

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



January 3, 2005

ALL-COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO: I-01-05

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM COORDINATORS
COUNTY PROBATION OFFICERS

SUBJECT: LIBRARY CARDS FOR FOSTER YOUTH

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order
- Clarification Requested by
One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

The purpose of this All County Information Notice is to publicize a successful youth library card program that was established by Los Angeles County. The simple opportunity for anyone to possess a library card has been denied to many foster youth because of multiple placements, need for confidential information when completing library card applications, and/or concerns from foster parents that they may be liable for lost or damaged materials.

In an effort to remedy this situation, Los Angeles County, in collaboration with local libraries, implemented a program whereby foster youth are able to obtain library cards by issuing them through the foster parent. In order to preserve confidentiality of information, the foster parents are only required to provide proof that they are the youth's foster parents. By creating a "borrower code" in the library's automated circulation system, the foster parents are assured that card owners would not be responsible for fines or replacement of lost or damaged materials. The libraries have reported that actual costs have been minimal. This unique system has been very successful in increasing the number of foster youth accessing library services. The California State Librarian and the California Department of Social Services are joining together to encourage all local libraries to offer this service to foster youth in their communities. We also are encouraging your agency to provide whatever technical assistance that may be requested from your libraries to implement this program in your community.

We want to congratulate Los Angeles County for their innovation in developing and implementing a model that can be used anywhere. If you have any questions or need further information, please call Sonya St. Mary, Manager of the Independent Living Program at (916) 651-7465.

Sincerely,

PATRICIA AGUIAR, Chief
Child and Youth Permanency Branch