A COLLEGE TOUR PROGRAM FOR FOSTER YOUTH

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A COLLEGE TOUR PROGRAM FOR FOSTER YOUTH

A Project

by

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Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism Administration
Abstract

of

A COLLEGE TOUR PROGRAM FOR FOSTER YOUTH

by

Anna Spivak

The primary purpose of this project is to design a program that will introduce foster youth to an educational college tour program within the greater Sacramento area while providing an opportunity for foster teens to explore and experience college life for a week, and establish the importance of attending higher educational institutions. Currently there is a need for more educational programs and resources to help stress the importance of remaining in school and eventually attending higher educational institutions, prior to aging out. This program will include a total of twelve foster youth. Selection of youth will be based off references from their social workers and the disclosure of information from the Sacramento County. In order to expose foster youth to higher educational opportunities within California, the City of Davis will help to implement this program and provide these youth with a fun and empowering experience that will positively affect the future of their lives.

_________________________, Committee Chair
Dr. Katherine Pinch

__________________________
Date

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Until recently, education has not been something that foster youth agencies have placed on the radar. The primary focus for foster youth care has been protection and safety. Therefore, education for this population has spiraled downwards. The number of foster youth entering college has been very bleak, and many have no encouragement and lack resources and opportunities for them to become exposed to higher education. It is almost unjust that these youth are deprived of education (Nance, 2008). These youth need more resources and programs, in order for them to reap the benefits of attending higher education institutions. In addition to themselves, their caretakers, communities, schools, and social workers, should begin to work collaboratively with one another in order to make the process of entering college more feasible.

Researchers from the Small Foundation have stated that within four years of aging out 25% of young people in foster care have been homeless, fewer than half have graduated from high school, 42% have become parents themselves, and more than 80% are unable to support themselves. In addition to these numbers, officials from the Sacramento County have stated that within 12 to 18 months of leaving foster care, 33% of those people may become reliant upon public services and 40% will suffer serious physical victimization, including sexual assault. To help alleviate the gap between the educational resources and the lack of encouragement from caretakers, Teen Scene, an educational college tour program, will provide an opportunity for foster teens to explore
and experience colleges for a week. The program will allow these young people the chance to visit Northern and Southern California colleges, travel in vans, stay in hotels, and the ability to potentially connect with their future educational institution. The college tour program will help establish the importance of attending higher educational institutions, expose the youth to available programs and resources, and help negate their current attitudes about college. By exposing these young people to this experience, it potentially will reinforce the importance of acquiring educational stability within their lives.

**Purpose of Project**

The purpose of this project is to design a program that will introduce foster youth to an educational college tour program within the greater Sacramento area. It will provide: an opportunity for foster teens to explore and experience college life for a week, help negate their current attitudes about college, formalize friendships and mentors with college students who have gone through the foster care system as well, and establish the importance of attending higher educational institutions.

**Need for the Project**

Young people in foster care lack future orientation, educational guidance, and opportunities that allow them to change their attitudes about higher education. Nationally, each year approximately 20,000 foster care youth “age out” or emancipate from the foster care system, whether or not they are prepared. About 25% of these youth live in California (Honoring Emancipated Youth, 2010). Once youth “age out” or leave the foster care system as Burton (2007) has noted, the “uphill battle” begins. Foster care can
hinder these young people’s abilities to learn because of the overwhelming instability in their lives. They are ill-equipped to transition from secondary to post secondary education. What they need are programs and opportunities which provide positive support and exposure to higher education, in order to begin changing their attitudes. They need opportunities to begin to feel empowered and be able to visualize a life beyond disappointment and insecurities. Foster youth transitioning from high school to college need support that includes guidance from high school counselors and other adults who can help them aspire to pursue education beyond high school and who can help them make a successful shift from life within the foster care system to living independently. The City of Davis college tour program Teen Scene would facilitate foster youth of the greater Davis and Sacramento areas on a weeklong tour of southern and northern California colleges. Prior to attending the tours, the young teens will attend pre-trip meetings that will help familiarize them with the requirements and expectations of college, and expose them to their tour guides and other the participants. They will partake in a focus group discussion, experiential activities such as rock climbing, team building games and recreational opportunities at UC Davis and Sacramento State’s recreational facilities in order to familiarize themselves with their future guides, other participants, and establish trusting relationships and friendships. The participants will travel in vans, stay at each college for a majority of the day, and in the evening stay at a designated hotel near the campuses. Because the participants will be away for a week in a supportive and fun environment, they hopefully will begin to develop positive feelings about the potential of going to college and become more informed about the benefits of attending
and remaining in college. These young people must become exposed to the advantages of college and must begin to visualize themselves attending. If the process of attending college becomes attainable for them, then their attitudes can shift and they hopefully will visualize a more prosperous future for themselves.

Definitions of Terms

The following definitions are to help clarify and inform the reader of particular terms that are mentioned within the following chapters.

City of Davis- Is a university-oriented city with a progressive, dynamic community noted for its bicycles, small-town style, parks, energy conservation, and the quality of its educational institutions (CityofDavis.org, 2011).

College Tour- Refers to an official visit to a colleges’ campus guided by an employee of the campus or by a guide of a particular association or group visiting the college.

College Selection- Refers to choosing a college, based on an admitted student’s preference of the campus over another and previous information he/she has on a particular school that seems appealing to him/her.

Extracurricular Activities- Refers to activities that are structured that are not part of the standard academic curriculum and are run by positive role models (Farineau & Mcwey, 2011).

Facilitator- One who guides and oversees the teens. Their purpose is to mentor and help with the process of educating the youth of the program.
Foster Youth- Or sometimes referred to as dependents of the State, because they are no longer safe within the environment of their biological parents, and are therefore removed from their homes (Legislative Analyst Office, 2010).

Foster Placement- Refers to the placement of the youth with an approved relative or “kinship” or guardian or in a licensed group or foster home (LAO, 2010).
Chapter 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this project is to design a program that will provide an opportunity for foster youth to visualize attending higher educational institutions, and inform them of the benefits and resources that are available during their educational careers. The first part of this chapter will provide a basic understanding of foster youth, their care systems and barriers that inhibit their educational growth. This chapter will also examine factors such as recreational activities and leisure awareness that can contribute to the educational success of foster youth. The conclusion of this chapter will discuss and describe the importance of programs like “Teen Scene” that have the ability to provide tangible educational experiences for these young people.

Problems Related to Foster Youth and Foster System

California is home to the largest foster care population in the United States (Atkinson, 2008). Within the State of California there are over 9.5 million children, and approximately 80,000 of those children at any given time are ordinances of the State: or also known as foster youth (National Foster Care Coalition, 2007). When children are abandoned, neglected, a death occurs, or abused by their biological parents, or when their parents’ own complications such as mental illness, drug addictions, and incarceration hinder adequate care of their child, others must step in. Most often other family members such as relatives or grandparents begin to provide care for the child. However, if no relatives or close family friends are available, a court will intervene and place them in care of other institutions or with other non-related families (Wertheimer, 2002). Before
these children become ordinances of the state or await foster care placement, they may have experienced traumas that will have forever impacted their lives in negative ways.

