

# John Burton Foundation for Children Without Homes

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January 10, 2013

The Honorable Vito Chiesa  
1010 10th  
Suite 6500  
Modesto, CA 95354

Dear Supervisor Chiesa:

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge an excellent program in your county that has had proven success in reducing homelessness and involvement with the criminal justice system amongst former foster youth: the Transitional Housing Placement Plus (THP-Plus) Program. THP-Plus provides up to 24 months of affordable housing and comprehensive supportive services to former foster and probation youth ages 18-24. THP-Plus was established in 2001 by the California State Legislature, and since then, has served well over 8,000 young people who would otherwise face unstable housing and homelessness.

Enclosed with this letter is the THP-Plus Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2011-12. The Annual Report is a product of the John Burton Foundation's THP-Plus Statewide Implementation Project. The Project's goal is to end homelessness among youth formerly in the foster care and juvenile probation systems by expanding access to THP-Plus throughout California. Currently, 50 of California's 58 counties have THP-Plus programs, and over this past fiscal year, THP-Plus provided affordable housing and supportive services to 2,151 former foster and probation youth.

Even with the passage of Assembly Bill 12 which extended foster care to age 21, THP-Plus will continue to play an incredibly important role, providing housing and supportive services to former foster youth who either are not eligible for extended foster care, have chosen to opt out, or who have reached the upper age limit of 21 years old. THP-Plus has been rigorously evaluated and has been found to help our state's most vulnerable youth increase their levels of employment and education and reduce their levels of criminal justice involvement and homelessness.

In Stanislaus County, Aspiranet is the THP-Plus provider. They do amazing work that prevents some of our state's most vulnerable youth from falling through the cracks. If you are not already acquainted with this program, I encourage you to schedule a site visit or familiarize yourself with their program and the young people they serve.

Below is the contact information for your county's THP-Plus provider:

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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info@johnburtonfoundation.org  
www.johnburtonfoundation.org



**Aspiranet**

Luis Madrid, THP-Plus Program Manager

(209) 725-2125

[lmadrid@aspiranet.org](mailto:lmadrid@aspiranet.org)

Should you have questions about the THP-Plus Statewide Implementation Project, please feel free to contact Amy Lemley, Policy Director at the John Burton Foundation.

In Peace and Friendship,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Burton", written in a cursive style.

Senator John Burton (retired)  
Chair, John Burton Foundation

# 2011-12 THP-Plus Annual Report



**The John Burton Foundation  
for Children Without Homes**





## TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PLACEMENT PLUS PROGRAM (THP-PLUS)

THP-Plus provides safe, affordable housing and comprehensive supportive services to youth formerly in the foster care and juvenile probation systems in California. This report is a summary of THP-Plus in Fiscal Year 2011-12.

## PARTICIPANT PROFILE: Christine Hicks

The eldest of six siblings, Christine Hicks entered the foster care system in Los Angeles at age five. After at least eight different foster care placements, including both foster homes and group homes, Christine emancipated from the system at age 18. A year later she graduated from high school, started working, and enrolled in college. Christine soon realized that attending college did not allow her to work as many hours as she needed to support herself and decided to drop out.

Over the next couple of years, Christine entered and exited a few different transitional housing programs in Los Angeles. While settling into her third program, which happened to be a THP-Plus program, Christine became pregnant. Unfortunately that program could not support parenting youth, so she moved in temporarily with an aunt. Aware that she needed to secure a stable living environment for herself and her daughter, Christine recalled that one of her old group homes was owned by a family whose daughter ran a THP-Plus program that accepted parenting youth. She reconnected with the family and was accepted into C.H.A.I.N. Reaction's THP-Plus program in Los Angeles.

For the next 18 months, the program's director and case manager worked intensively with Christine to develop goals and work towards achieving them. Being a mother had awoken a change in her. She developed what she describes as a "healthy fear" of failing, of ending up on the streets. Christine realized "providing for myself is one thing, but providing for another person is entirely different". She wished she had developed this "fear" earlier in life, but was thankful that once she found it, she had people there to help guide her.

Christine knew that working jobs here and there was not going to cut it. With the support of the THP-Plus staff, she pursued a career as a pharmacy technician. She completed school at American Career College and received her California Pharmacy Technician license. She graduated from C.H.A.I.N. Reaction's THP-Plus program and had saved enough money to move into a two-bedroom apartment with her daughter and an old childhood friend. Christine is currently preparing for the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board Exam, and working to support herself and her 2 year-old daughter, Riley.

