

## Glossary of Terms

**Adjudicatory Hearing:** A court proceeding held to determine whether the allegations of a petition are supported by legally admissible evidence and whether the court has jurisdiction of the child.

**Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997:** Federal legislation that represents a bipartisan effort to effect change in the out-of-home care system. It attempts to refocus attention on child safety, to reduce overly long stays in out-of-home care by moving children promptly into permanent families, and to facilitate the adoption of waiting children.

**Advocacy:** The act of supporting, recommending, and/or speaking on behalf of a child/youth, in order to promote the individual's positive development. It involves championing the rights of individuals or communities through direct intervention or through empowerment.

**Aftercare:** Within the context of transition services, aftercare would be those services and supports provided to young people who have been discharged from foster care but are still in need of services during the transition period. Aftercare services may be provided informally, through contact with the young person's social worker or previous placement staff, or formally, through an aftercare program. Aftercare is a critical part of the transition service continuum for those young people who are no longer legally connected to the service system. For the purpose of this report, the concept of aftercare and services traditionally provided within this time frame comprise Transition Services.

**Aged-Out:** The termination of legal foster care status due to the attainment of adult status at age 18 or above as a result of administrative or statutory regulations at the state level. When publicly funded child welfare services end because a young person has reached the statutory age limit, that young person is said to have "aged out" of the system.

**AFCARS:** (Adoption and Foster Care Automated Reporting System) – The method by which Child Welfare programs submit data bi-annually to the federal Children's Bureau regarding the population of children and families served through Adoption and Foster Care programs. The Children's Bureau collects case-level information from state and tribal Title IV-E agencies on all children in foster care and those who have been adopted with Title IV-E agency involvement.

**Assessment:** The process used with a family or individual to determine the family or individual's strengths, needs, and support network. In the context of transition services, an assessment should be utilized to determine the youth's level of accomplishment of independent living tasks and skills. Specialized assessment tools may be utilized to measure educational progress, vocational skills and/or interests, special physical/mental health needs, or level of community and/or social supports.

**Boarding Home:** A transitional setting for youth or young adults providing individual rooms for youth or young adults, which may have shared facilities and minimal supervisory expectations. A boarding home can be set in a single family home or townhome in the community, or may be developed as an SRO (single room occupancy) housing setting in a remodeled apartment building or motel.

**Campus-Based Group Homes or Apartments:** Many large residential treatment programs are located on campus settings, often in rural communities adjacent to a city or town from which youth are placed at the

facility. Over the years, many of these programs have recognized the need for transition services for the youth they serve who may exit care from the residential setting. Utilizing existing buildings, or building transition homes or apartments on campus, residential programs may develop an on-site transition services program for youth getting ready to age out of care or to return to the community as young adults.

**Caregivers or Caretakers:** Individuals who are responsible for supervision of youth and providing for youth's basic needs while in out-of-home care.

**Care Manager:** An alternative term for Case Manager, the Care Manager is the primary individual responsible for securing, monitoring, and managing services in partnership with an individual client and/or family. The Care Manager may or may not provide direct services themselves, such as independent living skills training, counseling, etc. When a young person is in an out-of-home care placement, they may have a public child welfare social worker assigned to them, as well as a Care Manager in the placement setting. The balance of responsibility in this situation depends on the agreement or contract between the placement provider and the public agency. Either of these Care Managers may be responsible for providing transition services and support to youth on their caseload, or such services may be provided by a third party, such as an independent contractor or a specialized IL department within the public child welfare department.

**Caseload:** All individuals (usually counted as children, youth, or families) for whom a social worker or care manager is responsible, as expressed in a ratio of clients to staff members.

**Case management:** A service that helps people arrange for *appropriate services* and supports. A *case manager* coordinates mental health, housing, social work, educational, health, vocational, transportation, advocacy, *respite care*, and recreational services, as needed. The *case manager* makes sure that the changing needs of the child and family are met.

**Case Plan:** An agreement, usually written, developed between the individual, or family, the primary care manager, and other service providers. It outlines the tasks necessary by all individuals to achieve the goals and objectives identified by the individual or family in order to best promote their well-being. In the case of a youth or young adult in transition, the case plan may include a transition service or independent living plan, or there may be a separate additional plan related specifically to transition.