Many will have lost their homes, slept in trailer parks, motels, cars, parks, abandoned spaces and buildings, train stations, buses, and lived in transitional shelters (Legal Center for Foster care, 2009). They may have been beaten, witnessed their parent(s) high, left without food or shelter or given up for adoption. In 2008, the San Diego County began tracking sibling placement and noted that approximately 70% of children who are placed in foster care have another sibling and many become separated from them during placement. It is difficult enough for these youth to go through these experiences alone, but to lose one’s sibling in the process, can be even more detrimental to their self esteem. Atkinson (2008) stated that former foster youth will face family challenges into adulthood because of their previous history with traumas. One statistic noted that “19% of former foster care parents reported having a child removed from their custody, restarting a painful cycle with the foster care system” (Atkinson, 2008, p. 194).

**Foster Care**

Once a child has been removed from their biological parents there are several options he/she may have for shelter. Depending on their circumstances they either will be placed with an approved relative or guardian, or in a foster home or licensed group, (LAO, 2010). The length of stay in a foster home, licensed group, or with a foster parent is dependent upon four outcomes the court can decide upon: when “reunification” has been determined, meaning the safety and health risks have been resolved; when “permanency” has been declared or a child has found a home the court decides as
permanent; when a youth “emancipates,” or has reached the age of eighteen and is no longer under the court’s supervision because he/she is now considered an adult; and “delinquency,” when a child’s foster status may be terminated if they become a ward of the criminal justice system (LOA, 2010).

The preference of the state is to try to enable the biological parents to retain custody of their child, however many times the parents are unable to get “clean” from their drug addictions or the environment does not prove to be safe for the child (Atkinson, 2008). The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) which was passed in 1997, is the principal federal law that controls placements and admission into the foster care system. The primary goal is to balance family preservation and reunification with safety and health of the child. Under this law it is mandated that reasonable efforts must be instituted in order to preserve families by preventing a child’s initial removal, and that upon return (if allowed), the safety of the child must be made the “paramount concern” in determining reunification (Atkinson, 2008). Another large concern that the ASFA must address is the foster care “drifting.” Drifting is the process where a foster child “drifts” in and out of foster care systems, never forming a solid foundation to begin his/her life. Atkinson (2008) has also noted that the average youth in foster care has had at least three foster care placements.

Some foster youth may even be dependents of the state from birth to eighteen. However, close to half of youths in foster care spend at least two years in the system, and nearly 20% will spend five or more years in foster care (Atkinson, 2008). While there are many efforts being made to reduce these statistics, which will be further discussed in the
following portions of this review, it is important to note that some of these children “may spend their entire childhood cycling through various temporary foster care placements before aging out, without ever being reunified with their families of origin or finding an adoptive home” (Atkinson, 2008, p.186). Not only will some spend their entire lives in and out of care, they will also be forced to “age out” when they turn 18. Many will have no home, relative, or safe place to stay once they turn this age; this is when foster youth begin to face many barriers, which will have the potential to negatively affect the remainder of their lives.

**Aging Out**

Nationally, each year approximately 20,000 foster care youth “age out” or emancipate from the foster care system, whether or not they are prepared. About 25% of these youth live in California (Mandolesi, 2010). Once youth “age out” or leave the foster care system as Burton (2007) has noted, the “uphill battle” begins. Research conducted by Mark Courtney of the University of Washington stated that youth leaving foster care by 18 were almost three times more likely than their peers to be out of school and work, twice as likely to be unable to pay rent, and four times as likely to become evicted as cited in (Burton, 2007). Former foster youth who have aged out of the system, as Atkinson (2008) mentioned, face incarceration, poor educational outcomes, unemployment, and poverty at alarming rates. Because these youth no longer have any kind of services or support being provided to them, they begin to create unhealthy choices that in turn cause them more harm. Some foster youth do not “age out” of the foster care system; instead, they “are reunited with parents or principle care takers,
adopted, placed in guardianship, transferred to another agency, die, or run away,” (Atkinson, 2008, p.187).

Placement for this population is never a secure situation and moving in and out of care is extremely tiresome and does not provide stability; these youth often begin to lose hope in the system and begin developing issues with identity. A study conducted by Susan Kools, a professor of adolescent development at UCSF, found that foster care youth developed a negative outlook on identity development (Kools, 1997). “For adolescents, peer perceptions are critically important… being teased and ridiculed about being in foster care was particularly damaging to foster youth in their identity development, which resulted in them feeling disconnected and alienated from their peers” (Klitsch, 2010, p.2). Because foster youth are often in and out of the care system, frequent school change creates yet another constraint for these youth. Each time they rotate from home to home, they also change schools. Klitsch (2010) noted this process means they must adapt to new classes, teachers, care system, and new peer groups, which inevitably increases behavior problems and does not provide adequate time for positive or healthful identity formation before aging out.

**Lack of Stable Mentors**

Foster care youth in congregate housing or other institutions can be at risk of emancipating with inadequate preparation for living independently. Congregate housing, where older youth are commonly placed in group home residences, often leads to difficulties in developing relationships with members of the community because they receive fewer opportunities to develop adult mentors and become adopted. “Congregate
care facilities are generally staffed with young workers and sustain high employee turnover rates, preventing youth from developing “lasting relationships with responsible adults,” one of the key factors typically associated with aging out successfully (Atkinson, 2008, p.189). It is vital for the growth of these youth to develop positive relationships with mentors such as a school counselor, a teacher, a family friend or coach, because they sometimes provide the only consistency these children will have in their lives. “Mentors provide consistency through times of transition. They believe in the youth with whom they work and are sometimes the only people in the children’s lives who are saying positive things about them” (Atkinson, 2008, p.189). Methods of mentorship also include establishing or developing bonds with their relatives and older adults. Strengthening the bonds they have with their mentors can often lead to positive choices and decisions for their futures, because someone is there to help encourage and lend support through difficult times (Atkinson, 2008). Unfortunately not all foster youth will develop the opportunity to bond with a mentor or someone stable that will lend them good advice and support, so instead they will partake in criminal activity (Atkinson, 2008). Youth in California who aged out of the foster care system were shown to have a greater likelihood of state prison records, the more times they were relocated while in foster care (Atkinson, 2008).

Lack of Educational Achievement

Without intervention, as Kelly (2000) mentioned, most foster youth are at great risk for entering into adult public assistance or the criminal justice systems, and will not complete high school. Because of the frequent school changes, foster children have
become one of the most educationally vulnerable populations: yet another constraint they must face prior to aging out of the foster care system (Brunnberg, Hedin & Hojer, 2009). “A solid education is considered the foundation for a productive future, but for teens in foster care, education beyond high school is rarely a reality” (Martin, 2003, p.1). Factors that impede their educational success are lack of adult supervision to provide assistance with homework, positive support and encouragement, and low expectations from care takers, (Brunnberg et al., 2009). Research has indicated that 75% of foster youth perform below grade level, and demonstrate weaker cognitive abilities and lower academic achievement compared to non-maltreated children. “They exhibit behavioral problems in school settings ranging from aggressive, demanding, immature and attention-seeking behaviors to withdrawn, anxious and overly-compliant behaviors” (Shea, Weinberg, & Zeltin, 2003, p.1). Because these behaviors are very common amongst these youth, more than 50% have been retained at least one year in school (Shea et al., 2003).

