

# What's Happening In My Region?



**1** I'm happy to announce Region 1 has been making progress in our monthly meetings! We are currently in the process of renaming our YLC meetings, which the youth will have input in the final decision. We recently held our YLC Christmas Party in Lubbock at the transition center and we had 8 youth attend. Also, we had our YLC Christmas party in Amarillo at our Buckner Transition Center and had an astonishing outcome of 15 youth attend! Region 1 is preparing for the Statewide YLC meeting in January 2014 in Austin, TX. Our mission is to invite as many youth as possible to our Youth Leadership meetings, and begin to make a difference! Crystal Surace, Youth Specialist 806-570-6589

**2** Region 2 had a great end of 2013! We hosted our annual PAL Christmas banquet for the youth who've aged out of care. The Wichita Falls and Abilene offices really came together and donated a ton of gifts for the youth. We are so excited to get our Youth Leadership Council together again to start off the New Year. Courtney Valdez, PAL Staff 940-235-1938

**3** Region 3's Youth Leadership Council (YLC), Change for Today and Tomorrow (C4t2), participated in a community service project by preparing and serving Thanksgiving meals at a local resource center for people living with HIV/AIDS. The members of C4t2 are currently preparing for the

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**5** In December the Junior League of Beaumont sponsored an Etiquette Seminar and Christmas Party for PAL Youth. The YLC committee sponsored the SOC Campaign. They stuffed Christmas socks with hotel toiletries and peppermints that were collected from staff. The group passed out the socks at area Nursing homes as they sang Christmas carols to the residents. The residents always enjoy the youth. On January 29th, the Junior League sponsored a workshop for PAL youth focusing on preparing for college, preparing for the workforce, financial planning, and interview skills. The second workshop on March 26th will focus on skills needed in everyday life, such as cooking on a budget, sewing, and other fun lighthearted topics. Please don't forget Prom Project is February 22nd! Delores Duhan, PAL Coordinator 409-730-2445

9 Region 9 had to say a sad farewell to our Youth Specialist Danielle Ontiveroz, but the good news is she is now working at Midland College and continuing her college education! Two young ladies from Odessa participated in the statewide youth leadership council held at the Texas State Capitol recently. Get active and have your voice heard! PEAKS camp is just around the corner, if you are interested in attending this event or other PAL events contact Tom Ellison space is limited so don't wait! Anyone who would like to be involved in our regional youth leadership activities, call or "text" Tom Ellison PAL Staff, 432-553-4158

1 Region 11's Teens Advocating for Change Organization (TACO) has been busy recognizing case workers throughout the Region this quarter. The case workers who are honored as TACO's Case Worker of the Month receive a Certificate and a TACO T-Shirt. Brigitte (Corpus Christi) and Norma (Laredo) are two of TACO's Case Workers of the Month for October 2013. TACO also celebrated the holidays by holding Halloween parties and Christmas gatherings throughout the Region, in collaboration with the local BCFS Transition Centers. Kassandra Villarreal, Youth Specialist 361-878-7571

February is Black History month! African Americans have come a long way from their days as slaves to being sworn in the White House. In honor of the journey towards equality, here is a time line that outlines some of the major dates in the Civil Rights Movement.

Feb 3, 1870 – The states ratified the 15th Amendment, which prohibits federal and state governments from denying a citizen the right to vote based on that citizen's "race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

Dec 1, 1955- Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a white passenger in Montgomery, Alabama. This prompted Martin Luther King to lead a boycott of Montgomery buses that lasted over one year.

Jul 2, 1964- President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits discrimination of all kinds based on race, color, religion, or national origin. That Act also gave power to the federal government to enforce desegregation.

Mar 6, 1857- The U.S. Supreme Court held that African Americans, whether slave or free, could not be American citizens and therefore had no standing to sue in federal court. The court also ruled that the federal government had no power to regulate slavery in the federal territories acquired after the creation of the United States. The decision was made after Dred Scott, an African American slave who had been taken by his owners to free states and territories, attempted to sue for his freedom.