**Chafee Program:** The Foster Care Independence Act of 1999, which increases federal support to states for independent living programs. Under this new legislation, named in honor of the late Senator John H. Chafee, the federal allotment for Title IV-E independent living programs has doubled from \$70 million per year to \$140 million (although currently only appropriated at \$105 million).

**Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP):** The program through which federal Child Care Defense Funds (CCDF) are utilized by states to provide child care programs to support the work and educational pursuits of parents. In Louisiana the funds are managed by the Louisiana Department of Education (LDoE), and through partnership with DCFS, the CCDF state plan includes both protective services child care and foster care stabilization services child care with Child Welfare clients identified as special populations for utilization of the CCAP. To support all families in accessing high quality child care, the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) provides financial assistance to low-income families while they are working and attending school twenty or more hours per week.

**Child Protective Services (CPS):** A process beginning with the assessment of reports of child abuse and neglect. If it is determined the child is at risk of or has been abused or neglected, then CPS includes the provision of services and supports to the child and his/her family by the public child protection agency and the community.

**Child Well-Being:** The healthy physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual development of a child.

**Coach:** One who gives instruction, advice, training, or preparation for future events or situations.

**Cost of Failure:** Cost of not being involved (systems).

**Collaboration:** A process of individuals and organizations in a community working together toward a common purpose. All parties have a contribution to and a stake in the outcome.

**Community:** A group of individuals or families that share certain values, services, institutions, interests, and/or geographic proximity.

**Community-Based Group Home:** Detached homes housing 12 or fewer children in a community-based setting that offer the potential for the full use of community resources including employment, health care, educational, and recreational opportunities. They can be staffed on a rotating shift basis, by a live-in houseparent, or use a teaching family or some variations of these staffing patterns.

**Community-Based Organization:** Non-profit organization established as a support to the community and its members, and supported by government contracts, private endowments, grants, and community donations. Community-Based Organizations (CBO's) have historically been developed by individuals or groups within the community in response to a perceived community need.

**Concurrent Planning:** Permanency planning strategy for assuring an expedient permanent placement for a child. Planning for reunification occurs simultaneously with the development of alternative permanency plans, including adoption, to be used in the event that it is not possible for the child to return to his or her family of origin. In the context of transition, concurrent planning can be utilized as a strategy for ensuring that all youth receive services and support to prepare them for the transition to adulthood while at the same time ensuring that efforts continue to secure family permanency.

**Confidentiality:** The protection of information obtained from an individual or family receiving services from release to organizations or individuals not entitled to it by law or policy.

**Continuum Housing Options:** See Continuum Living Arrangements Options below.

**Continuum Living Arrangements Options:** In the context of transition, optimal outcomes can best be achieved through the provision of a continuum of transitional living arrangement options. Living arrangements that include a range of more and less-supervised and supported settings enable a youth or young adult to build on real life experience, make mistakes in a safe environment, and to move both backward and forward on the continuum until they are able to live on their own. A transition living arrangements continuum includes a variety of settings such as: scattered site apartments, host homes, mentor roommate apartments, boarding

homes, respite/emergency shelters, shared homes, supervised apartments, dorms, group homes, etc. Youth may move from one type of living arrangement to another.

**Continuum of Service:** Like the continuum of living arrangements, a broad continuum of service optimizes the movement of young people toward independence/interdependence while making an adequate level of services and supports available to them during the transition period. The transition continuum of service includes assessment, service planning, service delivery, evaluation, and aftercare, all provided within the context of a youth development approach.

**Court-Appointed Special Advocate (CASA):** A trained person (usually a volunteer) appointed by the juvenile or family court to assure the needs and best interests of the child are addressed during the court process. CASA volunteers speak on behalf of abused and neglected children in foster care. Each program is an independent, non-profit organization that recruits, trains and supports volunteers to work within the foster care system once appointed by the court. Advocates provide written recommendations to the court representing the best interests of the child.

**Cultural Competence:** The ability of individuals and systems to respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, and faiths or religions in a manner that recognizes, affirms and values the worth of individuals, families, and communities and projects and preserves the dignity of each. It is a continuous process of learning about the differences of others and integrating their unique strengths and perspectives into our lives, serving as a vehicle used to broaden our knowledge and understanding of individual and communities.

