



County of Los Angeles DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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Grand Opening of Local California Youth Connection Office at L.A. County DCFS Facility—Thursday, May 16, 10 AM

California Youth Connection (CYC), a statewide foster youth empowerment, leadership development, training and advocacy organization announces the opening of a new Southern California regional hub office based in Los Angeles. On March 12, 2013, Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, introduced a motion to approve a five-year agreement between the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and CYC. The agreement would enable CYC to co-locate within a DCFS office with the purpose of increasing foster youth participation in leadership training in the Los Angeles region. The motion was approved by the Board.

Through the generous support of the Board of Supervisors, and Foster Care Counts, in partnership with the DCFS Youth Development Services (YDS), CYC will be housed at the DCFS Metroplex Office at 3530 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 400, Los Angeles, CA 90010. This partnership will strengthen already existing services provided by DCFS to empower and support the thousands of youth in foster care in Los Angeles County.

DCFS Director Philip L. Browning stated, "The Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services is extremely pleased to have the California Youth Connection housed within our Youth Development Services Division and is grateful to Foster Care Counts for supporting this endeavor. Having the CYC co-located with us will enhance our shared goal of serving the 460 youth who transitioned out of foster care last year and the nearly 1,500 youth who choose to remain in supervised placements under AB-12." Former foster youth and Chair of the California Youth Connection Los Angeles Chapter, Marcellia Goodrich, stated, "The new CYC space at the DCFS Metroplex Office is convenient and accessible, giving more foster youth the opportunity for their voices to be heard and to get involved in advocacy."

CYC has a 25-year history of promoting system, policy and practice reform designed to improve the lives of the 65,000 children and youth in the California child welfare system. The CYC is a youth-led, organization with 32 county-based chapters across the state. CYC's mission is to ensure foster youth voices are heard locally, regionally and statewide in all aspects of policy and practice improvements that impact the lives of the state's marginalized foster youth population. CYC has been an instrumental force behind some key legislation affecting foster youth. CYC partnered with child welfare advocacy organizations for 2 years to ensure the passage of AB 12, giving youth the option of staying in foster care until the age of 21. CYC also worked on bills that helped improved education, permanency planning, group home care and Independent Living Program (ILP) regulations.

CYC and DCFS will host a grand opening on Thursday, May 16, 2013 from 10:00 am – 12:00 noon. Refreshments will be served as well as presentations on the CYC projects underway in the region.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"