

## SUCCESS STORIES

### PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

A teenage foster child was placed at a runaway shelter due to a lack of foster homes. He indicated that he did not know his caseworker or where his parents lived. He was very concerned about his future. A local advocacy council member took time to listen to this child realizing that foster children have little recollection of personal data that is a part of their foundation. After hearing the story, the local advocacy council member developed a "notebook" for the child to enter important information regarding his caseworker, guardian ad litem, school counselor, mental health counselor, medical history and family background. It also has a place for entries such as schools attended, favorite subjects and special events. This notebook offers them an opportunity to have a place to keep personal information and to begin to assume personal responsibility for maintaining records of his history. This was an empowering tool for this teenager and the notebook idea was subsequently shared with about 15 other foster children who passed through the runaway shelter. The Local Advocacy Council plans to provide this notebook to other foster children.

### RUNAWAY FOSTER CHILD MAKES THE GRADE

A teenage foster child from another district was placed in the runaway shelter during the summer while school was out. She had missed a great deal of school the previous year due to an inclement family situation. She had failed her grade and was supposed to attend summer school in order to be promoted. She learned that the school district did not have a summer school for her to attend and she would have to repeat her grade. A local advocacy council member called the principal at the girl's previous school to request a promotion for her if she completed a basic skills assignment in reading and math on her grade level in private tutoring sessions. The principal cooperated with this plan and the child maintained a folio of her work. When she was not returned to her home district in time for school to begin, the local advocacy council member spoke with the counselor at the school and the child was placed in her correct grade until she could be transferred to her home district.

### CHANGES FOR THE BETTER

Following a poor emergency response incident in a forensic sight at a state hospital, several local advocacy council members assisted the hospital in examining their emergency response procedures. This included research into alternate methods of responding, including those used by the Federal Prison System. As a result of this project, several changes in procedures were made by the hospital, which are expected to reduce the number of incidents involving violent confrontations, and to improve the response process when violence does occur.

**SUCCESS IN ADVOCACY**