



children's home + aid

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Children's Home + Aid Receives \$2 Million Federal Grant Funding New Program to Support Teenagers in Foster Care Transition to Adulthood

CHICAGO, Ill. (**October 7, 2011**). Youth who “age out” of foster care without being adopted are at high risk of homelessness, poverty, unemployment, incarceration, as well as physical and mental health issues. Illinois has the third highest rate of young adults aging out of foster care in the country, yet it lacks formal programs and resources for emancipating youth to address their social and emotional needs. In response to this unmet need, Children's Home + Aid was awarded a 5-year, \$2 million federal grant from US Department of Health and Human Services to implement and rigorously evaluate the Adult Connections program.

“We are thrilled to have the opportunity to test and share the results of this new and innovative program. This collaboration between leading child welfare agencies, the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services, the Cook County Public Guardian, and other partners will meet a critical need for youth in foster care,” said Nancy Ronquillo, President and CEO, Children's Home + Aid.

Each year, hundreds of youth in foster care throughout Cook County reach adulthood and are discharged from the foster care system to live on their own without resources or support. Based on a one-year pilot program originally funded by the Chicago Community Trust, the Adult Connections program will strength and enhance over 200 of these youths' supportive connections with adults (such as biological family members and mentors trained to support the youth in meeting their goals), while developing independent living and work skills through internships and life skills training. Children's Home + Aid will partner with UCAN, Kaleidoscope, Inc., and One Hope United to implement the Adult Connections program. The program will be evaluated by the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Social Work.

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About Children's Home + Aid

Children's Home + Aid is a leading child and family service agency in Illinois. Each year, it protects, educates and counsels more than 40,000 children, youth and families to improve their lives.

Since 1883, Children's Home + Aid has been a compassionate advocate helping to shape public policy in child welfare, early childhood and juvenile justice. Children's Home + Aid is recognized for establishing best practices and achieving outstanding results through its programs and services that focus on child abuse prevention, healthy child development and strengthening families. For more information about Children's Home + Aid, visit www.childrenshomeandaid.org.

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