Again, due to the frequent changes in schools, attendance decreases and their educational records fail to follow them to their new school. Foster youth will miss an average of four to six months of educational attainment because of the frequency of school changes, and as research has found 65% of these youth will have attended seven or more different schools from elementary to high school (Atkinson, 2008). Because of the lack of necessary paperwork once they arrive at a new school, they lose critical services in both general and special education entitlements (Atkinson, 2008). Many school programs, even those assisting foster youth, do not take into account the unique circumstances the youth encounter when their schools go on academic break. Many youth
will be displaced from their student housing during these breaks, leaving them homeless and without care (Atkinson, 2008).

**Desire for Education**

Because of the plethora of barriers that impede a foster youth’s education throughout high school and even into higher educational institutions, it becomes a common misperception as Martin (2003) has noted that foster youth lack the desire for educational aspirations. This however, is not necessarily the case. Research conducted at the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at the Washington University in St, Louis showed that 70% of teens in the foster care system have a strong desire to go to college (Martin, 2003). The same research also noted, because their desires to attend college is very high, it is important for planners to begin building more behavioral and educational programs for this population. Wendy Auslander, Ph.D., professor at George Washington University, and co-author of the research, stated “If youth want the better lives that educational achievement can bring, they may be motivated to participate in programs to improve their academic achievement” (Martin, 2003, p.1). All young people, as Emerson and Lovit (2008) have mentioned, have the ability to succeed academically if the necessary support and advocacy is derived from educators, caregivers and professionals.

**The Value of Leisure Programs and Activities for Foster Youth**

Programs and opportunities that have the potential for foster youth to expand their educational achievements are extracurricular activities. Studies have shown that participation in extracurricular activities has improved their overall academic
performance. “If any child can benefit from extracurricular activities, it is foster youth” (Klitsch, 2010, p.1). Structured extracurricular activities can alleviate the stressors they face and reduce their concerns of identity development, behavioral problems, and academic achievements. Extracurricular activity provides opportunities that create stronger bonds between peers and teachers, and allows them to occupy larger roles within their communities (Klitsch, 2010). Constructive activities allow for opportunities that provide practice for intellectual and physical skills which contribute to the well being of one’s community by enabling the youth to recognize a sense of agency as a member, and become involved in socially valued and recognized groups (Eccles, Stone, & Hunt, 2003). The associated benefits exuded from participation in extracurricular activities are sometimes the most beneficial for high-risk youth, while involvement in them increases self concept, school engagement, educational aspirations, and school grade point averages (Mahoney, Cairns, & Farmer, 2003).

When an individual becomes interested in an activity he or she becomes intrinsically motivated and will therefore learn to enjoy the activity. Since extracurricular activities provide structure, promote skill building, enable challenges, and require effort, the interpersonal competence of these youth can expanded in positive ways which can lead to greater success in their educational careers. Mahoney et al. (2003) has also noted that it does not depend on the specific activity itself, but more importantly the characteristics that define it. Studies have also noted that participation in extracurricular activities throughout high school years has decreased delinquent behaviors, substance abuse, and antisocial behaviors, and increased the likelihood of college enrollment.
“Youth become more motivated to do well in school just so they can continue to play on their school teams” (Klitsch, 2010, p.2). At risk youth who have involved themselves in even just one extracurricular activity have shown a lower likelihood to drop out of school. Because a sense of positive personal identity forms when youth become involved in sports or other extracurricular activities on their campuses, they begin to see school as a positive place where they can grow and further their academic developments (Klitsch, 2010).

Foster youth, as Klitsch (2010) has mentioned, have the ability to become even more disconnected from their school’s community because of the frequent transfers and placements they must go through. However, involvement with extracurricular activities can eventually enhance the feelings of support and unity with their schools because it provides an outlet where they do not feel judged and criticized, and allows them to create new bonds with different adults and peers than normal. According to Klitsch (2010), many extracurricular activities are led or instructed by teachers. By creating stronger relationships and bonds with their instructors, it may eventually help them to feel more comfortable at their schools and ease the transition. They will have the ability to seek more guidance, advice, and support, when they have mentors they can rely upon and seek academic advising from, and coaching support in their after school endeavors. “As students acquire skills like leadership or athletic expertise, they may gain increased confidence in their abilities. Additional psychological benefits include higher self-esteem, less worry regarding the future, and reduced feelings of social isolation” (Klitsch, 2010, p.3).
Extracurricular activities, as Eccles et al. (2003) have mentioned, also establish an opportunity to “express and refine one’s identity” (p.876). For example, youth who play or work on school projects with one another, often spend equal to or greater amounts of time with one another at school, during down times, and activities within and outside of school. During this time they develop new friendships, create new experiences together, discuss life goals, family values and aspirations, and develop peer cultures and identities. Often, if youth associate with likeminded students or friends that are encouraging of extracurricular activities, opportunities will also arise for the youth to influence one another in their academic achievements as well (Eccles et al., 2010).

Foster youth, when transitioning to a new school, want to be accepted by their fellow students as normal, and not as the new “foster” student. The process of participating in leisure activities in school, after school, or in their free time, enlarges their opportunities to socialize with their peers, train their social skills, and expand their abilities and talents in sports, music, and dance (Brunnberg et al., 2010). Youth participating in extracurricular activities also gain experiences that resemble classroom like environments. Participants of extracurricular activities become “subordinate to an adult authority figure who sets goals and expectations for children, organizes tasks designed to promote mastery of a given skill, and provides instruction to promote skill development” (Covay & Carbonaro, 2010, p.22). Extracurricular activities and programs also help students work as a team and generate advanced interpersonal skills when working with others. Covay and Carbonaro (2010) surmised that extracurricular activities have an indirect relationship with achievement. They were able to find that
extracurricular activities improve students’ noncognitive skills which were positively linked to academic achievement. And participation in such activities during high schools years led to a decrease in students dropping out.

Unique to California, as Atkinson (2008) has mentioned, is Assembly Bill 408. Under this law it allows foster youth to participate in social activities and extracurricular enrichment programs appropriate to their age, and prohibits regulations, laws, and policies from interfering with youth involvement within these activities (Atkinson, 2008). While they may be protected by this law, foster youth still desire more knowledge about extracurricular activities. They want to be supported by their caregivers, caseworkers and teachers in order to surpass the barriers placed upon them, and move forward with their academic endeavors.

**Current Resources and Programs**

In order to ensure that foster youth are able to obtain resources that help them financially and empower and encourage them mentally through their educational endeavors, career pursuits, and leisure activities, programs like the Guardian Scholars, Independent Living, Y.O.U.T.H. (Youth Offering Unique Tangible Help), Quality Parenting Initiative, EOP’s (Extended Opportunity Programs), Courageous Connection, California youth connection, Chafee Grant Program and Voices have been implemented within many states and in particular the state of California. Many of these programs are located directly on college campuses, online, and through informed personnel such as social workers. However, foster youth do not always have access to these resources
because their guardians and caretakers do not know about them or do not have the time to spend encouraging the youth (Brunnberg et al., 2010).