Looking back at the decisions she has made and at her time in THP-Plus, Christine offers sound advice: "Ask questions, save money, and learn how to budget. Respect everyone and yourself while in the program, stay in school, and wait to become a parent until you know you are ready." Christine has made lifelong connections with the staff at C.H.A.I.N. Reaction, and wants them to see her succeed.

## THP-PLUS BY THE NUMBERS

2,151 youth served between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012

1,386 housing capacity as of June 30, 2012

18.8% single-site housing model

67.6% scattered-site Housing model

13.6% host-family housing model

## AVERAGE MONTHLY COST PER PARTICIPANT

\$2,580 in single-site housing model

\$2,289 in scattered-site housing model

\$1,798 in host-family housing model

50 participating counties

57 THP-Plus service providers

47 providers operate in one county

10 providers operate in two or more counties

81 individual THP-Plus programs



*“Knowing is not enough, we must apply...  
Willing is not enough, we must do.  
Thanks to THP-Plus, I’ve applied and I’ve done.”*  
- Teddy M. (New Alternatives, San Diego County)



## FALL 2012



Dear THP-Plus Partners:

On behalf of the John Burton Foundation for Children Without Homes, we are pleased to release the Transitional Housing Placement Plus (THP-Plus) Program Annual Report for Fiscal Year (FY) 2011-12. Since its inception in 2001, THP-Plus has supported youth exiting the foster care and juvenile probation systems in their transition to adulthood. This report highlights the achievements of THP-Plus over the last fiscal year while acknowledging the challenges the program has faced, and provides a summary of the recent policy changes affecting the program.

In 2011-12, THP-Plus provided former foster youth and youth exiting juvenile probation with housing and comprehensive supportive services including educational assistance, counseling, employment support and training, and mental health services. Like many in California, these youth face increasing challenges in finding stable employment and safe, affordable housing. We are pleased to share that during the last fiscal year, 50 of California’s 58 counties implemented THP-Plus programs providing affordable housing and supportive services to 2,151 youth, ages 18 to 24.

THP-Plus providers, youth, and community supporters are in agreement that THP-Plus is a much-needed safety net and has proven to be an effective tool in preventing homelessness and disengagement. Unfortunately, in 2011 Governor Brown’s Realignment of Child Welfare Services moved control of the THP-Plus budget from the state to the counties, making THP-Plus increasingly vulnerable to local budgetary decision-making. In an effort to sustain and enhance the success of THP-Plus programs, the THP-Plus Statewide Implementation Project has continued to provide technical assistance, training, policy advocacy, and evaluation. A key component of the THP-Plus Statewide Implementation Project is the THP-Plus Participant Tracking System, which collects comprehensive data on the progress youth make during their time in the program. Sixty-eight percent of THP-Plus providers currently use the Participant Tracking System.

Also included in the report is an update on the implementation of Assembly Bill 12, the California Fostering Connections to Success Act, which took effect on January 1, 2012, as well as a timely review of the status of THP-Plus Foster Care (THP+FC). THP+FC is one of the new placement options for youth participating in extended foster care and is modeled after the existing THP-Plus program. Based on years of success of providing thousands of youth with housing and supportive services, it is clear that these two complementary programs can provide a safety net for transition-age youth whether they are participating in extended foster care or have exited the foster care or juvenile probation systems.

We applaud the hard work of the THP-Plus community; nonprofit providers, county administrators, and the young adult participants. We look forward to a day when every youth in California makes a safe, supported transition from the foster care and juvenile probation systems.