May 18, 1896 – The U.S. Supreme Court upheld state laws requiring racial segregation in public facilities (known as Jim Crow laws) under the doctrine of “separate but equal” in *Plessy v. Ferguson*.

May 17, 1954 – The U.S. Supreme court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* Kansas that public school segregation was unconstitutional. This ruling paved the way for the end of segregation by overturning the court's previous ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson* and the doctrine of "separate but equal."

Sep 24, 1957- Nine black students, who became known as the "Little Rock Nine," were blocked from entering Central High School. President Eisenhower sent federal troops and the National Guard to intervene on behalf of the students.

Feb 21, 1965 - Malcolm X (born Malcolm Little) was assassinated. Malcolm X had been a revolutionary black freedom fighter and civil rights activist.

Aug 30, 1967 - Senate confirmed President Lyndon Johnson's appointment of Thurgood Marshall as the first African American Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Thurgood Marshall had been a leader within the NAACP and successfully argued the Brown v. Board of Education case.

Apr 4, 1968 - Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated at age 39.

Nov 4, 2008- Barack Obama was elected as the first African American President of the United States.

## A red heart-shaped bowl filled with red, pink, and white heart-shaped candies. The candies are scattered throughout the bowl, with some showing the word 'LOVE' embossed on them. The bowl is set against a white background.

Good friends should be there for you to not only celebrate the good times but also for helping us through the bad times. You want to make sure that you feel “good” when you’re with friends. They should be positive influences that help you with the stressors of life, such as school, sports or even parents. Healthy friendships offer both companionship and a voice of reason that will help you be a successful healthy young adult. These friends can help increase happiness, reduce stress, help cope with traumas, and offer a positive influence.

You have the right to express yourself and your opinion. Good friends will understand and respect your choices even if it's not the same as their decision. You should not fear losing friends over speaking your mind. Speaking your mind is a part of being a good friend. It's only right to voice your opinion if you feel that your friend is entering into a bad situation. The tension of disagreeing is normal and most of the time with the right level of communication and respect for your friend, the situation will be resolved. Good communication and support make your friendships more enjoyable.

**Ingredients:** 1 Box of Graham crackers, 1 medium banana, 1 tbsp honey, 6 ounces vanilla Greek Yogurt, 2 cups of light whipped cream, 2 tbsps unsweetened shredded coconut. Diced 1/2 cup of each : Strawberries, blueberries, raspberries and pineapples (other fruit is fine). Add drizzle of dark chocolate on top of the fruit as the last touch for the fruit pizza. 1 tbsp of extra virgin olive oil to grease the pan.

**1. Take graham crackers** out of their package and into a large bowl or baking sheet and crush the graham crackers with a cup, but don't crush into a dirt consistency. You want the graham crackers to have a couple crunchy pieces left. It makes the crust so much crunchier and gives it a cookie texture. **2. Add the banana** to the crushed graham crackers. Take your hands and combine the banana and graham crackers together. If you are using your hands, treat it like a meatloaf. **3. When the banana** and graham crackers are combined, add the ball of dough to a greased baking sheet. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Flatten out the dough with your hands. Roll it out from center going outward. You can use your finger tips or a roller. Fold the outer edges in and pinch the sides to form a crust. **4. Drizzle the honey** over the crust and spread it around with a spoon. This will give the crust a nice crispy texture on the outside, but keeps a chewy texture on the inside. Just like a sugar cookie. **5. Place the crust** in the oven. It will bake approximately 20 minutes, but every oven is different. Keep your eye on it. Don't let the edges burn. They will be lightly brown and crispy. The center will be a lot softer, but it will harden as the crust cools off. Let it cool down on the baking sheet. If you try to move it before it cools, it will break in half like a chocolate chip cookie right out of the oven.

Combine the Cool Whip and Greek yogurt together, and place it in the fridge to thicken. (20 minutes) and add your fruit as you like or picked. Once the crust has cooled, add the whipped topping to the center of the crust and spread evenly.