*Cultural Competence is*

- 1 a defined set of values and principles which are reflected within the behaviors, attitudes, policies and structures of [Name of agency], agencies, family/youth organizations, providers and community stakeholders to result in appropriate and effective services for all;
- 2 the capacity to (1) value diversity, (2) conduct self-assessment, (3) manage the dynamics of difference, (4) acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge, and (5) adapt to diversity and the cultural contexts of the communities served; and,
- 3 the integration of the above in all aspects of policy making, administration, practice, service delivery, and systematic involvement of families and youth, key stakeholders and communities.

*Linguistic competence* is the capacity of [Name of organization] and its personnel to communicate effectively, and convey information in a manner that is easily understood by diverse audiences. Linguistic competence involves the development of interagency and internal capacity to respond effectively to the mental health literacy and communication needs of the populations served, and to possess the policy, structures, practices, procedures and dedicated resources to support this capacity.

*Cultural* refers to integrated patterns of human customs, beliefs, and values of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups.

*Competence* implies having the capacity to function effectively as an individual and an organization within the context of the cultural beliefs, behaviors, and needs presented by children, youth and families and their communities.

*Cultural Brokers* are individuals who help to communicate differences and similarities across cultures to eliminate the cultural gap between them. They may also mediate and negotiate more complex processes within organizations, government, communities, and between interest groups or countries. Cultural brokers are knowledgeable about the beliefs, values and norms of their cultural group, and the system they have helped to navigate successfully for their families. They can serve as cultural liaisons, cultural guides, or mediators of distrust between cultures, models, mentors and catalysts for change. Excerpt from *Bridging the Cultural Divide in Health Care Settings: The Essential Role of Cultural Broker Programs*, National Center for Cultural Competence. Document available at: <http://www.culturalbroker.info/index.html>

**Dependency:** A state of reliance on other people or things for existence or support; a tendency to rely on others to provide nurturance; to make decisions; and to provide protection, security, and shelter (**The Social Worker's Dictionary**). In legal terms, dependency refers to the legal status of a child or youth who is in the care and custody of the state, and whose status is supervised by the court.

**Discharge:** To officially release, send away or discharge a child or youth from an environment or system.

**Dispositional Hearing:** A court hearing held to decide what action should be taken after the court has conducted an adjudicatory hearing and has determined the case is within its jurisdiction. Decisions commonly made at the dispositional hearing include whether the child should be removed from parental custody or removal from parental custody should continue. It is also required the court find that the department (child welfare agency) has demonstrated the investment of "reasonable efforts" to avoid removal or to attempt reunification. The timeline runs from the date the child was initially removed from parental custody and placed in the custody of a child care agency.

**Education Training Vouchers (ETVs):** The ETV Program is a national program whereby funds are provided to state Child Welfare systems for provision to youth who qualify. ETV offers financial assistance to eligible youth to attend a post-secondary program at an accredited college, university, vocational or technical college. The maximum ETV award is \$5,000 per academic year. Awards are determined by the Cost of Attendance (COA) formula established by the program in which the youth is enrolled, and any unmet need the youth may have within their financial aid award. Awards vary and not every youth is guaranteed to receive the maximum amount. ETV funds may be used for tuition, fees, books and supplies, housing, transportation and other education related costs. Youth may access these funds while still in foster care or after aging out of foster care. Youth may receive the funds as long as they are performing satisfactorily in their academic program up to age 21. At age 21 if the youth remains continuously enrolled in the academic program, performing satisfactorily the youth may continue to receive the funds up to age 23.

**Emancipation:** The process through which a state terminates all financial support, care and supervision of a youth in the care and custody of the state through the child welfare system. Emancipation is also the statutory process through which a juvenile can appeal to the court to grant legal adult status to a minor. An emancipation order may be granted by a judge, in which case a minor would be granted all the legal rights of an adult. This type of emancipation is often confused with the term emancipation as it applies to the end of foster care status which occurs when youth in foster care reach the age of 18 or older and are emancipated from care.

**Emerging Adulthood:** Emerging adulthood is a hypothetical phase of the life span between adolescence and full-fledged adulthood which encompasses late adolescence and early adulthood, proposed by Jeffrey Arnett in a 2000 article in the American Psychologist.

