



Spring 2010

# 2010 Teen Conference!

The Youth Advisory Board (YAB) is pleased to announce that the 2010 New Hampshire Teen Conference has been scheduled for August 12th, at the New Hampshire Technical Institute in Concord. This year's conference theme is Mapping Our Future P.A.Y.S. (Preparing ALL Youth for Successes). Youth Advisory Board members are currently working with DCYF staff to plan activities for the conference, and to finalize plans for youth workshops. If you are not already attending YAB meetings, please come and participate in this very important planning process.

The next YAB meeting is scheduled for May 19th.



*CU4 Reality Fair at the 2009 Teen Conference*

**Save the Date**  
**2010 Teen Conference**  
**August 12, 2010**  
**NH Technical Institute**  
**Concord, NH**

## What is the Best Thing and the Worst Thing About Being A Child Protective Services Worker (CPSW)?

by

*Orianna Filiault, CPSW, Rochester DO*

First, to understand what the job of a CPSW is, it is important to know our Mission: "As Child Protection workers for the Division for Children, Youth and Families we are dedicated to assisting families in the protection, development, permanency, and well-being of their children and the communities in which they live. We are committed to the support of families to ensure the protection of children and the community in which they live. To accomplish this we will provide leadership and develop community collaboration in the creation of public policies and programs which strengthen and assist families. We are dedicated to providing services in the least intrusive manner possible while respecting the dignity of the families we serve."

Now, in day-to-day terms, this means that CPSWs are responsible for building relationships with children and their families to ensure that children are safe and to prevent further abuse/neglect from occurring. The CPSW needs to evaluate the risks if the child remains in the home while making reasonable efforts to keep a child in their home. Sometimes the child can remain in

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the home by having the family create a safety plan that will resolve the abusive/neglectful situation. If the risk is too great and/or the safety plan doesn't work, than the CPSW locates an appropriate placement that will meet the needs of child. This may be with a relative or in a foster or group home. After placement, the CPSW and the family develop a case plan that indicates the supports, resources and services needed in order to make it safe for the child to return home. In the event that the child is unable to safely return home, the CPSW works to achieve permanency for the child through adoption, guardianship with a relative or another permanent planned living arrangement. Once it is determined that a child needs to be placed, the CPSW facilitates placement, coordinates visits with the family and sometimes transports children to appointments. The CPSW also works with community agencies (such as law enforcement, school and medical personnel) in order to provide services for the families and to help resolve the abusive/neglectful situation in the home. The CPSW documents everything. That being said, I interviewed several CPSWs and here's what they said about what is best and worst about being a CPSW:

**The best part:**

- "The best part is when you get to see children smile."
- "When parents and children are able to be successful and learn new things from us."
- "To have the ability to impact change with families and the system."
- "Seeing children happy."
- "The people you work with and their dedication and compassion."
- "The families - to meet the families."
- "Building the relationships we have with our youth."
- "Being able to see positive change in people."
- "Making a difference."

**The worst part:**

- "The worst part is when you have to explain to a child why the child can't see mom or dad."
- "When children are removed from their families."
- "Watching children suffer emotionally - the emotional pain they go through is difficult."
- "When it gets too busy to do everything you need to do."
- "Not being able to do as much as you want to."
- "Sometimes not being able to fix the terrible things the children have gone through because I can't undo the past."

## New Hampshire Teen Voices

### Goal of Newsletter

This newsletter has been created in an effort to spread awareness of **New Hampshire Teen Voices**, and its monthly meeting of the Youth Advisory Board, or YAB. As a result of YAB efforts, significant outcomes have been achieved and participating youth have found the process both rewarding and empowering.

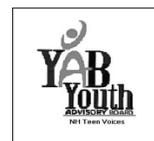
By publishing a quarterly newsletter focusing on YAB activities, it is the hope of both youth and staff that news of upcoming events and initiatives will generate even more interest and participation from staff, providers, and youth alike.

