

What's Happening In

My Region



1 Region 1's Jade Arias, Youth Specialist, left the agency to pursue other dreams. She enjoyed working with the youth leadership council and the youth. We'll let you know when this position is filled. Melissa Luman, from Lubbock, started her new position as PAL Coordinator. She'll be housed at the MAC Transition Center. We are very excited to have her onboard. The region is getting ready to go to the statewide teen conference at Texas Women's University in Denton in July. We are also planning the college campus tours in the northern region. So if you're a high school sophomore and would like to participate, contact Traci Baker, PAL Staff in Amarillo, at 806-354-6263. Have a safe, fun summer!

2 Region 2 has been very busy since April. Our youth attended Youth in Action day and did a great job advocating for themselves. In May, PAL hosted a graduation party to celebrate all of our graduating Seniors! Region 2 also hosted their second Aging Out Seminar in June. Our PAL classes started this summer along with a food drive to help with our youth that have already left care. We set up boxes in Abilene, Brownwood and Wichita Falls so our youth never go hungry. Region 2 is also gearing up for Teen Conference this year. We are so excited! Courtney Valdez, PAL Staff 940-235-1938

3 Region 3 Teen Conference will be July 20th in Arlington. It will be a fun filled day for youth with guest speakers and door prizes. Contact PAL for more information: 817-255-2352. The next Aging Out Seminar will be July 26th in Dallas. Contact PAL at 214-583-4060 if you are 15 ½ or 16 years old and you have attended a previous seminar. Rebecca L. Daniel PAL Staff 817-255-2311

4 Region 4, The Real Deal focused on Advocacy this spring first by participating in Youth In Action day, and also with our very own Advocacy Workshop. One of our goals is to learn how to be effective advocates so that we can make a difference in CPS and in our lives today! We celebrated 1 full year of having a YLC this summer, going over the progress we have made this far and looking at our goals for the future. Please contact Region 4 Youth Specialist Jennifer Mace if you would like more information on how to get involved with The Real Deal. 903-533-4110

5 Region 5's summer has gotten off to a great start! Congratulations to all the 2013 Graduates! Region 5 graduating seniors celebrated their accomplishments by having their very own graduation party in their honor. Many community sponsors hosted these parties for the seniors so they can start their new journey in the right direction. On June 12th, a Graduation Reception was held for our Seniors for us to celebrate as a whole and to provide words of encouragement and wisdom. Now, we are gearing up for our Regional Teen Conference set for July 24th. Shaneka Guidry, Youth Specialist 409-951-3368

6 Region 6 is proud of the class of 2013!!! We are happy to report that 47 graduates attended the PAL celebration on June 20th, 2013. It was a great success and we thank everyone who made this event possible especially the BEAR room. We wish our graduates the best of luck in their new journey! We have a **new number, 713-250-7000**. Gaby Valladares, Youth Specialist 713-884-3300

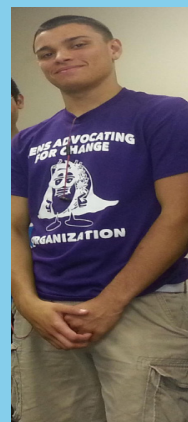
7 Region 7 had our annual Prom Rack event, visited local colleges and held our graduation celebration. Region 7 had 105 graduating seniors this year, way to make monumental changes at the legislative level by taking a group of youth to testify at the state capital on HB 843 to pass a bill that will require youth over age 10 to receive notification of their court dates. Meagan LeLeux, PAL Staff 512-834-3813

8 Region 8's Youth/Alumni Initiating Advocacy (YAIA) and the PAL program are doing some great things this year. Our meeting on June 20th was a success with over 20 participants. The Education and Training Voucher (ETV) specialist came out and taught our young adults all the ins and outs of ETV. We accomplished this through game play, determination and 100% participation. On July 13th, the YAIA has volunteered to help with projects through Habitat for Humanity. We are demonstrating compassion and dedication to those in our community. Our aging out Seminars are in full affect with the next one on July 31st. We are excited for what tomorrow will bring and we are changing lives one person at a time. Region 8 is on fire! Jennifer Elizalde, Youth Specialist 210-216-1135

9 Region 9 has been loving the summer so far! We've had our first session of Lifeskills Classes in Odessa and the second session will be in July! The Transitional Living allowance up to \$1000.00 will be given to eligible youth who attend and finish the classes once they age out! Call me so we can get you on the list for next year if you haven't already taken the Lifeskills Classes. Daniela C. Ontiveroz, Youth Specialist 432-260-8719

10 Region 10's Youth Advisory Board (YAB) leaders helped co-facilitate our second Aging Out Seminar which provided an in-depth look at the benefits you'll receive once you leave care. Our first Juneteenth celebration offered 3 sessions of home cooked soul food, live entertainment, and education from Sheila Craig on disproportionality issues. We are PROUD of all graduates to include Elliott Harold and Veronica Terrazas who graduated from UTEP! YAB meetings take place every 3rd Saturday of the month – get involved and make a difference! You are the creator of your own reality. April McWilliams, Youth Specialist 915-521-3815

11 Region 11's Teens Advocating for Change Organization (Region 11 YLC) had the opportunity to participate in the Youth inAction Day on April 5th at the Capitol in Austin. the Youth's presence made a big impact on the Representatives and the Youth were excited to be a part of the Legislative process. We have also ordered our New T-Shirts which we purchased with our own funds we raised! It has the Super TACO Logo on it because we plan to do Awesome things! We plan to wear these when we go on our Trips to Six Flags and Schlitterbahn this Summer! Kassandra Villarreal, Youth Specialist 361-878-7571



Portrait of a Survivor Interview with Quinten

It's 11:00 AM on a Wednesday and Quinton is sitting across from me in a chair. As I scramble to get my pen and pad ready, he sits calmly, waiting to tell his story.