**Emotional Maltreatment:** Parental or other caregiver acts or omissions, such as rejecting, terrorizing, berating, ignoring, or isolating a child, that cause, or are likely to cause, serious impairment of the physical, social, mental, or emotional capacities of the child.

**Expungement:** The destruction of records of minors or adults, after the passage of a specified period of time or when the person reaches a specified age.

**FAFSA:** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) A form that can be prepared annually by current and prospective college students (undergraduate and graduate) in the United States to determine their eligibility for student financial aid.

**FYSB:** The Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) is a Federal agency dedicated to supporting young people and strengthening families. The Bureau does so by providing runaway and homeless youth service grants to local communities. The Bureau also funds research and demonstration projects.

**FUP:** The Family Unification Program (FUP) is a housing subsidy program for families in the child welfare system and for youth aging out of the foster care system. Child welfare agencies refer families and youth in need of housing assistance to local public housing agencies where they are provided with a Section 8 voucher to subsidize their rent.

**Financial Self-sufficiency:** The point at which a person is able to take full responsibility for all personal expenses.

**Foster care:** Foster care is 24-hour substitute care for children placed away from their birth parents. An agency (state, local, tribal, non-profit, juvenile justice or child welfare) is involved in placement and care responsibility for the child. Foster care includes foster family homes (kin and non-relative), group homes, residential facilities, or child care institutions.

**Guardian ad Litem (GAL):** An adult person (lawyer or trained lay person) appointed by the court to represent a child's best interests in juvenile or family court (see Court-Appointed Special Advocate).

**Guardianship:** A relationship in which one person, called a guardian, is appointed by a Court to make decisions and act for another person, called a ward. A guardian of the person makes decisions about the ward's personal matters, such as housing, medical care, recreation, and education.

**Harm:** An injury received as a result of physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, or emotional maltreatment.

**Harm Reduction:** Harm reduction (or harm minimization) is a range of public health policies designed to reduce the harmful consequences associated with various human behaviors, both legal and illegal. Harm reduction policies are used to manage behaviors such as recreational drug use and sexual activity in numerous settings that range from services through to geographical regions.

**Host home:** A situation in which a youth rents a room in a family or single adult's home, sharing basic facilities and agreeing to basic rules, while being largely responsible for his/her own life.

**Health and Human Services (HHS):** One of the largest federal agencies, the Department of Health and Human Services is the principal agency for protecting the health of all Americans. Comprising twelve operating divisions, HHS' responsibilities include public health, biomedical research, Medicare and Medicaid, welfare, social services, and more.

**HiSet:** The HiSet exam is one of three tests U.S. states and territories use to measure high school equivalency skills. The General Educational Development (GED) and the Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC) are the other options. Some states offer only one of these tests. Other states offer all three tests and let you decide which one you wish to take.

**HUD:** The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is the federal government agency charged with providing affordable housing options for all Americans.

**IEP:** Individualized Educational Plans are the formal case planning mechanism utilized by the school system to ensure that children and youth who are receiving and/or in need of special educational services and supports receive those to which they are entitled by law. Like the child welfare case plan, the IEP describes tasks, timelines, and persons responsible for tasks that will contribute to the achievement of educational goals and objectives.

**Independence:** State of being self-sufficient as an adult of legal age. In the context of transition services, this state would apply to youth and young adults after emancipation from the child welfare system, juvenile justice system, or other state custody status.

**Independent Living:** Those segments of the human services fields (including, at a minimum, child welfare, youth development, developmental disabilities, vocational, mental health, etc.) dedicated to the development of programs, policies, and services that best support the positive development of youth and adults as citizens, community members, employees, and family members.

**Independent living services:** Support for a young person living on his or her own. These services include therapeutic group homes, supervised apartment living, and job placement. Services teach youth how to handle financial, medical, housing, transportation, and other daily living needs, as well as how to get along with others.

**Independent Living Service Plan:** See Transition Services Plan below.

**Independent Living (State) Plan:** The plan required by Federal Law (see Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 above) to be developed by states and submitted to the Secretary for Health and Human Services once every five years, as part of the state's child and family services plan. The state Independent Living, or Chafee plan, outlines the scope of services available in the state to youth preparing for and making the transition to adulthood, certifies that the state will comply with federal requirements for such programs, and details the state's financial and other resource contributions to the program.