### Editor

**Patrick R. Parkinson, CPSW, Nashua DO**

## New Hampshire Teen Voices DCYF/DJJS Youth Advisory Board

We are a group of diversified youth from across the State of New Hampshire who are between the ages of 14-21. We encompass both the child protection system as well as the juvenile parole and probation system. We all come from different situations and have spent different amounts of time in care. We are committed to making positive and effective change in the State of New Hampshire.



**nhteenvoices.com**

**Our next meeting is: Wednesday, May 19th,  
4:00 pm to 6:30 pm at Dolloff Building, Governor  
Hugh Gallen State Office Park, Concord.**



### Adolescent Program

**NH Department of Health and Human Services  
Division for Children, Youth and Families**

[www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/DCYF/adolescentprogram.htm](http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/DCYF/adolescentprogram.htm)  
603-271-4706 or 1-800-852-3345 x 4706 (toll free in-state)  
7-1-1 (NH Relay)

### Department's Mission Statement

*To join communities and families in providing opportunities for  
citizens to achieve health and independence*

**Nicholas A. Toumpas, Commissioner**



# Rising Stars

by  
Angela Nuzzi, College Counselor  
The NHHEAF Network Organizations



Hi Everyone!

Can you believe Spring is finally here! It seemed like such a long winter but the STAR program kept busy by creating great programming to help youth-in-care who are getting ready to make the transition from high school to college. The STAR staff was on the road all over the state working with the local District Offices to host File-A-FAFSA Nights. The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is a form that students can fill out to help see if they qualify for FREE money from the Federal Government to help pay for college. Students who are going to professional schools (like beauty or cosmetology schools), 2-year colleges (like NHTI or community colleges) or 4-year colleges (like Keene or Plymouth) can all fill out this free form. The STAR staff helped students so they could fill out the form correctly and then helped them fill out some college and scholarship applications. All the students who came were given duffle bags and flashlight key chains and were put into a raffle for TWO \$500 File-A-FAFSA Night Scholarships! So congratulations go out to our TWO scholarship winners, Catherine B. and Jordan S.!

The STAR Program is also working to coordinate a new program for this summer called "College Bootcamp". This program will help students who are planning on starting college this September, as well as current college students; navigate the world of financial aid. We'll also work on 'survival' techniques to help them be successful! Keep checking out our STAR web page at [www.NHHEAF.org/STAR.asp](http://www.NHHEAF.org/STAR.asp) to check the calendar for District Office locations, dates and times.

It is with great excitement I share that the STAR program will have a new face coordinating the programs. I am happy to announce that Rich Neilsen took over the STAR program, effective April 1<sup>st</sup>. Please help me in welcoming Rich to the STAR Program. Look for his article about the STAR Blog on page 5 of this newsletter and more from him in the future!

## Growing A Future Out Of Dust

In time in which I began to sprout  
I turned my life to what I know-  
Thriving off the plain same decay  
Of which my recent roots have grown-  
Yet I continue to cut back any force growth I seem to  
want to show - for light I seem to store inside doesn't  
want to know - so every day will pass and I'll remain the  
same - thus throw a handful seed into the barren ground  
in which they call my name - hope will take then soon will  
shoot a better life for me - to brighter days to bigger  
things my future soon will see

- Peter L., age 20

## Ask the State



*“What can you do if you feel that your worker is not helping you at all?”*

Have you tried sitting down with your worker and letting him or her know exactly how you feel? If you do so, remember to use those “I Statements” that you are familiar with. For example, tell the worker that “I feel this way when you do or don’t do this.” Then tell your worker what you would like to have happen. The goal of this meeting is for each of you to get a better understanding of where the other one is coming from. Once this is established, you can begin to work towards a resolution. If you are not comfortable having this conversation alone, you can ask your worker if someone else also involved in the case (such as your therapist, CASA, etc.) can sit in on the meeting. Another approach would be to put your thoughts down in writing and give them to the worker.