Senator John Burton (retired)  
Chair, John Burton Foundation

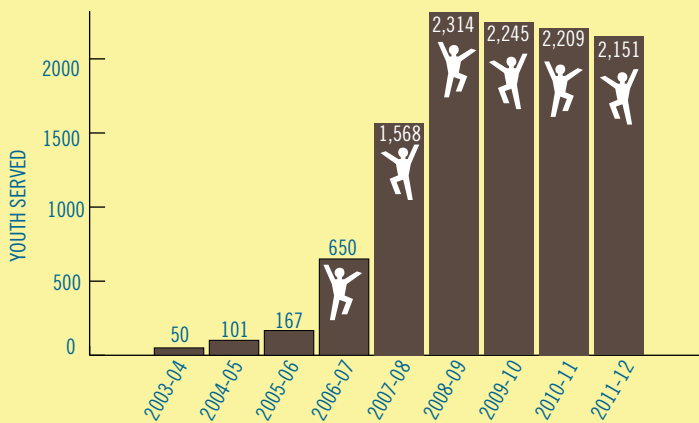


# HOW MANY YOUTH DID THP-PLUS SERVE IN 2011-12?

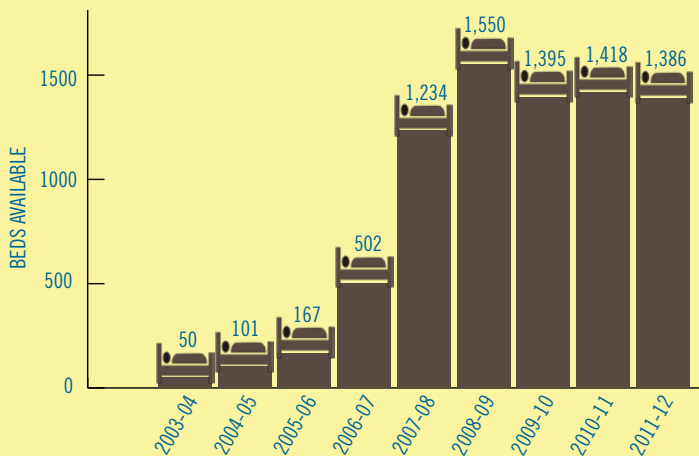


After experiencing a reduction to the FY 2010-11 annual budget from \$35.7 million to \$35.4 million, THP-Plus was affected by the 2011 Realignment of Child Welfare Services and the development of THP-Plus Foster Care. Some counties made minor reductions to bed availability during FY 2011-12, resulting in a 2% overall decrease in THP-Plus housing slots from FY 2010-11. THP-Plus served a total population of 2,151 youth during FY 2011-12, a decrease of less than 3% from FY 2010-11.

