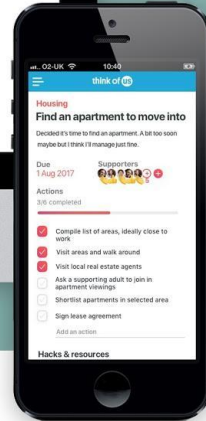
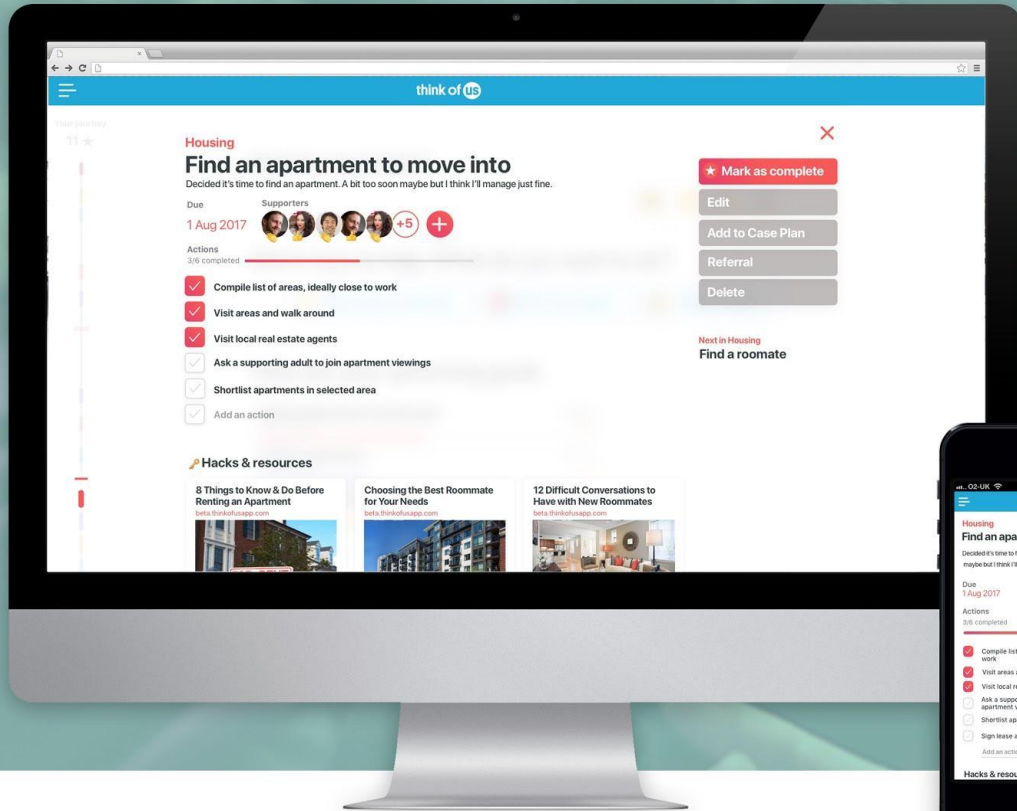


think of **us**

**LEVERAGING INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY TO
IMPROVE THE LIVES OF YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE**



THE THINK OF US PLATFORM



Think of Us is a web and mobile life-coaching platform that helps foster youth navigate their transition to adulthood. It ensures that youth are aware of all of the steps they have to take to navigate the foster-care system and that they are prepared to live independently after they turn 18 and are on their own.

CURRENT OUTCOMES FOR YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE

50%

**GRADUATE
HIGH SCHOOL**

20%

**PURSUE
POST-SECONDARY
EDUCATION**

3%

**ENROLL AND WILL
COMPLETE 4 YEAR
DEGREE BY AGE 26**

1.8%

**WILL GET A
COLLEGE DEGREE**

A SMALL COMPANY WITH A BIG MISSION



- We want to help young people who have been in foster care successfully transition into adulthood
- A big part of this transition is education

WHAT MAKES THINK OF US DIFFERENT



- Hosting hackathons
- Working with young people to identify their needs and pathways to success
- Meeting young people where they're at Translate this to our platform, which is available on their phones and computer

HOW WE'RE MAKING THINGS BETTER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