**Institution:** A large structured facility or group of facilities housing anywhere from 40 to several hundred children, youth, and/or young adults, with most services provided on-grounds. Institutions may have as their goal residential treatment for children and youth with severe behavioral/emotional disturbance, diversion from juvenile corrections placement, or as a placement alternative for youth considered hard to place in the community.

**Interdependency:** Interdependency represents the ability to meet one's physical, cultural, social, emotional, economic, and spiritual needs within the context of relationships with families, friends, employers, and the community. This term is used rather than independent because the relationships cultivated throughout life are the basis for successful adult functioning, rather than a particular level of self-sufficiency or individual independence.

**Investigation:** An inquiry or search by law enforcement and CPS to determine the validity of a report of child abuse or neglect and/or to determine if a crime has been committed.

**Jurisdiction:** The power of a particular court to hear cases involving certain categories or allegations.

**Juvenile and Family Courts:** Established in states to handle legal matters concerning juveniles. Most often they have jurisdiction over child abuse and neglect, status offenders, and juvenile delinquency. In some states, they also have jurisdiction over domestic violence, divorce, child custody, and child support.

**Kinship Care:** The full-time nurturing and protection of children by relatives, members of their tribes or clans, godparents, stepparents, or other adults who have a kinship bond with a child.

**LHC:** The Louisiana Housing Corporation is the state government agency charged with providing affordable housing options for all Louisiana Citizens.

**LGBTQ12S:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Intersex, Two-Spirit.

**Life Skills:** Life skills typically include both hard (tangible) and soft (intangible) skills that support a youth's ability to develop emotionally into an adult. Hard skill areas include meeting transportation needs, maintaining one's home, knowing legal rights and responsibilities, being aware of community resources, managing money, and identifying health care needs. Soft skills include making decisions, solving problems, communicating effectively, developing meaningful relationships with others, developing a sense of one's self, and cultural awareness. Relevant life skills are taught at developmentally appropriate stages of a youth's life. There are intrinsic differences in life skills taught across diverse cultures.

**Lobbying:** The act of urging or advocating, resulting in positive outcomes for the child/youth. Lobbying generally refers to advocacy in the legislative context, for changes to existing laws or the introduction and passage of new legislation to benefit children, youth, and families.

**Mandated Reporter:** A person who, in his/her professional capacity, is required by state or provincial law to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the designated state or provincial agency. In some states, all adults are mandated to report suspected child abuse or neglect.

**McKinney Act:** The Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (PL100-77) was the first -- and remains the only -- major federal legislative response to homelessness. In 1987 Congress passed the act to improve



services for homeless persons, including emergency shelters, health care, and job training. Subtitle VII-B of the legislation specifically addresses education of homeless children.

**Mentor:** A wise and trusted counselor or teacher who serves as a senior sponsor, supporter and loyal advisor. Someone, usually over the age of 21, who acts as a supportive role model for a vulnerable or at-risk youth. Mentors can be volunteers, students, paid adults, former clients, etc.

**Multidisciplinary Team:** A group established among agencies or individuals to promote collaboration and shared decision making around the protection of children and the promotion of their well-being. Some multidisciplinary teams address issues related to individual children and families, while others focus more on community wide prevention and protection strategies.

**National Youth Transition Data Base (NYTD):** Public Law 106-169 required the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to develop a data collection system to track independent living services that states offer to youth transitioning out of the foster care system (i.e., mental health services, job skills training, career counseling, etc.). The data collection process was intended to be used to develop outcome measures to assess states' performance in operating independent living programs. The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) collects information on youth in foster care, including sex, race, ethnicity, date of birth, and foster care status. It also collects information about the outcomes of those youth who have aged out of foster care. States began collecting data in 2010, and the first data set was submitted in May 2011.

**Neglect:** Failure of parents or other caregivers, for reasons not solely due to poverty, to provide the child with needed age appropriate care, including food, clothing, shelter, protection from harm, supervision appropriate to the child's development, hygiene, education, and medical care.

**Partner:** A person who shares or is associated with another in some action or endeavor with joint interest, shared roles and responsibilities.

**Pell Grant:** A Pell Grant is a subsidy the U.S. federal government provides for students who need it to pay for college. Federal Pell Grants are limited to students with financial need, who have not earned their first bachelor's degree, or who are enrolled in certain post-baccalaureate programs, through participating institutions.