## YOUTH SERVED OVER 12-MONTH PERIOD



## THP-PLUS HOUSING CAPACITY AS OF FISCAL YEAR-END



# PARTICIPANT PROFILE:



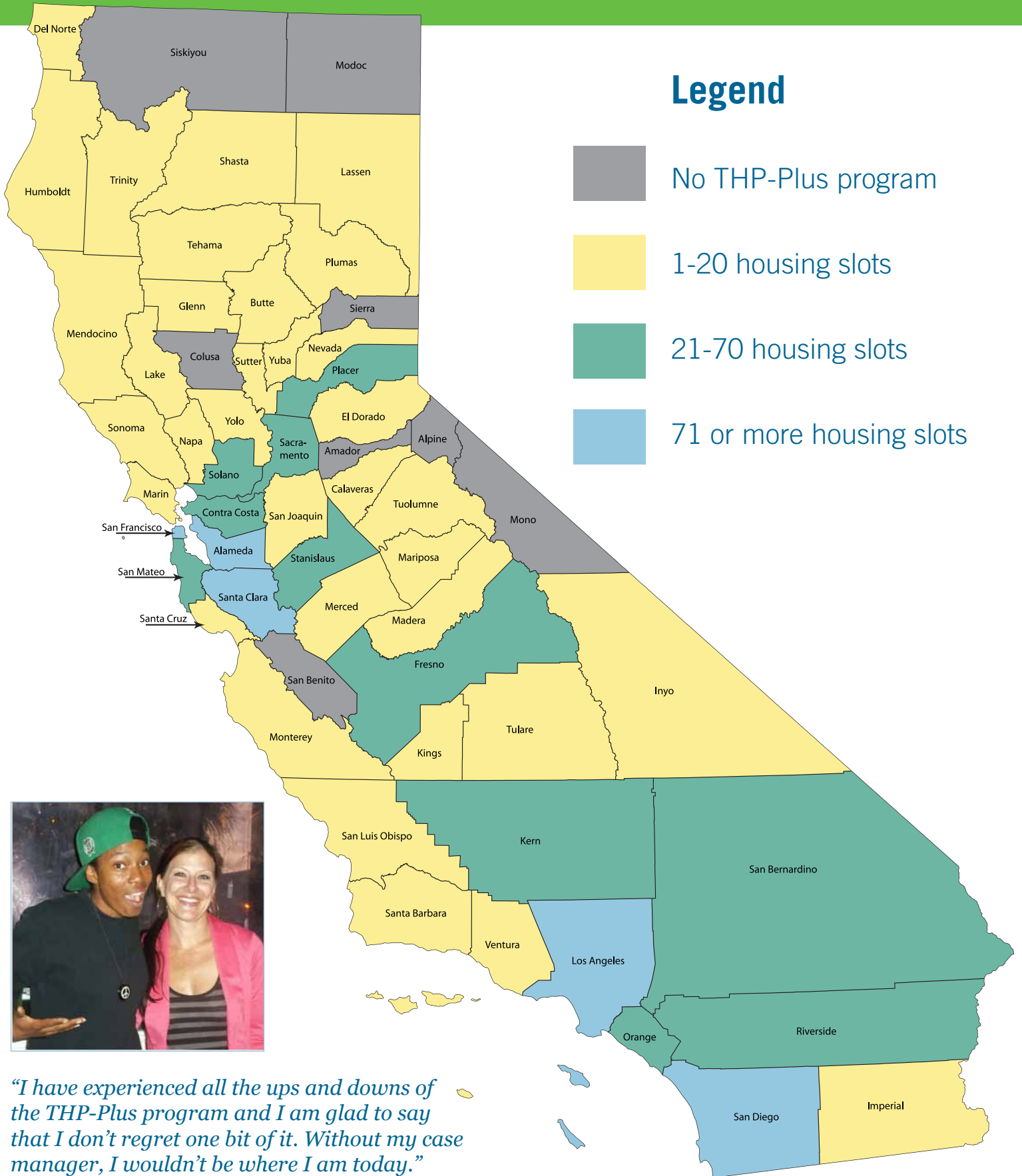
## Wyatt Bradley

Wyatt Bradley heard about the THP-Plus program from his social worker while living with his former foster mother in San Diego. This placement was his final stop after experiencing over a dozen foster and group homes both inside and outside of California. Wyatt was born in San Diego and entered the foster care system at the age of 4, separated from his two brothers. Wyatt never experienced stability. Yet, he graduated from San Diego Charter High School, one of five high schools he attended, and emancipated from the foster care system at 18. His foster mother allowed him to stay with her temporarily, but he knew he needed to find a place to live, and he knew he needed some direction in life.

When Wyatt entered New Alternatives' THP-Plus program in San Diego he was neither working nor attending school, however, he started off strong. He participated in the job development program and volunteered in his spare time. He was finally receiving the direction he knew he needed. Unfortunately, Wyatt found direction in other places too. He was involved with what he describes as "the wrong crowd". Wyatt hit a downward spiral. His THP-Plus case manager and program manager immediately noticed a change in his behavior. He began to lose the follow-through they had watched him develop while in the program, and his change in behavior made it evident that he was drinking and using drugs. A critical mistake landed Wyatt in jail, an experience that would change his life forever. Wyatt recalls this being the moment he had "no choice but to make a change". Now on probation, Wyatt had court-ordered requirements, including Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, anti-theft class, and public work service.

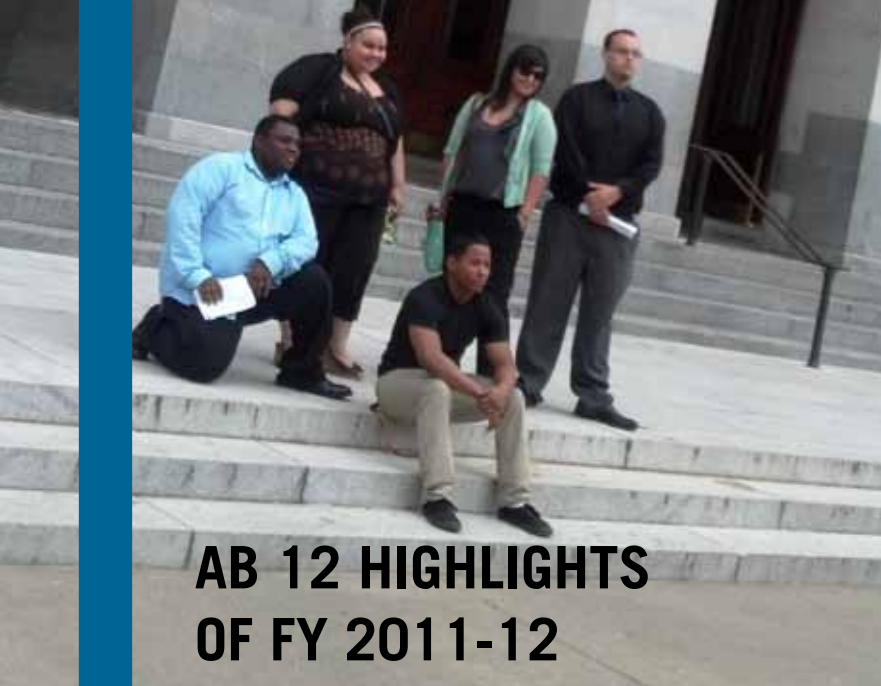
Wyatt embraced the support he received at New Alternatives to change the course of his life. The program staff supported him in meeting all of his court probation requirements and assisted him in paying for the anti-theft class and securing community service hours. With intensive support from his THP-Plus case manager and program manager, Wyatt stopped drinking and using drugs. After a few months of staying on the right track, he was offered a paid internship through his THP-Plus program with the Little Italy Association. He started off working with the landscaping crew, and soon gained a lead role.