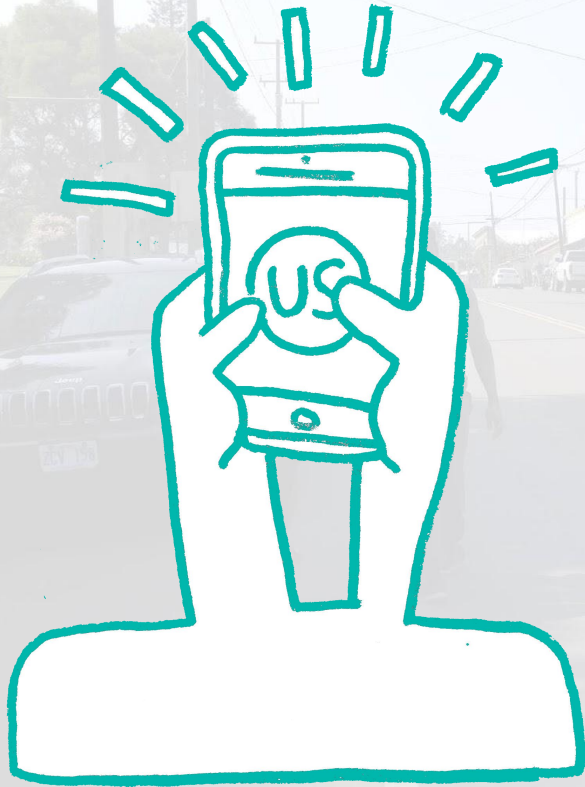
- Setting goals the right way
- Enabling young people to visualize their future
- Providing contextually aware resources around education and employment both before, during, and after higher education

HOW WE'RE MAKING THINGS BETTER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



- Hand-delivering what a young person needs, when they need it
- Increasing financial literacy
- Being a trusted source of information in times of need
- Bringing a young person's biggest cheerleaders to them

THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT



- Getting to know our youth even better
- Bringing the college tour to the young person; 360 degree tour
- Building a roadmap to success for each young person

think of **us**

darrell@thinkof-us.org

#HACK
FOSTERCARE
Los Angeles

THE CALIFORNIA COLLEGE PATHWAYS
BLUEPRINT CONFERENCE 2017

LA County Department of Children and Family Services
Genie Chough • gchough@dcfs.lacounty.gov • October 17, 2017

OVERVIEW



1. The Technology Gap
2. So what is a “Hackathon” anyway?
3. How did it work?
4. What came out of #HackFosterCareLA?

SEARCH

[Advanced Search](#)

RESOURCES

- Report Child Abuse
- En Espanol
- For Mandated Reporters Only (Complete your written report on-line)
- DCFS Services
- DCFS Policy
- DCFS Contracts
- DCFS Resource Families
- Board Correspondence
- Board of Supervisors
- Commission for Children and Families
- Inter-Agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (ICAN)
- LA County 211
- LA County Runaway & Abducted Children
- LA County Helps
- LA County Online
- LA County Annual Report
- LA County Resource Matrix
- Safely Surrendered Baby Law
- Delinquent Parents

EVENTS CALENDAR

Please Select:

Apr
2017



Attend empowering trainings, activities and events to strengthen your family

- [2015-2016 DCFS Biennial Report](#)
- [DCFS Newsletter Winter 2017](#)

RECENT UPDATES

- 04.19 Board Motions: Board Proclaims April 17, 2017 as "Cambodian Genocide Remembrance Day" | April 17 through 22, 2017 as "National Community Development Week" | April 2017 as "Child Abuse Prevention Month" | April 2017 as "Fair Housing Month" | the week of April 9 through 15, 2017 as "Women and Girls in STEM Week" throughout Los Angeles County
- 04.18 Adoption: Wednesday's Child Broadcast for 04/19/17 and 04/23/17 - IZAIYAH - Segment # 856
- 04.13 In The News: Chronicle of Social Change: In Trump Era, L.A. Social Workers Seek Tighter Collaboration with Immigration Officers | Spectrum News: Palmdale Regional Hospital Helps to Make Easter Special for 400 Children | La Opinión: 'Los dos siempre quisimos hijos' (English Translation)
- 03.16 Second 90-day Progress Report on the Consolidation of DCFS Public Health Nurse Program Within the Department of Public Health

