

CTG Online News

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CTG Participates at the Annual Meeting of the National Youth in Transition Database Initiative



CTG graduate assistant, Amanda Kronen, recently attended the 2011 NYTD Technical Assistance (TA) Meeting in Washington, DC. The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) is a national effort to collect data about the independent living services provided to youth in foster care. CTG, in partnership with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), is working to collect the data in New York State for youth turning 17 in foster care.

The TA meeting was hosted by the federal Children's Bureau to provide an opportunity for states to learn about the first round of national data collection and associated data quality issues, federal plans for data analysis and dissemination, and preparations for engaging youth in the next round of NYTD surveys. The Children's Bureau's National Resource Center for Youth Development (NRCYD) and the National Resource Center for Child Welfare Data and Technology (NRCCWDT) assisted with facilitation at the meeting.

Amanda was part of a four-person team that attended the meeting from New York State. In addition to Amanda, NYS sent a former foster care youth representative, a data manager, and project manager from OCFS. Each of the 52 reporting states (all 50 plus DC and Puerto Rico) sent a team, which made the total attendance at the meeting about 300.

For Amanda and the NYS team, the meeting was a good opportunity to connect with the NYTD program and network of people who are working on this across the country. Some of the key takeaways for CTG and the NYS team were:

- Whether the state has 100 youth turning 17 or over 2,500 like New York, gathering accountability and outcome data directly from individual youth requires coordinated effort from the many different services providers across the system.
- Communication and coordination are key aspects of making a project like this work. New York State, like many states, is working to inform state staff, county and voluntary agency caseworkers, foster parents, and the youth about NYTD.
- All states are finding ways to innovate and leverage information systems to improve information flows and data quality to meet reporting requirements.

CTG will use what it has learned from the meeting to finish data collection for this year's baseline and will incorporate the lessons learned as we develop and implement strategies for engaging and tracking youth in subsequent reporting periods.

More information on the project: www.ctg.albany.edu/projects/nytd.

NYTD Session Topics:

- NYTD data analysis from the first reporting period (Oct. 2010 – March 2011).
- State best practices from South Carolina, Illinois, Colorado, and South Dakota regarding data collection, reporting, file submission, navigating the federal online data portal, outreach, and social media use.
- Ways to engage the follow-up population (baseline youth at 19 and 21).
- Foster care youth panels describing their experience with NYTD.