If you continue to feel that you are not getting anywhere, you can ask for a meeting with the worker’s supervisor and let the supervisor know how you feel, again using the “I Statement” approach.

## Current Initiatives

YAB members, in conjunction with Adolescent Program staff, continue to pursue initiatives designed to help youth in care. Here is a look at new developments.

### Education and Career Development

The Education and Career Development group continues to focus on a long term project designed to help youth in care, i.e., the YAB Resource Guide. The process in developing this handbook is extensive because it involves a review of similar guides that have been created throughout the United States. Currently, members of this group are reviewing these guides and trying to combine various pieces to create a handbook that best fits the needs of youth in care in New Hampshire. The goal in creating a handbook is to have a tool that would advise youth of their rights while in placement, such as the right to contact their CPSW to ask questions about their case.

### Federal and State

This group has developed a survey that will be used to gather opinions from youth in care on the questions asked by DCYF during its site reviews of residential facilities. The main question of the survey is: “Are DCYF site reviewers asking the right questions of staff at residential facilities when these facilities/group homes are reviewed for compliance?” DCYF conducts reviews of all residential programs to make sure youth living there are being properly cared for and provided with what they need. This survey will provide DCYF with information directly from youth at these facilities that the Division can use to make sure a youth’s experience in care is as positive as possible.



# Star Blog

by

Rich Neilsen, College Counselor  
The NHHEAF Network Organizations



As many of you know, the Center for College Planning's STAR Program has launched an interactive Blog that features two youth-in-care writers who have been blogging all year about their college search and application process. These blogs have offered students and families an inside look at what a youth-in-care experiences during the college process. You can read their blogs every week at [www.joecollegeblog.com](http://www.joecollegeblog.com).

Since the bloggers have been blogging for four months now, I thought I would take some time to ask one of them to share what this experience has been like. I chose to interview Krystal, who is currently a senior in high school and has just been through the college application process and is now hearing back from colleges with her first few acceptance letters!

Krystal shared this about her experience, "It has been nice to be able to use social networking tools to share my story with others and receive feedback. I enjoyed sharing my college experiences." She also mentioned, "Blogging has helped me a lot in the college process. Writing my thoughts down made me think more about it. Also, reading other bloggers posts gave me ideas and inspiration for my own college process."



Krystal also commented on the additional skills she has improved upon while writing her blog. "I've practiced my writing skills, reading skills, and communicating skills. Sometimes I have written about things that I hadn't completed in the college process yet. When I wrote about it first, it made it easier to do later. After seeing it on paper it seemed easier and made it all planned out."

Krystal hopes she isn't the only one benefiting from her blogs. "I hope readers and especially other youth-in-care gather inspiration from my blogs. I hope it relieves their stress and inspires them to get going with their own college process!"

You can read both Krystal and Meryssa's blogs at [www.joecollegeblog.com](http://www.joecollegeblog.com) every week. Click on the link on the left entitled "Rising STARS" for past posts. You can also have their blogs sent to your email by subscribing to the

## NH Teen Voices Newsletter

### Do you have

- a suggestion for a newsletter article?
- an article you'd like to submit?
- a question for the "Ask the State" column?
- poetry that you wrote and would like to submit?

### Then

email it to Patrick Parkinson, CPSW (NH Teen Voices' editor). He'd like to hear from you and what you'd like to see included in the newsletter.

[pparkins@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:pparkins@dhhs.state.nh.us)



# Adolescent Worker Contact Information

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**Conway** - Nancy Moore 447-3841 x 339

**Keene** - Jackie Waldvogel 357-3510 x 783

**Laconia** - Karen Cohn 524-4485 x357

**Littleton** - Traci Smiley (interim) 444-6786 x 337

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**Portsmouth** - Shawn Blakey 433-8324

**Rochester** - Kathleen George 332-9120 x 145

**Salem** - Rosy Gammad 893-9763 x357

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