[more updates>>](#)

DCFS EVENTS CALENDAR

- 04.03.17 YMO Peer Resource Center Events for April 2017
- 04.03.17 Career Club Workshop for youth Age 16-25
Date: April 10 - May 25
- 03.29.17 2017 Unstoppable Awards for Foster Youth- Deadline Extended to April 30th
- 02.27.17 Free Job and Resource Fair Open to the Community
Date: April 1, 2017
- 02.07.17 Unstoppable Awards Scholarships For Foster Youth
Deadline: April 15, 2017 | Application

[more events>>](#)

L.A. County Department of Children & Family Services
Foster Care Search System
Caregiver Home Profile

RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL
Learn How to Become a Foster or Adoptive Parent

L.A. County Resource Family Approval Tracking System for Community Partners

Childrens Trust Fund

APPROVED RELATIVE CAREGIVER (ARC) PROGRAM

KinshipCareServices
Providing a Helping Hand to Relative Caregivers

For Mandated Reporters Only (Complete your written report online)

DCFS Contracts
Open Bids & Solicitations

quarterly newsletter

DEPARTMENT NEWS

- Board Motions
- eCounty Digest Newsletter
- In the News
- Success Stories
- Media Relations
- Press Releases
- DCFS Newsletters
- DCFS Publication Awards

1. The Technology Gap

2. So What is a “Hackathon” anyway?

- Parties with a shared interest come together to develop solutions, generally over a compressed timeframe.
- Originated in the tech world, but can also be legal, policy or general problem-solving sessions.
- Child Welfare Hackathons in: Washington DC, New York, Silicon Valley, and most recently, Los Angeles.

3. How did #HackFosterCareLA work?

Key to our Success:

- A single lead partner (Winnie Wechsler, Anthony and Jeanne Pritzker Family Foundation) and a diverse group of supporting partners.
- #HackFosterCareLA sponsors:



FOSTERING MEDIA CONNECTIONS • THE CHILDREN'S PARTNERSHIP • THINK OF US
CALIFORNIA YOUTH CONNECTION • TXT: TEENS EXPLORING TECHNOLOGY

3. How did #HackFosterCareLA work?

Bringing the Right Folks Together:

- Who are the “right” folks? Anyone with a shared interest in developing a solution.
- #HackFosterCareLA included 60+ coders, designers, and developers from technology sector.
- Also included 250+ subject matter experts to guide tech folks: foster youth, policymakers, social workers, non-profits, caregivers.

3. How did #HackFosterCareLA work?

The Setting & The Agenda:

- Took place at FullScreen Media, a tech firm in Silicon Beach.
- Launched 2-day event with Mayor Garcetti, Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, and DCFS Acting Director Brandon Nichols.
- Assembled ten teams with 4 to 6 members each.
- Each team tackled 1 of the 5 Challenges, and in 26 hours, developed solutions that could serve as basis for future work.

3. How did #HackFosterCareLA work?

Identifying the Problems:

- Devoted pre-planning months to prioritizing biggest challenges, and identifying ones ripe for technological solutions.
- Developed 5 “Challenges” to hack on:
 - (1) Increasing Foster Parent Recruitment
 - (2) Facilitating Visitation
 - (3) Optimizing Access to Resources
 - (4) Improving Communications between Youth/Families & Social Workers
 - (5) Enhancing Transition Planning for Foster Youth