It is imperative then, for the foster youth population to try and persever through the barriers that obstruct their educational goals and inform themselves whenever possible. “Almost every higher educational institution has an outreach program specifically for foster youth,” stated Stephanie Ortega on April 19\textsuperscript{th} 2010, supervisor for the Guardian Scholar program in San Diego. “They may or may not be called the Guardian Scholar program but function similarly, but it depends on the school and how much funding is available.” The Guardian Scholars is a comprehensive on-campus program that supports former foster youth in their efforts to gain a university, community college or trade school education. The program leverages the expertise and resources of the private sector and public agencies to support students with financial assistance, life coaching, mentoring, housing scholarship dollars and personalized attention (Small Foundations, 2009). Additional resources include the Independent Living Program which is available in all California counties and serves youth from the age 16-21, helping them emancipate, and provides money for college costs, transportation, and up to 30% on housing. Y.O.U.T.H. is a development program that trains youth in facilitation skills and curriculum development, and also provides training to child welfare professionals and the greater community on how to better serve the needs of transition-aged youth in foster care.

The Quality Parenting Initiative seeks to ensure that every child removed from his or her home is cared for by a family who provides skilled nurturing parenting, and the
youth maintain connections with his or her birth family. The initiative also regulates that caregivers need to be respected partners with participants in the child welfare system including agencies, case workers, courts, attorneys and others. Other resources like the California Youth Connection organization advocates for current and former foster youth between the ages of 14-24. Voices, which is a youth-led organization empowers underserved youth 16 to 24 years old by utilizing holistic services throughout their transition from systems of care, at the same time building a supportive community to call home and establishing a solid foundation for a satisfying life. Lastly, The Chaffee Act which was instituted by congress in 2001, provides states with funding to offer services and programs from foster care to independent living, and has created vouchers for up to $5,000 for young adults entering postsecondary institutions (Atkinson, 2008). The National Foster Care Coalition (2007) has outlined specific recommendations of how the State can continue to improve the Chaffee program, which is crucial because of California’s high foster population. They have suggested increasing outreach to eligible youth who are currently in care and to those who have left, as well as to the adopted youth sixteen and above, and engage foster youth as partners in the implementation, expansion, and evaluation of the program. They also have recommended that further collaborations with financial aid administrators and higher education systems be increased. Raising awareness and increasing the availability of resources for the foster youth population is crucial in order to improve their lives. Creating opportunities like the Chaffee Act and Guardian Scholars, for foster youth to achieve their aspirations of
attaining a college education, healthier futures, and informing them of their rights is something they deserve to know as citizens.

_Meaning Through Leisure_

Leisure, whether it be through recreational or extracurricular activities, provides opportunities for foster youth to develop positive meaningful lives. Leisure enables the foster youth population to develop resilience against the negative experiences they encounter. It provides a “safe” place where they can escape from the components of their lives that are not as positive. Iwasaki (2006) has noted that positive emotions and wellbeing can be gained through leisure pursuits. “People can find positive meaning within ordinary daily events and activities (e.g. social leisure, spiritual leisure) by discovering positive values and having positive experiences from these events and activities” (Iwasaki, 2006, p. 252). Discovering positive emotions or experiences that can be associated with a particular activity, program, or event, can also help alleviate depressed or distressed moods, and improve one’s well-being and health (Iwasaki, 2006). For these young people, leisure pursuits are practically a necessity in order for them to maintain their resilience and establish meaning from their lives. Baumeister and Vohs (1991) concluded that there are four main needs that provide meaning to life. Purpose, develops the connection between present and future fulfillment and goals. Values, signify goodness and positive outcomes that can justify particular courses of action. Sense of efficacy, indicates the notions and thoughts that state one can make a difference, and one has control over her/himself and life. Lastly, self-worth, where people need to believe they are good or commendable people (Iwasaki, 2006). Leisure, as Iwasaki (2006) has
mentioned, “appears to act as one essential facilitator to this strength-based pathway leading to meaning-making and life-quality-enhancement” (2006, p.256). Because these youth face so many barriers that impede their educational careers and home lives, establishing positive life meanings that are consistent with Baumeister’s four main needs are extremely important. As the studies have shown, leisure and extracurricular activities are avenues that foster youth can utilize to obtain this route.

**Importance and Need for Additional Programs**

Foster youth need opportunities to begin to feel empowered and be able to visualize a life beyond disappointment and insecurities. Foster youth transitioning from high school to college need support that includes guidance from high school counselors and other adults who can help them aspire to pursue education beyond high school and who can help them make a successful shift from life within the foster care system to living independently. Young people in foster care lack educational guidance and opportunities that allow them to help change their attitudes and knowledge about higher education. Foster care can hinder these young people’s abilities to learn because of the overwhelming instability in their lives. They are ill-equipped to transition from secondary to post secondary education. What they need are programs and opportunities which provide positive support and exposure to higher education, in order to begin changing their attitudes and beliefs about higher educational attainment.

**College Tours**

In order to minimize the stressors that are involved and create an environment that makes searching for colleges simpler, college tours have the ability to reduce the worries
and concerns associated with college selections. College tours allow students to visit campuses, gain insightful information about the admissions process, GPA requirements, specific degrees, college life, dorms, and most importantly, tours expose the participant to the environment on and around the campus. While online access and virtual tours are accessible to gain adequate information about a specific college, on site tours allow the participants to be completely immersed within the process and truly feel a campus’s college life. Martin (2009) stated, “Visits to colleges can provide opportunities for deeper evaluation, allowing students to ask themselves whether or not a school feels like the right place for them” (p.21). College Campus Tours, an official tour company has noted that college tours and campus visits are crucial and completely necessary for college bound students (www.collegecampustours.net, 2010). A college tour may be the first time where a student receives the opportunity to travel away from his or her home or family. A tour may also provide lasting friendships because the experience is so powerful, and at the end of the tour a participant may conclude where he or she would like to attend college.

A College Tour Program

Ehrlich (2004) stated prospective students should always tour the schools they plan to attend. This is exactly why college tours are an integral part of selecting the proper college that best suites the prospective student. In many instances, as Walters (1997) stated, a college tour may be the first personal experience a student will have with a college. Therefore the intent of the City of Davis’s college tour program Teen Scene, is to take foster youth of the greater Davis and Sacramento areas on a weeklong tour of
southern and northern California colleges. Teen Scene will incorporate recreational activities and introduce leisure education to the participants of the program. The experiences they will obtain from attending this trip will help encourage them to continue their high school educations, while creating interest in attending college and encouraging their peers to do the same.
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Formation of Program