**Perkins Loans:** A Federal Perkins Loan is a 5% fixed interest rate loan for undergraduate and graduate students with exceptional financial need. Because of its low interest rate, need-based award, and generous cancellation policies, it is one of the most affordable options for students in post-secondary education.

**Permanency:** Permanency in child welfare is a concept that encompasses more than time. It involves a sense of having a place to call home; a feeling of belonging and connectedness; and an identity linked to family, tradition, culture, and community. Formal permanency is the achievement of permanent legal status for a child or youth with a family or other caregiver through adoption or long-term guardianship.

**Permanency Planning:** Process through which planned and systematic efforts are made to assure that children are in safe and nurturing family relationships expected to last a lifetime.

**Petition:** A legal document filed with the court to initiate a juvenile or family court action. The petition sets forth the alleged grounds for the court to take jurisdiction of the child.

**Positive Youth Development:** The process in which all youths engage over time in order to meet their needs and build their competencies. A positive youth development philosophy and approach reflect our desire for positive outcomes in the developmental process and our purposeful efforts to design environments and services that will contribute to the achievement of desired outcomes.

**PCWA:** Public Child Welfare Agency; the county or state organization that oversees the welfare of children and youth.

**Relational Permanency:** An emotional attachment between the youth and caregivers and other family members and kin.

**Residential Treatment Center:** A facility or group of facilities usually serving between 15 to 40 youth and utilizing a combination of on-grounds and community-based services. Some residential treatment centers may be much larger, serving several hundred youth in a campus-based setting.

**Resiliency:** The power or ability to return to the original form, position, etc., after being bent, compressed, or stretched; elasticity. 2. Ability to recover readily from illness, depression, adversity, or the like; buoyancy.

**Reunification:** Family Reunification – the process of returning children in temporary out-of-home care to their families or origin – it is the most common goal and outcome for children in child welfare.

**Self-Sufficiency:** The ability to care for, provide and maintain adequately for one's self without the need or assistance of a person and/or agency.

**Semi-Supervised Apartment (Scattered Site or Single Site Apartments):** A privately owned apartment rented by an agency or youth in which a youth lives independently or with a roommate, with financial support, training, and some monitoring. Apartments may be scattered in a community, or an agency may support a group of apartments in a complex or single building.

**Service Coordinator:** Similar to a care manager, a service coordinator works with a young person to secure the services and supports needed to transition successfully to adulthood. A youth may have a service coordinator in addition to a care manager, where the service coordinator specializes in brokering community supports and services, such as employment, education, and housing.

**Shared House:** A minimally supervised house shared by several young adults who take full responsibility for the house and personal affairs. These homes may or may not have live-in staff to provide support and supervision. The house may be sponsored or owned by a CBO, or young people may secure the housing independently and rent as a group.

**Shelter:** A facility whose purpose is to provide short-term emergency housing to teens or adults in crisis.

**Shelter Plus Care:** A Shelter Plus Care Program provides rental assistance for hard-to-serve homeless persons with disabilities in connection with supportive services funded from sources outside the program.

**Single Room Occupancy (SRO):** A room for rent, often near a city center. SRO's are often remodeled motels utilized by community housing agencies to provide low-cost housing to eligible populations at risk of homelessness, including youth or young adults.

**Specialized Family Foster Home:** A situation in which a youth is placed with a community family specially licensed to provide care and sometimes specifically trained to provide independent living services.

**Specialized Group Home:** Sometimes referred to as semi-independent living programs, these homes are usually staffed as a group home, but house older teens and focus on developing self-sufficiency skills.

**Special Needs:** Any condition that requires extra attention or specialized services to assist a youth or young adult, such as: developmental disabilities, pregnancy, children, physical disabilities, mental illness, chemical dependency, etc.

**State Independent Living Coordinator:** Individual designated to oversee Chafee-funded Independent Living Programs in the state and to ensure the guidelines are followed. The Coordinator may act as a liaison between counties and the state child welfare office in county administered states, between the state and regions in state administered states, or may directly implement the states independent living program statewide.

**Strengths-Based Approach:** The philosophy of seeing or evaluating a person, group or system by their assets and/or positive attributions instead of focusing on their deficits. A strengths-based approach is foundational to a positive youth development philosophy, and provides the context for design and implementation of all services for youth in transition.