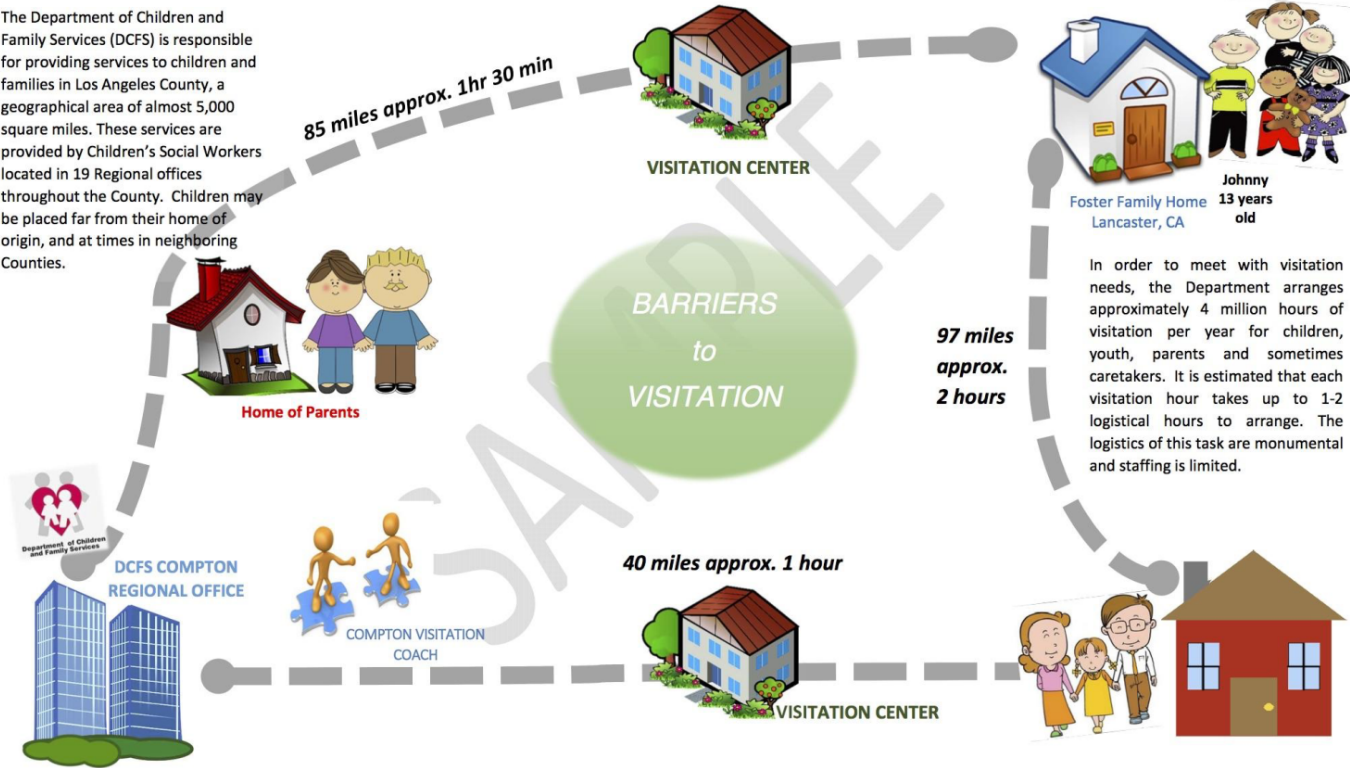
Hack Challenge: Visitation



"The number of visits and who is doing the monitoring was a big deciding factor for me in taking our [foster] kids. I work and I only have 4 hours every night to take care of 3 kids, including dinner, homework, therapy, etc. It's simply too much for me to spend 2 hours, 2 or 3 times a week for visits."

Theresa, Foster Mother

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is responsible for providing services to children and families in Los Angeles County, a geographical area of almost 5,000 square miles. These services are provided by Children's Social Workers located in 19 Regional offices throughout the County. Children may be placed far from their home of origin, and at times in neighboring Counties.



Social Worker provided example of a "typical visitation"

In order to meet with visitation needs, the Department arranges approximately 4 million hours of visitation per year for children, youth, parents and sometimes caretakers. It is estimated that each visitation hour takes up to 1-2 logistical hours to arrange. The logistics of this task are monumental and staffing is limited.

Hack Challenge: TILP



"I want to go into sports management – that's my plan. But this wasn't really included in my transition planning. I didn't pay much attention to the TILP for that reason. But if I had had more say in the process, I would probably be more committed to the TILP."