In order to create this program, I first had to research the foster youth population. While reading through articles and talking to social workers within the Sacramento area, I came to realize that these youth could benefit from an experiential college tour program. According to the statistics, the importance of education for this population is something they desire, but lack because of all the barriers that impede their educational careers. Because exposure to a fun and adventurous trip could ultimately increase their goals for higher educational achievements, I felt it necessary to create this program. Currently the City of Davis runs a similar college tour program for high school youth, so I was able to base Teen Scene off that program and make the necessary adjustments to properly fit the foster youth population. Next, I proceeded to connect with social workers within the Sacramento area, and they informed me of the necessary steps to acquire foster youth participants for the program. I would need to contact the Sacramento County in order to receive information on any foster youth. The County would communicate with the social workers who would then release a list of eligible participants to the county, whereupon the county would then decide whose information to release to the Community Services Coordinator of Davis. Once this process was completed, the program would have participants. After this information was relayed to me, I proceeded to visit the Guardian Scholars program at the UC Davis campus. I talked with the director of the program about Teen Scene and what my intentions were of obtaining two students of the Guardian
Scholars program to guide the trip. Then I set up a meeting with the current Community Services Coordinator at the City of Davis and presented all the information I had acquired about the program. We established that this program would be beneficial for the foster youth within the greater Sacramento area, and further discussed how other recreational departments within Northern California could eventually use this same program, if positive results and feedback from the current participants and guides had been accounted for.
Chapter 4

PROGRAM MANUAL

TEEN SCENE
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1. Introduction

1.1 Exploration of Diverse Educational Institutions

The colleges that these young teens will be visiting are variations of all higher educational institutions, from community college, to state, to four year universities. This variety will provide them with options and increase their awareness of the different avenues they can select from when preparing for college. The variety will also enable the participants to visualize what path they ultimately will want to take when it comes time for filling out their college applications. Some youth may find it too difficult to transition from their high schools directly to a four year university. Therefore, exposing them to a community college may help reduce anxiety they may experience when application time arrives. Also if the transition seems too grand, knowing about the transfer agreements community colleges make with other educational institutions can be helpful. The differences in student populations at each institution are additional factors these youth may want to be aware of. Coming from a smaller high school, it may seem intimidating or too uncomfortable to transition into a new environment with a larger population than what they are used to. During these visits, opportunities to look at the colleges surrounding environments will also be explored. Along with the guides, they will be able to eat off campus, drive or walk through the neighboring residences, and free time will be allocated when feasible to ensure they can reflect and adequately absorb the experience with their peers. Creating bonds with their fellow peers during this trip will help them expand their socialization skills, and create lasting memories with people who have had similar life experiences.
2.0 Program Operations

2.1 Guide Selection

In order to operate Teen Scene, two guides will be needed to run the program. Hiring will begin in January for the positions. This will allow approximately three months for the guides to receive adequate training and prepare for the trip. To meet the criteria of a guide, they must be current students and belong to the Guardian Scholars Program from either the UC Davis Campus or Sacramento State campus. The director from both campuses’ Guardian Scholars program will be notified about Teen Scene and the availability of the guide positions. Flyers with a description about the program, the necessary criteria to meet the job requirements, and contact information if interested, will be given to the directors to pass out to the Guardian Scholar participants. Interviews will be conducted by the Community Services Coordinator in Davis at City Hall, located at 23 Russell Blvd. The selection of the guides will be based on maturity, previous job experiences, age, year in college, and their driving records.

Guide Responsibilities

Once the Community Services Coordinator has selected the guides, they will need to be finger printed and go through a training process in order to properly and safely run the program. They will be trained over a period of three weeks on the weekends about the details of the program. Collaboratively, the guides help with the structure of the program. They will book the school tours and the hotels, and designate what will be done during periods of down time during the trip. They will lead and plan with the Community Services Coordinator the pre-trip meetings, the focus group discussion, and outreach to
and work with the Sacramento County and social workers in order to receive participants. The guides will also be responsible for assembling a binder which will include: driving directions to each campus and hotels, hotel reservations, self guided tour information, emergency contact information, the itinerary, a day by day outline, incident and accident forms, admission requirements, and a receipt log to account for all expenditures. The City of Davis already has the receipt log and incident/accident forms available. It will be up to the guides to collect the rest. The guides will also be responsible for driving the participants for the entire week in vans belonging to the City of Davis, which the Community Services Coordinator will have booked a month in advance. Guides must also make sure to save all receipts.

2.2 Participant Selection

The guides will communicate with the Sacramento County and inform them of the program they will be running. They will begin communication with the County soon after hire in January, in order to provide adequate time for the County to find viable participants for the guides to operate the program. The County will work alongside social workers who will help with participant selection. Social workers work directly with foster youth, and will be able to notify the County of the potential participants. The guides must work with the County, as this is the only agency that can release foster youth information. Because foster youth are ordinances of the State, any information about them cannot be released to the public. Therefore the guides will keep close communication by contacting and becoming familiar with those persons who work at the County because eventually the County will be able to disclose participant information. Once both parties, social workers
and County members, have been informed about Teen Scene, they will be able to monitor applicable participants who they believe will benefit most from attending the program. There will be a total of twelve available positions that will need filling prior to the pre-trip meetings. The Social workers will submit a list to the County of all the participants who would meet and be available to attend the program. The County would then check to see whose information they would legally be able to release to the City of Davis. Once this process has been completed, the County will be able to disclose to the guides the available participants. Participants will then be selected at random.

2.3 Participant Requirements

The first criteria to become a participant on the trip is that the applicant must be entering or currently in their junior year of High School. The participants must be in good standing with their social workers and seemingly motivated to finish their High School careers. Those participating will be informed of proper conduct and safety guidelines while on the trip. They will be asked to take notes and pictures to document the trip’s process in notebooks and disposable cameras provided by the City of Davis. They also will be required to participate in a focus group addressing their previous life experiences. Additionally they must be able to attend the pre-trip meetings.

3.0 Pre Trip Meeting Outline

Prior to attending the tours, the young teens will participate in three pre-trip meetings. Participants will be informed of this trip through their social workers or foster care guardians. The Sacramento County will work alongside the social workers to help
determine who will benefit from this program especially if they are a current high school junior. Once informed and participants selected, the youth will meet at the Veterans Memorial in Davis for the first meeting. The subsequent meetings will be held at a designated location on the campuses of UC Davis and Sacramento State University. The meetings will be led by current or former participants of the Guardian Scholar program, who will also be guiding the youth on the trip. The trip will take place during the youth’s spring break and will cater to those in their junior year of high school. The guides will be interviewed by the City of Davis’s Community Services Coordinator, who oversees and runs all the outdoor education and recreational programs for the city, and selection will be determined based on their ability and maturity to chaperone the foster youth on a week long program away from their current place of residence. The guides will be given specific instructions and information from the Community Services Coordinator on how to facilitate the focus group, and pre- trip meetings, that participants and when possible the caretakers, will be required to attend.

3.1 Pre-Trip Meetings Will:

- Introduce participants to one another with use of a focus group
- Offer bonding activities with team buildings games, ice breakers, and recreational games.
- Provide educational material and information that will help these young people enroll in college.
- Present opportunities to learn about financial aid, dorms and student housing, and college selections.
• Grant personal insight by guides who were former foster youth.

• Familiarize participants with the UC Davis and Sacramento State Campuses, and their recreational facilities and programs.

• Offer handouts that discuss how to fill out financial aid forms and stress the importance of deadlines.

• Instruct participants on how to prepare for SAT’s.

• Inform them about the process of submitting applications to colleges.

• Provide information about the program, including itinerary, packing requirements, hotel locations, meeting locations and behavioral policies.

• Provide information about the differences between higher educational institutions and what types of procedures they will need to go through prior to turning in the college applications.

• Cover the necessary groundwork in order to attend college.