**Subsidized Housing:** Government-supported, low-income housing. Monthly rent is based on income. A CBO or public child welfare agency may also provide subsidized housing for youth in transition through the direct provision of no- or low-cost transitional housing or through housing stipends given directly to youth in the community during a transition period of 18 months to three years.

**Subsidy Programs:** A situation in which a youth receives a monthly stipend that can be used toward a self-chosen living arrangement and food and personal supplies. The youth are required to follow certain agency guidelines and participate in agency activities, such as life skills classes, in order to maintain the subsidy.

**Supervised Apartment:** An apartment building, rented or owned by an agency, in which numerous youth live with a live-in supervisor who occupies one of the units.

**Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP):** SNAP offers nutrition assistance to millions of eligible, low-income individuals and families and provides economic benefits to communities. SNAP is the largest program in the domestic hunger safety net. The Food and Nutrition Service works with state agencies, nutrition educators, and neighborhood and faith-based organizations to ensure those eligible for nutrition assistance can make informed decisions about applying for the program and can access benefits.

**Supplemental Security Income (SSI):** SSI makes monthly payments to people who have low income and few resources and are age 65 or older, blind, or disabled.

**Systems Youth:** Youth in the care and custody of the state, either through child welfare, juvenile justice, or federally recognized tribes. Young adults ages 18-21 may still be considered systems youth when they maintain foster care status, though the youth must voluntarily agree to remain in custody, and the custodial

status remains voluntary until the youth is discharged from services or reaches the age when services must terminate by state policy or statute.

**Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF):** The U.S. federally structured welfare program established in 1996 to replace the *Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)* program; the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS) program; emergency assistance; and some provision in *Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI)*, and other programs. The program is part of the *Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (P.L.104-193)* and gives the states more authority to create and manage their own welfare programs. States are permitted to cut their welfare spending by up to 25 percent without losing the fixed federal block grants. Unlike the AFDC program, TANF cash assistance is no longer considered an entitlement, lifetime eligibility of benefits is reduced to a total of five years, and benefits to legal immigrants are restricted.

**Title IV-B:** The nature of this program is to fund child welfare services. Eligible services under Subpart 1 (Yearly appropriation. 25 percent state match required) include emergency caretaker and homemaker services, emergency financial assistance, family preservation activities, mental health services, alcohol and drug abuse counseling, and post-adoption services. Eligible services under Subpart 2 (Capped entitlement, 25 percent state match required) include a range of family support and family preservation services.

**Title IV-E:** This is an entitlement program that funds foster care maintenance (or room and board costs), for eligible children, and adoption assistance payments for children with special needs. Children are Title IV-E eligible and, therefore, entitled to federal financial participation in the costs of their foster care placement, if they enter foster care from families who are eligible for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) or from families who would have been AFDC eligible if the family had applied for AFDC benefits. Children with special needs are eligible for adoption assistance payments if they were eligible for Title IV-E at the time of their foster care placement or became eligible for SSI before adoption.

**Title XX:** Title XX of the Social Security Act, also referred to as the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), is a capped entitlement program. States are entitled to their share, according to a formula, of a nationwide funding ceiling or “cap”, which is specified in statute. Block grant funds are given to states to help them achieve a wide range of social policy goals, which include preventing child abuse, increasing the availability of child care, and providing community-based care for the elderly and disabled. Funds are allocated to the states on the basis of population. The federal funds are available to states without a state matching requirement.

**Transition:** In the child welfare arena, transition is generally understood to be the period of time from late adolescence to the early adult years during which the youth increases their level of skills and practice of independent living and begins taking on the tasks and responsibilities of interdependent adult living.

**Transition Facilitator (TF):** A term for a professional who assists a youth during the transition to adulthood.

**Transitional Services:** Transition services represent the array of services available to a youth or young adult who has reached adolescence and is beginning to move through the transition process, or may be at any point in the transition process. Transition Service planning and delivery include a wide range of supports and opportunities including:

- direct delivery of IL skills training,

- opportunities to practice life skills in real life settings with support,
- community resource referral,
- physical and mental health services,
- education and employment preparation and support,
- strengthening relationships,
- achieving family permanency
- opportunities to participate in community life, community leadership,
- opportunities to be mentored
- work experience
- transitional housing and housing preparation and support

**Transition Service(s) Plan:** A plan developed that outlines steps to be taken to prepare a youth without stable family support for life after the child welfare system. A youth or young adult may have a transitional service plan in addition to a case plan, or may only have a transitional service plan while participating in aftercare services or post-foster care transitional programs.