-Eric, 19

SAMPLE TILP

Goal	Activities	Responsible Party	Planned Completion Date
Apply to College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with school counselor to strategize on finishing A-G requirements Take SAT prep class and take SAT exam Apply to college 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth CSW will assist locating SAT class if not offered at school CSW will refer youth to Education Consultant if additional assistance is needed ILP will fund SAT class and assist with college applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 09/10/2012 to meet counselor 10/9/2012 (date of next SAT exam, deadline to register is 9/10/2012.) No later than 11/30/2012 for college applications (follow specific college application deadlines)
Obtain funding for college	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend ILP financial aid workshop Apply for scholarships, grants, and financial aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth ILP will hold workshop and assist with financial aid applications CSW will refer youth to Education Consultant if additional assistance is needed 	03/15/2013
Learn to drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take driver's training class Take driving exam Obtain driver's insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Caretaker ILP/DCFS will provide funding for training and insurance 	12/30/2012
Obtain part-time employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit school's career center Obtain work permit Register at local OneSource Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Caretaker CSW will take youth to register at OneSource ILP will provide funding for job transportation and job clothing 	02/30/2012
Establish permanent connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find mentor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSW/ILP will refer to mentoring program 	02/30/2012

The TILP is a state document generated in the youth's case file. It is then uploaded to the Child Welfare Services Case Management System.

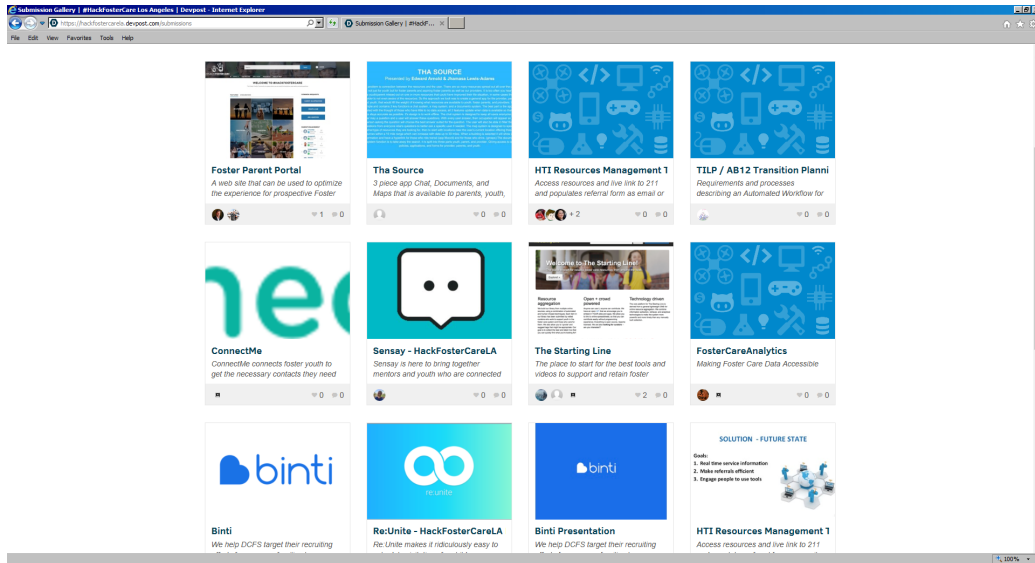
The information can be typed into the electronic case file, and then signed by the youth, caregiver and caseworker. The caseworker can also print a blank copy, handwrite the TILP, then upload the completed document into the system.

The TILP is designed to cover the youth's goals for the next 6 months.

The key to an effective TILP is to take the youth's long-term goals for the future and break them down into smaller goals that can be achieved during the 6 month. The plan is meant to help youth lay out achievable goals on their road to adulthood.

3. How did #HackFosterCareLA work?

Culminated with presentations by the teams. Many teams developed the framework for a working app. Demos can be viewed at:
<https://hackfostercarela.devpost.com/submissions>



4. What Came out of #HackFosterCareLA?

New Partnerships:

- Walked away with proof that, without constraints, we can collaborate to make progress—even in just one night.
- Established alternative way to work with external partners. Current contract process is burdensome and takes ~18 months.
- Worked closely with philanthropic funders who may be willing to support future related efforts.

4. What Came out of #HackFosterCareLA?

New Potential Solutions:

- Pursuing three demos for further potential development.
- Developing a visitation pilot involving external partners and fleshing out the functionalities and requirements.
- Continuing to explore whether we can build the software internally or work with Hackathon partners.