• Establish the importance of completing High School.

3.2 Pre-Trip Meeting 1

Will take place at Veterans Memorial Center located on 203 East 14th street.

10:00am- Pre Trip meeting will begin, and sign-in sheet will be passed around.

10:15am- Ice breakers and some recreational games will be played.

10:45am- Focus group will start.

12:00pm- Focus group will stop, lunch will be served.

12:30pm- Check list sheet for college requirements will be handed out which will include:
- Summary of deadlines
- EOP deadlines
- SAT’s information
- FAFSA/ Chafee grants, financial aid
- Costs
- Living options
- Loans/grants
- Additional support services and resources:
  - California College Pathways
  - California Fostering Connection
  - Renaissance Scholars Program
  - Pottruck Family Foundation

Explanation of each requirement will be discussed and questions will follow.

2:45pm- Inform participants of the location (map will be provided) and details of the next pre-trip meeting.

2:45-3:00pm- Conclude with a recreational game, and thank participants.

3.3 Pre-Trip Meeting 2

10:00am- Convene at UC Davis in front of the book store.

10:15am- Explore bookstore, look at text books and supplies; inform participants of the buy back text book procedures, and notify them about purchasing test material.
10:45am- Walk to library, explore, look at study sections, librarians desk, rental procedures, computer labs, printing and scanning options and locations, and ID cards and their function.

11:45am - Walk to food court, eat a snack.

12:00pm- Walk to gym (notification about our arrival will be made in advance), and explore. Visitation to the rock wall, weight room, cardio suite, track, and locker rooms will be made.

1:00pm- Time to write in notebooks. Thoughts, ideas, suggestions, questions, and information they may have learned should be written down.

1:30pm- Walk to down town Davis, explore area.

2:15pm- Walk back to the UC Davis campus, play games in the quad area.

3:00pm- End of pre- trip meeting. Inform participants of next meetings location, thank participants.

3.4 Pre-Trip Meeting 3

10:00am- Convene at Sacramento State University, in front of the book store.

10:15am- Explore bookstore.

10:45am- Walk to Library, explore, look at study sections, librarian’s counter, rental procedures, computer labs, printing and scanning options and locations, and ID cards and their function.

11:45am- Walk to food court, eat a snack.
12:00pm- Walk to gym (notification about our arrival will be made in advance), and explore. Visitation to the rock wall, weight room, cardio suite, track, racquetball courts, and locker rooms will be made.

1:00pm- Time to write in notebooks. Thoughts, ideas, suggestions, questions, and information they may have learned should be written down. Job opportunities will be discussed as well as recreational clubs and activities they can participate in at minimal costs.

1:15- Walk to high ropes course, where participants will participate in a high ropes course for the remainder of the afternoon.

2:30pm- Participants will debrief with guides/facilitators about the day and a list will be passed out notifying participants of what to pack and bring with them for the tours, and when to arrive the day of the trip. Phone numbers should be exchanged and emails too, in order to facilitate communication until the trip, thank participants.

3.5 UC Davis and Sacramento State Visitations

These two diverse campuses will ease the transitions into the visitation of the additional campuses they will visit after the pre-trip meetings have concluded. The time spent on these campuses will help them visualize what it may be like for them to attend college in the future. It will provide an opportunity to see what types of students attend the colleges and what kind of environment they feel most comfortable with.
4.0 Focus Group Outline

A focus group will be used as an opportunity for the guides and participants to build collaboration and unity within the group. As Henderson and Bialeschki (1995) have stated, “The value of group interviews lies in their ability to stimulate new ideas among participants by allowing spontaneity and candor” (P.162). It is invaluable for the foster youth population to receive access to a program that will allow them to express their concerns in a collective environment, which can help to stimulate growth and further their knowledge about the importance of education in their lives. The goal of the focus group will be to involve and inform the foster participants with as much knowledge about each other’s goals, obstacles, and aspirations they have for their futures. Additionally the focus group will be used to encourage one another and inform themselves of the opportunities that currently exist for them after high school, so that ultimately they can encourage others who have similar lifestyles to their own. By bringing together a group of participants who have similar upbringings, the scope of this project will be able to capture the emotions and experiences they have as individuals and bring them together as a group, while exposing them to successful outlets for their futures.

4.1 Focus Group Discussion

The focus group will start with introductions during the first pre trip meeting, and will be led by the guides of the trip. The importance of college and the current programs that are similar to Teen Scene will be discussed. An explanation of the goals of the program, as well as the importance of the program will be stated as well. The participants will be asked if written notes can be taken as they comment, and an audio recording device
played, to accurately record their discussion. The commentary will be used for purposes of comparison. Upon the trips completion, a follow up meeting will be held to compare the commentary from prior in order to see the growth of the participants.

**Questions that will guide the focus group discussion will be as follows:**

- When you think about college, what is the first thing that comes to mind?
- What are some components to college that you may be looking forward to?
- What are the some barriers you have encountered with the educational system?
- Can you foresee some inhibitions you may have about attending college?
- What do you like best about High school?
- What do you think you will learn from this trip?
- What would you like to learn from this experience?
- How could this trip be beneficial to others?
- Tell me about your involvement with extracurricular activities.

**4.2 Importance of Focus Group**

These questions will help stimulate thoughts about college, and will help to inform one another about the knowledge they each currently have and their experiences with higher education. There may not be time for all the questions to be discussed, so it will be up to the facilitators to determine which ones are best suited for their group. This process will bring out concerns they may have and factors they feel may inhibit them from applying to college. This discussion will allow the participants to share their personal experiences, while building on other people’s comments and ideas, allowing for a free flowing exchange between the participants. “Focus groups could provide information about a
range of ideas and feelings that individuals have about certain issues, as well as illuminating the differences in perspective between groups of individuals (Rabiee, 2004, p.656). The group discussion will last approximately an hour, maximum two, and will be held at the Veterans Memorial Center located in Davis.

4.3 Limitations of a Focus Group

Some limitations that could arise from using a focus group may be the willingness to initially share information. The participants may feel uncomfortable or not yet ready to share their experiences within a group setting. The focus group may inhibit some from disclosing information, as they may feel intimidated by the process. Another limitation may be the type of care the participants will be in during the process. Depending on the available services and knowledge of their current care givers, some participants in the group may be more experienced with the higher educational system and process than others, and this may affect the overall group dynamic during the discussion. All of these factors will be taken into consideration by the program leaders.

5.0 Recommendations for Before, During, and After the Trip

Before

- Select hotels that serve continental breakfasts.
- Maximum of four youth in each room.
- Males and females sleep separately.
- Petty cash should be allocated to guides for meter parking.
- Guides should book hotels a month in advance.
- Remind participants to write in their notebooks.
• Debrief after every college visit.

During

• Participants should document everything they can in their notebooks.
• Participants should pick up flyers and handouts provided by the schools.
• Participants should take pictures whenever possible.
• Place parking permit on van dashboard.
• Maximum sleep is advised.
• Remind participants to write in their notebooks, and ask questions like:
  • What were some things you liked about the campus?
  • What were some things you disliked?
  • Could you see yourself immersed within that particular environment?
  • If you could have known anything further about that campus what would it be?
  • What places would they have liked to spend more time at?