# My PALS

## Do You Want a Pen Pal?

Send your responses or new letters to:

News for Us! Editor  
2525 Wallingwood Dr.,  
Suite 1503  
Austin, TX 78746

Don't forget to write your name and address on all materials you send!

My name is **Kane**. I'm about 5'9". I am 17 years old and live in San Antonio, TX. My favorite things are drawing, singing, and skateboarding. Sometimes I play basketball, I'm alright at it. My favorite kind of music is rap and rock. I really like Eminem and Greenday. Gaming is another hobby of mine, but I don't make it a habit. I hope to become a tattoo artist or a computer graphics engineer, but for right now I am currently the lead singer in my church youth group. I love to meet new people!

Hey what's up? My name is **Ryan**. I'm 17 going on 18 and am from San Antonio, TX. I am currently in Lee County but will be going to TDJC next month, and was looking for a pen pal to write to while I'm gone. Appreciate your time.

Artist : **Kane**

Do you like to create, draw, sculpt, or paint?

Send us your creations (or pictures) to be published in the newsletter.

Dont forget your name!



**TNOYS**  
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[www.TNOYS.org](http://www.TNOYS.org)



From the ages of 18 through 20 you will be enrolled in STAR Health but can switch to STAR; and when you are ages 21 through 25 you will receive Medicaid through the STAR plan of your choice through the end of the month of your 26th birthday.

For information or if you need help call toll free 2-1-1 or 1-877-541-7905. You can also visit [YourTexasBenefits.com](http://YourTexasBenefits.com). If calling 2-1-1, notify the operator you are calling about the Former Foster Care Children program.

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**Texas Youth Connection**

Check out the Texas Youth Connection Facebook page.  
It is located at the web address:  
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## Affordable Health Act

Healthcare Coverage is now available to you until the age of 26. Did you know you now have healthcare coverage until you turn 26? As of January 1, 2014 the Affordable Care Act provides Medicaid coverage to individuals under age 26 who were in foster care in Texas and receiving Medicaid when they aged out of care. The new healthcare program is the Former Foster Care Children program and to be eligible you must:

**Be age** 18 through 25,  
**Have been** in Texas foster care on your 18th birthday or older.  
**Have received** Medicaid when you aged out of foster care  
**Be a US** citizen or have a qualified alien status, such as green card

Always report changes to 2-1-1 within 10 days of knowing of changes, such as a change in address. You are at risk of losing your healthcare coverage if you don't report changes.

For more information visit <https://www.yourtexasbenefits.com/ssp/SSPHome/ssphome.jsp>  
STAR Medicaid <http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/medicaid/mc/ClientInformation.shtml#1>

Written by: Shannon Ramsey, Team Lead, Transitional Living Services

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# News For US



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## 100 Outstanding Young Leaders

2013 was a great year for young leaders in Texas. Each year FosterClub—a national foster-youth organization—selects 100 people from across the nation that demonstrate leadership, resiliency, and a commitment to making a difference. Texas was fortunate to have 5 young people selected as outstanding young leaders in 2013!

One of these young leaders, Timothy Belseth, earned his spot among the others by dedicating the early part of his career to improving foster care by working for the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Timothy has empowered foster youth to find their voice and become advocates, not just for themselves, but for other youth as well.



Under his guidance, the youth he worked with were able to drive change at the legislative level. There were two major accomplishments the youth made during this time. First, was working to protect the state tuition and fee waiver for foster youth. Second, was ensuring that foster children receive notice of court hearings so that they can participate in their case planning and advocate for themselves.

Timothy is currently employed as the ETV/Youth Specialist where he works with regional Youth Specialists, coordinates the Statewide Youth Leadership Council, and works with the Education and Training Voucher Program. Congratulations Timothy! If you want to read more inspiring stories and learn about other national young leaders, please visit [www.fosterclub.com/young-leaders/2013-outstanding-young-leaders](http://www.fosterclub.com/young-leaders/2013-outstanding-young-leaders).

