

CLARK COUNTY, NV

**SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:**

- **FAAYT** volunteer activity at 3 square, February 15th
- **FAAYT** monthly meeting, February 20th 4-6 pm, 301 E. Clark Avenue
- **FAAYT** outing to Gravady, March 28th
- **FAAYT** outing to Seaquest Interactive Aquarium, April 2nd
- To attend events, please contact Rebecca Lucente at 702-455-0573 or Rori Brantley at 702-455-8029.

Independent Living

FEBRUARY 2018

Foster and Adopted Youth Together

Foster and Adopted Youth Together (FAAYT) will be focusing on recruitment and the development of youth advocates as the 2019 legislation year approaches. FAAYT will be restructuring and asking that any youth interested in becoming leaders among their peers contact the Independent Living unit.

Those expressing interest will be responsible for the re-vamping of FAAYT. They will be tasked with identifying changes in which they would like to see occur within our system of care. This group will be fully youth-driven. The Department of Family Services will be present to assist and support the group in any identified tasks. These could include: event planning for all teens in care, a youth written newsletter, advo-

cacy for change, and social media updates.

The sky is the limit for this group. Existing meeting days and times are listed to the side. Beginning in March, the youth will be responsible for designating future meeting times and locations.

We are very excited to see what goals this group will develop and see them come to fruition. If you are interested in becoming part of this core group of leaders please contact, Rebecca Lucente at 702-455-0573 or Rori Brantley at 702-455-8029.



thinkLaw-Critical Thinking

The Department of Family Services is proud to announce that they have purchased a curriculum used to enhance youth's critical thinking skills. The thinkLaw program is a "learner-centered" curriculum. IL staff is present to facilitate discussion, not to instruct. ThinkLaw uses real life

legal cases as a tool for teaching a wide array of critical thinking skills.

IL initiated the program with a small group of youth placed at St. Jude's Ranch for Children. The youth received a monetary incentive for their participation. Youth

amazed IL staff in the excitement they demonstrated over the material and engagement.

DFS IL is collaborating with Eagle Quest, facilitating sessions with 20 identified youth. DFS is reaching out to other Higher Level of Care agencies to offer this program to other teens.

Hot Topic-Bus Passes

The Independent Living unit offers bus passes to youth 14-18 years of age. In order to receive these, youth must be assigned to an IL worker. Bus passes can be used for the following: IL classes, school events, employment searches/interviews, cultural activities, FAAYT meetings/activities, and other self-sufficiency programs.

The IL unit has implemented the following trial protocol for bus pass issuance. Youth should call their assigned IL worker 3-5 business days in advance to notify them of

the need. Youth and/or their caregiver will be able to pick the bus pass up from the IL location at 301 E. Clark Avenue, 4th floor LV NV 89101. If you cannot pick the bus pass up, please notify your worker prior to your next 90 day in person contact; one will be provided at that time.

As the IL unit is always looking at ways to increase self-sufficiency; this policy was put in place to assist youth in organization and planning.



Up and Coming-Scholarship workshops

As the end of the school year approaches and graduation season is in full effect, the Independent Living unit will begin offering scholarship workshops.

These workshops will be extended to both youth and caregivers. IL staff will present scholarship and financial aid options for youth in care. Youth will be able to utilize computers to assist in the completion

of the Federal Student Aid application (FAFSA), Educational Training Voucher (ETV), among others. Caregivers will be provided the information to assist youth with the application process and how to monitor award status.

Workshops will take place at the Central DFS location, 121 S. MLK Blvd, and offered beginning in February 2018.

IL is excited and proud to offer these workshops as we strive to increase the graduation and post secondary education rates amongst youth in care as well as the state of Nevada as a whole.

For more information and workshop dates, please contact Andrea Blanco at 702-455-7750.

"Education is the key to unlock the golden door of freedom"

- George Washington Carver

IL is specializing!!!

As our Independent Living team grows, we are looking to match staff with specialties and interests.

IL has acquired a Spanish speaking staff member. Andrea Blanco is assigned to youth and families whose primary language is Spanish to ensure their needs are met and communication flows freely.

Rori Brantley will be teaming with

the ICWA permanency unit and assigned to youth who are members of tribal communities. These cases are commonly referred to as "ICWA" since the Indian Child Welfare Act applies

IL is working on assigning staff who wish to specialize in a variety of areas, such as: pregnant and parenting teens, dual custody cases, and

disabled youth to name a few.

If you have any questions, please contact Ariel Racine at 702-455-1184.