Questions are important to ask after each campus visit, as it will stimulate thoughts, help debrief, and provide opportunity for the participants to reflect upon their experiences.

• Facilitate conversations during car rides about colleges and the day’s events.
• Always keep excellent communication between guides.
• Communicate with current students on campus, and ask them about their college experiences.
  • What do you like best about this campus?
Why did you select this campus?
How difficult are your classes?
Overall what are things that have made your college experience enjoyable or not so enjoyable?

These questions could lead into further comments and discussions, and hopefully provide a more well rounded and diverse experience for the participants to hear.

After

- Thank participants.
- Continue contact with participants.
- Hold a follow up focus group discussion.

6.0 The Program Basics

Day one of the program will begin on the first Monday of the youth’s high school’s Spring break. Normally this break begins in late March or early April. Participants will convene by eight in the morning, at City Hall, in Davis. The participants will bring with them a duffle bag, suitcase, or some form of luggage to carry their belongings. During the last pre-trip meeting, a list of belongings would have handed out to the participants notifying them of what to bring, so they will arrive prepared Monday morning. They will also have communicated with their fellow participants and social workers, and guardians at the pre-trip meetings on how to arrive at City Hall, if they do not have adequate transportation. There will be two vans, each seating a total of seven people including the guides. Once the luggage has been packed, a behavioral reminder to the participants will be made, in order to ensure safety and appropriate behavior throughout the trip. One cell
phone will be provided to each guide, so they can communicate while driving, and one first aid kit will be allocated to each van. Additionally the binder created by the guides with the hotel reservations and driving instructions mentioned under guide responsibilities will be placed inside the vans. A copy of the binder should be duplicated so each van will have the same information. Petty cash will also be given to the guides to pay for parking and other miscellaneous expenses.

The guided tours for each campus will have been reserved a few weeks prior by the guides, in order to guarantee the youth are provided with an official tour of the schools. To book a tour, one must go online and submit a request for the day and time they would like, on the school’s web site, under the request a tour tab. The official tours will take approximately an hour and the tour guides will inform the students of financial aid, majors the school offers, dorm life, Greek life, meal plans, clubs and sports on campus, and means of transportation. Once the official campus tours have ended, the guides of Teen Scene will take the participants to the foster outreach educational opportunity programs and resource center locations. There they will meet the staff that coordinate and run the programs. The participants will be able to ask questions and inform themselves of the opportunities they may receive on that campus.

7.0 Teen Scene Colleges

1. UC Santa Cruz
2. Cal Poly San Luis Obispo (State)
3. UC Santa Barbara
4. Santa Barbara City College
5. UCLA

6. Monterey Bay (State)

7. San Francisco City College

8. San Francisco State

8.0 Hotel Locations

Santa Barbara-Holiday Inn Santa Barbara 5650 Calle Real 93110
(1 night)

LA-Ramada Limited (Hollywood Hotel) 1160 N Vermont Ave., Los Angeles 90029
(2 nights)

San Francisco-The Opal 1050 Van Ness Ave. San Francisco 94109
(1 night)

9.0 Teen Scene Itinerary

Day 1

6:00-6:45am: Staff arrives; pick up vans from Corp Yard; gas if necessary; place first aid
kits, binders, and snacks in vans.

6:45-7:15am: Teens arrive; load vans; answer any last minute questions.

7:15-9:45am: Drive to Santa Cruz.

10:00-12:00pm: Official Tour of Santa Cruz; visitation to the Smith Renaissance Society.

12:15-1:00pm: Lunch and explore down town Santa Cruz.

1:15-4:30pm: Drive to San Luis Obispo.

4:45-6:30pm: Official Tour of Campus and visit to Educational Opportunity Program.

6:35-7:35pm: Dinner and Explore Down town SLO.
7:45-9:45pm: Drive to Santa Barbra and check into Ramada Hotel, 4770 Calle Real.
9:50-10:30pm: Check in and debrief.

**Day 2**

8:00-9:15am: wake up; pack up; and eat breakfast provided by hotel.
9:15-9:45am: Drive to UCSB; park vans.
10:00-12:00pm: Official Tour of campus and visitation to their extended learning services programs.
12:00-1:45pm: Lunch and explore down town SB.
2:00-2:15pm: Drive to Santa Barbra City College; park vans.
2:30-4:30pm: Official tour of campus and educational resource services center.
4:30-6:45pm: Drive to Hollywood Hotel; check in.
7:15-8:30pm: Dinner at a designated location near hotel.
8:30-9:30pm: Debrief at hotel; play games.
10:00pm: Back in rooms.

**Day 3**

9:00-9:45 Wake up; get ready for the day; eat breakfast.
10:00-11:00am: Drive to UCLA; park vans.
11:15-11:30pm: Official Tour of Campus and Guardian Scholars program.
11:45-12:45pm: Eat lunch; explore surrounding area.
1:00-1:30pm: Drive to Santa Monica; park vans.
1:30-5:00pm: Beach time and exploration of Santa Monica Pier.
5:15-8:00pm: Eat dinner on Santa Monica Strip; and explore area.
8:15-9:15pm: Head back to Hollywood hotel.

9:15-10:00pm: Debrief and discuss itinerary for following day.

**Day 4**

7:45-8:30pm: Wake up, pack up; eat breakfast.

8:30-1:30pm: Drive to California State University Monterey (CSUM); rest stops along the way.

1:45-4:00pm: Tour campus; visit the EOP program and staff.

4:00-5:30pm: Visit beach and surrounding area.

5:45-8:45pm: Drive to San Francisco; stop for dinner along the way.

8:45-9:00pm: Check into the Opal.

9:00-9:45pm: Debrief and discuss following day’s itinerary.

10:00pm: Back in rooms

**Day 5**

8:30-9:30am: Pack up; eat breakfast.

9:30-9:45am: Drive to City College San Francisco; park vans.

9:45-12:00pm: Official tour of campus; visit to the Guardian Scholars program.

12:00pm-1:00pm: Eat lunch; explore surrounding area.

1:00pm-1:15pm: Drive to San Francisco State University.

1:20-4:00pm: Official tour of campus; and visit the EOP program.

4:00-6:15pm: Drive back to Davis to Veterans Memorial.

6:15-7:00- Unpack vans; debrief; notify participants of follow up meeting.
Additional Notes

Keep in mind traffic, parking time, restrooms stops, and meal times, as these variables may take longer than planned and may alter the times listed above. It should be noted that the itinerary can be flexible as you may spend more time at one school than another, as some campuses are smaller than others and may take less time to tour.

Campus visit will include:

- The library
- The bookstore
- Lecture Halls
- Campus center
- Food courts
- Dining commons
- Dorms
- Recreational facilities
- Health and wellness centers
- Colleges of Letters, Arts, and Sciences schools
- Educational Opportunity Programs/Guardian Scholars Program offices

10.0 During Campus Visits

The youth will be provided with notebooks as well as cameras in order for them to help retain and absorb the knowledge and understanding of their experiences. At each school, they will take photographs, journal their thoughts, emotions, and experiences they had with each particular school. At each school, the programs that cater specifically to foster youth such as the Guardian Scholars, and Educational Opportunity Programs will be given extra attention. It is important for these youth to know where the exact locations of these services are and with whom they can communicate, especially if they receive acceptance to these schools. It is additionally important for them to become more
proactive with their educational aspirations. The earlier they establish connections with these resources the better. Early connections could lead to easier transitions from high school to college as they will be more familiar with the domain and the pre-requisites required of them.