Waking up at 5am to catch the trolley from El Cajon to Little Italy solidified Wyatt's determination to succeed. He noticed a change in himself – "I enjoyed having structure, routine, and especially a paycheck." After completing the three-month internship, the Little Italy Association hired Wyatt on as a full-time employee with benefits. He graduated from THP-Plus with a savings of a few thousand dollars, and transitioned into his own studio apartment where he pays rent in full. Wyatt has been employed with Little Italy for almost a full year, making \$9.50 per hour as a Community Benefit District Staff. Wyatt is sober, and regularly stops by New Alternatives to see program staff and update them about his life. According to Wyatt, "You're going to make mistakes but you have to learn from them."



*“I have experienced all the ups and downs of the THP-Plus program and I am glad to say that I don’t regret one bit of it. Without my case manager, I wouldn’t be where I am today.”*

**- Regina L. with case manager  
(New Alternatives, San Diego County)**



## AB 12 HIGHLIGHTS OF FY 2011-12

Technical assistance and training on AB 12 provided throughout the fiscal year

### OCTOBER 4, 2011

#### Clean-up legislation AB 212 passes:

- Changed how youth exiting juvenile probation access extended foster care
- Included other provisions to ensure the policies were consistent with current law

### JANUARY 1, 2012

#### AB 12 is implemented:

- Foster care is extended to age 19  
(foster care will extend to age 20 in 2013)

### MAY 25, 2012

#### Clean-up legislation AB 1712 passes out of Assembly:

- Once the bill passes, it will make several technical revisions to extended foster care and subsidized guardianship

### JUNE 27, 2012

#### 2012-13 California State Budget and Assembly Bill 1473 pass:

- Made THP+FC a state licensed, county certified placement under the Transitional Housing Placement Program category
- Fulfilled the intent of AB 12 by including \$53.9 million over three years to pay for extended foster care to age 21 (foster care will extend to age 21 in 2014)
- Closed the eligibility gap for non-minor dependents who turn 19 in 2012 and 20 in 2013 by permitting counties to draw down federal matching funds to continue services (age phase-in largely eliminated except for youth who either (A) turned 19 in 2011, or (B) turned 19 in 2012 if they were not receiving AB 12 benefits immediately prior to turning 19)

More information about Assembly Bill 12, the California Fostering Connections to Success Act can be found at [www.cafosteringconnections.org](http://www.cafosteringconnections.org)

## THP-PLUS & THP+FC, Together These Programs Can Reach More Youth Than Ever Before

THP-Plus Foster Care (THP+FC) is one of the new licensed placement options for youth participating in extended foster care. The program is modeled after the original THP-Plus program, and will provide housing and supportive services that assist participants in the transition to adulthood. THP+FC is licensed by the Community Care Licensing



Division of the California Department of Social Services under the Transitional Housing Placement Program category, and is certified by county departments of social services. THP+FC providers will receive a rate of \$2,225 - \$2,797 per participant per month. Twenty-six percent of current THP-Plus providers already have a Transitional Housing Placement Program license, and 63% hold some sort of children's residential license.