**Transitional Living Program (TLP):** In general, TLP is the term referring to the broad array of possible living arrangements that help youth learn skills needed for the next, less supervised setting. Some campus programs have assigned a house to serve as a transitional living experience before a youth leaves the system and moves out on his/her own. Some agencies refer to TLP as housing-based services for older homeless youth and young adults who are not in the system.

**Transitional Living Group Home:** A home often affiliated with a residential treatment center to which older teens move upon completion of treatment goals. The focus while a youth lives in the transitional home is to acquire life skills and to prepare for a return to the community and for self-sufficiency.

**Transitional Living Program for Older, Non-System Youth:** The *Transitional Living Program for Homeless Youth* is a federally funded transitional program for youth ages 16-21 funded by the Department of Health and Human Services as one of the Family and Youth Services Bureau's Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs. This funding is available to community based public and private agencies for the purpose of providing transition services for up to 18 months to homeless youth who are not eligible for services under an existing system, such as the child welfare system. While the Transitional Living Program funded by HHS is the most commonly known TLP, it is not the only transitional program, and should not be categorized as such. A transitional living program can be any program in a community that is designed to assist youth in transition. The terms "transitional living program" and "independent living program" can be used interchangeably without attribution to funding source. For the purposes of this document, the term transitional services is the broad term encompassing all supports, services, and opportunities designed to help youth make successful transitions to adulthood.

**Trauma Informed Care:** Trauma Informed Care is an organizational structure and treatment framework that involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma. Trauma Informed Care also emphasizes physical, psychological, and emotional safety for both consumers and providers, and helps survivors rebuild a sense of control and empowerment.

**Welfare Investment Act:** (P.L.105-220) The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) was implemented to consolidate, coordinate, and improve employment, training, literacy, and vocational rehabilitation programs in the United States, and for other purposes.

**Welfare to Work Partnership:** The national organization of business and government leaders established in 1997 to facilitate the transition of public assistance recipients to the private-sector workforce. The executives of business corporations work in partnership with government representatives to create meaningful jobs for former welfare clients and provide training and mentoring to succeed in those jobs.

**Women Infants and Children (WIC):** The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children. WIC helps income eligible pregnant and breastfeeding women, women who recently had a baby, infants, and children up to five years of age who are at health risk due to inadequate nutrition.

**Wraparound Approach:** A process for planning and implementing services and supports that is based upon individualized, strength-based, needs-driven planning and service delivery.

**Youth-Guided:** Encompasses the principles of: youth have rights; youth are utilized as resources; youth have an equal voice and are engaged in developing and sustaining the policies and systems that serve and support them; youth are active partners in creating their individual support plans; youth have access to information that is pertinent; youth are valued as experts in system transformation; youths' strengths and interests are focused on and utilized; adults and youth respect and value youth culture and all forms of diversity; and youth are supported in a way that is developmentally targeted to their individual needs.

**Youth Advisory Council /Committee:** A group of youth recruited, trained, and supported by a private or public agency to act in an advisory capacity to the agency. Young people on an advisory committee or council may participate in agency governance, advocate on the agency's behalf to policymakers and legislators, act as a liaison between the agency and the community, represent the views and needs of their peers being served by the agency, and participate in program development, implementation, and evaluation.

**Youth-Driven:** Defined as, "ensuring that youth have a primary decision making role in their care as well as the policies and procedures governing their care in their community. This includes choosing services and providers; setting goals, designing and implementing programs, and monitoring outcomes. "

▪ (adapted from [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov))

**Youth Voice:** Assuring youth are present in all events where decisions are made regarding their lives.

**Youth Worker:** A person who works with young people in a community or other program setting with the goal of promoting their positive development. Youth workers may be paid staff or volunteers.

#### Sources:

- *The Child Welfare League of America Standards of Excellence for Transition, Independent Living and Self-sufficiency Services.* (2005). CWLA Press.
- *Facilitating Cross-System Collaboration: A Primer on Child Welfare, Alcohol and Other Drug Services, and Courts.* (2013). Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration.
- *Google*