At each of the colleges, they will receive opportunities to meet other students and ask them about their college experience. Time will be provided to visit the inside of a dorm and learn about the requirements of their potential living situations. They will be informed about the particular recreational activities and social clubs that are most popular and available to that school. The curriculum will involve knowledge about the valuable resources located in the library, where to go to print papers, the most productive places to study, and discussions about meal plans and health care services on campuses. Overall, the importance of enjoying oneself through one’s college career will also be stressed throughout each college visit. A balance of work and leisure is always a necessity, especially for at risk youth as the research has indicated.

11.0 Educational Opportunity Programs

Educational Opportunity Programs help motivate and inform students to make use of services that enhance their preparation for college, and the job market. They provide support, mentorship, one on one counseling, advising, academic programs, and information that continuously validates the success of those who participate. EOP’s main focus is on those who are low-income and first-generation undergraduates, and students who have potential to succeed, but who have not achieved higher education goals because
of economic and educational background. Excellence, achievement, leadership and community serve as the key elements to an EOP's purpose.

11.1 Educational Opportunity Program Contact Information

UC Santa Cruz

Smith Renaissance Society

Director Corinne Miller

Email: smithsociety@ucsc.edu.

Location: 215 ARC center 1156 High Street.

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

Educational Opportunity Program

Director Susan Sparling

Contact Kathleen Castillo at (805)756-2301

Email: sas@calpoly.edu

Location: Student Academic Services building

UC Santa Barbara

Educational Opportunity Program

Contact Director Lupe Garcia

Email: EOP@sa.ucsb.edu

Location: Student Resource building 2110

Santa Barbara City College

Educational Opportunity Program

Contact Director Marsha Wright Director at 805-965-0581 ext. 2304,
Email: wright@sbcc.edu

Location: Student Services building, 721 Cliff Drive

**UCLA**

Guardian Scholars Program,

Contact Paolo Velasco, M.A., at (310) 825-4730

Email: pvelasco@saonet.ucla.edu.

Location: Student Activity Center B44

**California State Monterey Bay**

Educational Opportunity Program

Contact Coordinator Carina Cisneros

Office Phone: 831-582-3112, Fax: 831-582-4561

Email: ccisneros@csumb.edu

Location: 100 Campus Center, Building 47

**San Francisco City College**

Guardian Scholars Program

Contact: Michael McPartlin, Special Services Manager (415) 239 3682

Email: mmcpartl@ccsf.edu

Location: Student Union MLK Center, Room B

**San Francisco State University**

Guardian Scholars Program

Program Director: Xochitl Sanchez-Zarama

Email: xvsz@sfu.edu 415-405-0546

Location: Student Services Building room 201
UC Davis

Guardian Scholars Program

Director: Arnette Bates (530) 752-9301 or
Email: atbates@ucdavis.edu,

California State University, Sacramento

Guardian Scholars Program

Director: Joy L. Salvetti (916) 278-3643
Email: jsalvetti@csus.edu
Location: 6000 J street Sacramento Hall 259

12.0 Sacramento County Contact Information

Health and Human Services (916) 875-6091 or (916) 875-5000 to speak with an operator
Senior OA for foster Care Eligibility-Sunny Kamar, (916)- 875-5720
Services for Foster Youth- Maria Pagador, program coordinator, (916) 876-5096
Housing program for Foster Youth- Víctor Contreras, program planner, (916) 874-4351

13.0 Follow up meeting

The commentary and discussion stated within the initial focus group will be used to compare with a follow up meeting at the end of the trip. The initial questions will be asked again at the follow up meeting to see if there has been change in thoughts and attitudes. Again, the follow up discussion will be recorded with audio and written documentation. Since a trip like this has never been done within the Sacramento/Davis
region, it will be important to record the changes in behavior to see if the trip would be worthwhile to continue. Additionally it will be important to see if the current trip was effective and important for these youth to have had. Other questions to explore are as follows:

- Now that the trip has concluded what have you learned that you had not known prior?
- What about your experience on this trip will be helpful for you in the future?
- What information would you have added that would have been more helpful for you?
- What components of the trip would you have liked to focus more on?

Hopefully by asking these follow up questions in addition to the initial questions, the facilitators will receive a better understanding of the benefits of the trip, as well as their performance guiding it. Once all meetings have been documented, the guides and community services coordinator will convene and look over the notes. By comparing what was previously stated prior to the trips start, to the ending of the trip, there will hopefully be a noticeable difference in attitudes and understating of college from the participants.

14.0 Funding

Funding for Teen Scene will be based on grants. Seeking funds would require the services of the City of Davis’s grant writer. In order to receive funds by the trips start date, writing must begin at least a year in advance. Potential funders would include:
Stuart Foundation, John Burton foundation, Walter S. Johnson, John H. Chafee Funds, California Wellness Foundation, Lumina Foundation, and the Taylor Zemo Foundation. Some subsidies may also be sought through the Sacramento County. One would need to contact the Sacramento County and speak with a social worker. An additional source for receiving funds would be the Greek systems at UC Davis and Sacramento State. The Greek system must complete philanthropic/community service hours every semester or quarter, and therefore could potentially raise money for the program to run. One could seek general funding or explore the possibility of individual sororities or fraternities sponsoring (and perhaps mentoring) a program participant. One would need to contact the president of the Sorority/Fraternity and inquire if this could be a possibility or the Director of Greek affairs.

**Greek Affairs Contact Information**

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(916) 278-6595
Chapter 5
CONCLUSION

The purpose of this program as mentioned is to provide an opportunity for these youth to become exposed to higher educational institutions. Many foster youth have never even set foot on a college campus nor have they ever seen one. The program will help encourage these young teens to remain in school by showing them the benefits and opportunities that will assist them along the way. The program will further work to establish the importance of partaking in recreational activities, joining clubs and extracurricular endeavors during high school and college. The more exposure these youth have to successful programs, opportunities and resources that are located within their communities, the easier the transition will be for them when they age out and begin attending college.

Amidst all the barriers they face and struggles many go through, having an opportunity to partake in a program such as Teen Scene, can only help to reinforce and establish the importance of continuing their educations. While this program has been formatted to fit the needs of foster youth, there are several other populations that may benefit from a program like this. Additional populations could be international students, inner city youth, and rural area high school students. Exposing these populations to the college environment could help ease the transition from high school to college, while creating friendships and positive memories, hopefully for a lifetime. However, in order for this program to work for other populations, the success of the trip must first be
documented and then shared with other recreational agencies. Once other recreational
agencies become aware of this trip within the Sacramento area, then one can only hope
that the more people who become exposed to the importance of education and the
positive effects it can have on foster youth, then the lower the tendencies for pregnancies,
incarceration, homelessness, and lack of education will be.
REFERENCES


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Guardian scholars Program, San Diego. Phone Interview with Stephanie Ortega, April 19th, 2010.