Starting October 1, 2012 THP+FC will serve youth in extended foster care, ages 18-21. THP-Plus will continue to serve youth who have exited the foster care or probation systems, ages 18-24. This includes youth that are not eligible for extended foster care, youth who have aged out at 21, and youth who have chosen to opt out of foster care prior to 21. With the addition of THP+FC, these two programs together, now have the ability to reach more youth than ever before reached by the THP-Plus program alone. With increasing demands on the counties as a result of Realignment, THP-Plus is vulnerable. It is imperative that all stakeholders advocate for THP-Plus at the county level to ensure the program's continuity along-side the federally funded THP+FC.

### UNDERSTANDING CALIFORNIA'S THREE TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PLACEMENT PROGRAMS

	THPP	THP+FC	THP-Plus
<b>Age</b>	16-18	18-21	18-24
<b>Dependent</b>	Yes	Yes	No
<b>Time limit</b>	N/A	N/A	24 months
<b>Funding</b>	AFDC-FC	AFDC-FC	CWS Realignment funds
<b>Licensed</b>	Yes	Yes	No





*“THP has provided me with the knowledge to know the things that I will face outside of this program and has taught me to strive for my dreams and make them a reality.”*

- Ted W. (New Alternatives, San Diego County)

## THP-PLUS PROVIDERS AND COUNTIES HOLD STRONG DESPITE AN AMBIGUOUS BUDGET ENVIRONMENT

On June 27, 2011 Governor Jerry Brown signed the 2012-13 California State Budget into law, which called for the Realignment of Child Welfare Services. This permanent funding structure changed THP-Plus from a 100% state-funded program to a program whose budget is now managed entirely at the county level.

From a policy and planning perspective, it has been a challenging year for THP-Plus. Providers and county administrators reported reduced THP-Plus bed availability early in fiscal year 2011-12 as a result of the original plan for THP+FC to share the state THP-Plus budget. This “70/30 split” was the result of an earlier budget compromise intended to maintain services and maximize use of federal Title IV-E and state matching funds. Although the Realignment of Child Welfare Services has left THP-Plus vulnerable to local budgetary decision-making, it also eliminated the 70/30 split. One-hundred percent of the THP-Plus budget, which is now controlled at the county level, can be allocated to THP-Plus.

An analysis of the data gathered on THP-Plus programs statewide shows a mere 32 bed reduction. This minor service impact in the face of a significant threat to funding early in the fiscal year is a testament to the commitment of the THP-Plus community.



*“They just kept telling me, ‘you have the ability to do this, you just don’t realize it yet.’ They had more faith in me than I had in myself.”*

- Arthur W. (Aspiranet, San Joaquin County)

- **2001** – AB 427 establishes THP-Plus.
- **2002** – THP-Plus de-linked from STEP.
- **2003** – 3 counties implement THP-Plus.
- **2004** – THP-Plus changed to an annual allocation.
- **2005** – Eligibility extended to age 24. 5 counties implement THP-Plus.
- **2006** – 60% county share of cost removed. 16 counties implement THP-Plus.
- **2007** – THP-Plus moves toward statewide implementation. 39 counties implement THP-Plus.
- **2008** – THP-Plus Participant Tracking System is launched.
- **2009** – 50 counties implement THP-Plus. THP-Plus serves over 2,000 youth for the first time (over FY 2008-09). \$5 million budget reduction to THP-Plus for FY 2009-10.
- **2010** – THP-Plus budget reduced slightly to \$35.4 million for FY 2010-11.
- **2011** – THP-Plus changes to a county-funded program under the Governor’s 2011 Realignment of Child Welfare Services.
- **2012** – Extended foster care is implemented. THP-Plus Foster Care licensing and rate structure established. THP-Plus is still serving over 2,000 youth annually.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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- The California Wellness Foundation
- The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
- The Walter S. Johnson Foundation

Author: Simone Tureck, John Burton Foundation

Designer: Kesler Communications

Thank you to all of the THP-Plus program providers and county administrators for taking the time to contribute information to this report. Special thanks to the current and former THP-Plus participants for sharing their stories, and to the providers who made this possible: Aspiranet-Stockton, C.H.A.I.N. Reaction, Inc. and New Alternatives.

The THP-Plus Statewide Implementation Project is a project of the John Burton Foundation. For more information about the THP-Plus Statewide Implementation Project, please visit [www.thpplus.org](http://www.thpplus.org) or contact the John Burton Foundation:

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*“THP-Plus has been more of a friend to me than most of the people I have called friends in my life.”*

**-THP-Plus Participant, San Joaquin County**

[www.thpplus.org](http://www.thpplus.org)

