parent
- Youth Father/Mother
- Family members
- Non-related extended family members
- Caregiver/Legal Guardian
- Significant friend (maternal and paternal)

# EPY CONFERENCE ISSUES

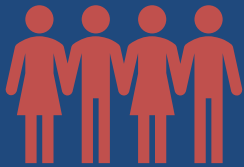
- Prenatal Care/Reproductive Health
- Home Visitation Programs
- Placement instability
- Education
- Subsidized child care to enable youth to remain in school
- Child Care
- Parenting Classes
- Early Intervention for babies
- Counseling
- Legal Issues: Family Law, tickets, immigration etc.
- Public Benefits
- Transition Issues and Services

# NOTES AND PLANS FOR EPY

Family Group Decision Making  
Meeting

Meeting Purpose: "The purpose of this meeting was **to identify and discuss youth's needs regarding early child rearing, childcare, education and her baby's needs.** Additionally, the purpose of the meeting was **to provide support and services to promote child safety.**"

# IMPROVING EPY CONFERENCE OUTCOMES



Let the youth know  
the EPY conference is  
**voluntary**



Tailor communication  
methods specific to  
the youth



Build collaboration  
between community  
organizations and  
DCFS



# RECOMMENDED PURCHASES FOR BABY

- Cribs, rocking chairs, changing tables or other infant related furniture.
- Car seats, strollers, or infant carriers.
- Clothes for the infant or maternity clothes for the pregnant minor/NMD.
- Nursing bras, breast pumps, formula or other infant feeding necessities.
- Diapers, pacifiers, bibs, and other miscellaneous infant items.



# FATHERS & EPY CONFERENCES

- Fathers under DCFS supervision can also benefit from an EPY Conference.
- Fathers can extend their existing support services to their children.
- Parenting fathers will be encouraged to attend school, complete homework and participate in appropriate activities separate from parenting to maintain balance and stability in their lives.



## **BENEFITS: SUPPORTS AVAILABLE TO YOUTH**

# FOOD ASSISTANCE

## WIC:

a nutrition program which provides, food, formula, nutrition and breast-feeding education to pregnant women and their children up to five years old.

## Cal-Fresh:

the former food stamp program includes an EBT card that can be used at grocery stores, farmer's markets and other food outlets.



# MEDI-CAL

- ✓ Foster youth are eligible for extended Medi-Cal up to age 26 (regardless of their income) under California's implementation of the Affordable Care Act.
- ✓ Youth must be in foster care at age of 18.
- ✓ Youth should automatically be enrolled and stay enrolled.
- ✓ Pays for medical, dental and mental health care.

# MEDI-CAL ELIGIBILITY

- ✓ Ensure that foster youth have the correct type of Medi-Cal, and that it is active.
- ✓ Newborns are covered for the month of their birth and the following month under their mother's Medi-Cal.
- ✓ Maternal And Child Health Access – after age 26  
Agency provides advocacy and health insurance for low-income people in Los Angeles County, including children, families, pregnant and parenting women, who live in the downtown area of Los Angeles and services for non-profit organizations in Los Angeles County.

*The Alliance for Children's Rights can help current and former foster youth in Los Angeles County with Medi-Cal issues.*

# INFANT SUPPLEMENT

- Infant supplement payments are paid to **assist with the care and supervision of a non-dependent infant/child.**
- **Payment is given directly to a NMD parent in an eligible placement.**

Placement Type	Rate
FFH/FFA/THP-NMD/WFFH/RFA & SILP	\$900
STRTP	\$1,329

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## Whole Family Foster Home

- *Parenting Support Plan*
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# EXPECTANT PARENT PAYMENT



- Cash benefit for pregnant minors and nonminor dependents (NMDs) in foster care totaling **\$2,700**.
- Payments will be made directly to the pregnant youth **three months prior to their expected due date** to meet specialized needs of the youth and allow them to prepare for their child(ren).
- Payment will be the same regardless of placement type.



# HOME VISITING PROGRAMS

Home visiting programs can help parents learn about their child's growth, health, and brain development, and connect young families to other helpful resources.

Having a healthy baby

Prenatal care

Nutrition

Avoiding drugs

Understanding what to expect during labor and delivery

Some help with breast feeding

Teaching the young parents, the importance of bonding with their baby and how to do it.

Understanding child development

Non-violent discipline

Birth control

# HOME VISITING PROGRAMS

## [Nurse-Family Partnership Program \(NFP\)](#)

- Free, voluntary program that partners first-time moms with nurses who provide intensive home visitation services. Referrals to the NFP must be submitted by the 28<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy.

## [Partnerships for Families \(PFF\)](#)

- Free, voluntary program offered to pregnant women and families with children under 12 months of age who have experienced challenges related to domestic violence, mental health, or substance abuse.

## [California NFP Programs](#)

## [LA County Home Visiting Programs](#)

# CHILDCARE ASSISTANCE

## Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children and Parenting Foster Youth

Created in 2017, the Bridge Program helps foster families and parenting foster youth access high-quality childcare for foster children by providing:

- **emergency, time-limited vouchers** to help pay for childcare for up to 6 months, with an extension to 12 months, as needed;
  - **childcare navigation support**, with navigators helping to immediately access childcare and then working continuously to transition or stabilize the children in long-term, high-quality childcare; and
  - **training for the childcare workforce in trauma-responsive best practices** to better meet the unique needs of abused and neglected children.
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- In certain situations, a non-licensed provider can be approved.

# CHILDCARE ASSISTANCE

- CalWORKs eligible youth are entitled to free childcare
- Alternative Payment Assistance Programs
- Head Start
- Connect with the local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency



# PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS

# COLLABORATION BETWEEN DCFS, COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS & YOUTH

- **Acknowledge birth will create new challenges for mother and father that must be addressed.**
- Encourage youth to invite anyone in their support system to participate in EPY conferences.
- Support mother, father and baby with **all available resources**:
  - Help create larger support system for youth – ensuring youth has linkages to all available services.
- Provide opportunities for mother and father to actively participate in the development of plans.
  - Tailor communication methods specific to the youth.
- Use culturally inclusive, trauma informed and evidenced based practices in all aspects of providing education and training surrounding pregnancy prevention, sexual health, and other intervention strategies.



# RESOURCES

- [Rights of Pregnant and Parenting Foster Youth in California: A Fact Sheet Prepared by the Youth Law Center](#)
- [California's Plan for the Prevention of Unintended Pregnancy for Youth and NMDs in Foster Care \(ACL18-61\)](#)
- [Resources for Case Management Workers for Documenting, Protecting and Sharing Reproductive and Sexual Health Information for Youth and NMDs in Foster Care \(ACIN I-06-20\)](#)
- [Parent Resources](#) – Los Angeles County DCFS
- [Project Fatherhood](#)
- [First Five California](#)
- [Early Head Start](#)
- [Nurse Family Partnership](#)
- [Healthy Families America](#)
- [Parents as Teachers](#)

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**THANK**  
**YOU**



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