So who are you?

My name's Quinten. I am 24 years old. I aged out of foster care.

How long where you in foster care?

Since age 1, I was in and out of foster care. My mother was doing whatever or really not doing anything to get us back.

That's tough; do you have a relationship with her?

Yes, I do. It's gotten better.

How was your foster care experience?

Well, I have a brother and sister. It's difficult to go through the system when you have siblings because it's like a package deal. We moved around from foster home to foster home. I was adopted at age 7 and moved to Michigan. It was difficult adjusting to life there. The adoption did not work out, so I came back into foster care at age 14 and aged out at age 18.

Tell me what's going on in your life now. I hear you are involved in public speaking.

On certain issues I do.

How did you start doing that?

I was invited to speak at a town hall meeting in 2010. It was hard. There were tears and I was stuttering.

Public speaking can be hard!

Yeah, I interviewed for a radio show, and that went better. Then, I spoke at a retirement ceremony.

So, you have some experience. How has that helped you with other areas in your life?

Definitely! Being able to talk to people and doing this interview, it has opened some doors.

Public speaking takes a lot of courage, you can't be shy.

I'm not a shy person. LOL.

What are you advocating for now?

Together with the Austin area Youth Leadership Council, I advocated for various bills this session such as House Bill 843 (Notification of upcoming court hearings), Senate Bill 1210 (Tuition Fee Waiver) and House Bill 644 (Tuition Fee Waiver). The youth council's testimony helped change people's perspectives on the bill.

You can find out more about these bills by doing a bill search at this link: www.capital.state.tx.us

I'm glad you spoke up for you and other youth in your situation.

Yeah, me too.

What do you want to do now?

I'm trying out for American Idol in August. Also, continuing to be involved with the foster youth in my community. It makes me feel like I've been given a reason to be here on this Earth.

Portrait of Survivor



Youth In Action 2013

Region 7's Youth Leadership Council, Reflections of Tomorrow, helped make a difference in improving the lives of children and youth in foster care by working to implement a new law that would promote court attendance.

The bill, House Bill (HB) 843, would require that foster youth 10 and older receive notification of an upcoming court hearing. Youth and alumni dressed in their "Sunday best" and testified on HB 843 in April 2013. They shared their experiences with not being able to attend court hearings, mainly due to the fact that they were unaware of when these meetings took place. One youth also stated that she understood the importance of attending court hearings and that she wanted to make sure others in foster care have the right to know when their hearings come



have the right to know when their hearings come up. Reflections of Tomorrow did a fantastic job during their testimony and the bill easily made its way through the legislative process, passing both houses of congress and ultimately being signed into law by Governor Rick Perry on June 16th, 2013. Congratulations to Reflections of Tomorrow for their hard work and success!

- Tym Belseth, Education and Training Voucher and Youth Program Specialist

Financial Tips

Make it a habit to start saving money!

•Saving as little as 10 percent of your earnings can give you major results, now just think if you saved 40 percent.

•Start some easy saving patterns like creating a list of things you need or a budget.

•Start having good credit by creating a savings account! (ask your local banker for more information)

•Shop around! Before committing to a big purchases do some research and shop around!

•Avoid the impulse buy! We all get the urge to purchase something immediately but many times it's best to sit and think about how the purchased item will effect your money.



My PAL's

Whats up everyone,

How are y'all My name is Joseph but people call me Joe or Joey. I see my self as a very outgoing individual and I like to try new things like writing letters.

I also like music, some of my favorite bands are Linkin Park and Daughtry but I also Like Bruno mars, lil wayne, J. Cole, and drake.

I absolutly love football and i am a Texans fan Hands down, Go Foster 23.I'm 6'1 190 and i Play Tight End in the sport.

I love to cook, and I am going to go to Le cordon Bleu Culinary arts school and probably be- come a cheif at a resturant, or I could open my own resurant. I will always write back,

Groove Easy,
Joey.

Hello World!

How are you all doing?
My name is Caleb, I'm 5'11" - so it is safe to say 6 ft. I weigh 154 lbs and have light brown hair and eyes that match it.

I'm an out going guy who loves to write, loves to play sports- though I admit I'm not the best- and I love anything having to do with math or science. I'm an honest person who seeks friendship.
So, if you'd like to write, feel free!

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a Pen Pal?

Send your responses
or new letters to:

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This Facebook page provides current resources, benefits and other information such as National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) updates that are important to transitioning youth. The page will allow the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to connect with YOU!!

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News
For Us

Inside the Newsletter

Financial Tips

My Region News

My Pal's

Portrait of a Survivor

Special News For Us

Interview with Quinten

The Preparation for Adult Living Newsletter