#HACK FOSTERCARE *Los Angeles*

1PM FRIDAY APRIL 28TH TO
4PM SATURDAY APRIL 29TH
AT FULLSCREEN MEDIA
PLAYA VISTA, CA 90094



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CALIFORNIA YOUTH CONNECTION • TXT: TEENS EXPLORING TECHNOLOGY

Hack Foster Care

The View from Silicon Valley

The mission of Hack Foster Care is to use technology to improve the lives of foster youth and families in the child welfare system. We bring together tech leaders, child welfare agencies, foster youth and families to develop solutions that make a meaningful difference.



HACK FOSTER CARE SUMMIT
The Best and Brightest United Together



FEB. 27-28, 2017 | MICROSOFT HEADQUARTERS, MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA



*Supporting Opportunity and Success
for Foster Youth Scholars*

Foster Families

What We Know

- 428,000 youth in the national foster care system¹
- Foster families have much lower incomes and education levels than other families with children²
- Foster teens end up in group homes and have the worst outcomes
- Potential parents with options for adopting are turned off by the process.

How Might We...

- Use data and technology to define the characteristics of optimal foster families
- Recruit massive numbers of optimal foster families and provide service levels that are customer-centric
- Implement matching technology for the best outcomes for youth

Aging out of foster care

What We Know

- 30,000 youth age out each year³
- 50% spend time in homeless shelter or jail; 50% of women pregnant by age 19³
- Many or most will be on public assistance for much of their lives
- Positive adult connections are highly correlated to better outcomes

How Might We...

- Use technology to identify available rooms and housing for young adults aging out of the system
- Develop massive social and professional networks of adult mentors for young adults

Education and Career

What We Know

- 50% complete high school; 3% earn a 4-year degree
- Average earnings at age 24 are \$690 (35% of “normal”)⁴
- Data shows that the only youth with “normal” income are those who worked during high school⁴
- Only 25% work while in high school⁴

How Might We...

- Provide individualized support (mentoring, tutoring) to every high school foster youth
- Ensure that 100% get STEM training and paid internships and jobs during high school & college
- Provide college and post-secondary persistence support to 100%

Access to Technology

What We Know

- 90% of teens have laptop access at home (80% of low-income teens)⁵
- < 20% of foster teens have laptop access at home⁵
- Laptop access is highly correlated to better school performance, higher self-esteem and lower rates of depression in foster youth⁶

How Might We...

- Ensure that every foster youth ages 13 – 21 has access to a laptop, productivity software, smart phone and high speed internet
- Offer safety training and support

Results and Activities

Topic

- Business Engagement
- Community Engagement
- Laptop access
- Internships & STEM
- Scholarships
- Foster Families
- Identity Theft
- Data tracking

Activity

- SVLG Foundation
- Junior League of San Jose
- 260 – about half of teens
- 100 in summer 2017
- Integrated Device Tech-IDT
- Impact as One; LinkedIn
- Symantec / LifeLock
- Data Zone / Foster Vision



think of us



HACK FOSTER CARE SUMMIT
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Footnotes

1. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/afcars-report-23>
2. <http://www.fostercoalition.com/who-are-foster-parents-demographic>
3. [https://hilton-production.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/79/attachments/Foster Youth Strategy Paper.pdf?1440415036](https://hilton-production.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/79/attachments/Foster_Youth_Strategy_Paper.pdf?1440415036)
4. <https://aspe.hhs.gov/pdf-report/coming-age-employment-outcomes-youth-who-age-out-foster-care-through-their-middle-twenties>
5. Pew Research Center, 2014; iFoster survey of 3,063 foster youth in Fresno, Los Angeles, Madera and Placer Counties. www.ifoster.org
6. <http://fostercarecounts.org/research-released-today-shows-acute-digital-divide-for-foster-youth/> Research by Jeremy Goldbach, University of Southern California
7. <http://www.foster-america.org/founding-story/>
8. <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/management/workforce/retention/workforce-retention/turnover/>
9. <http://www.governing.com/columns/smart-mgmt/gov-social-workers-turnover.html>