



Children In Placement
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CYA NEWS

Connecticut Youth Alliance



Mission:

The CT Youth Alliance, a project of Children In Placement, is guided, focused and driven by current and former foster youth with the assistance of other committed community members. Our members strive to improve the child welfare system by involving foster youth in the development of social work practices and child welfare policies.

Vision:

- To educate the general public and policymakers about the unique needs of foster youth and to increase awareness of other concerns;
- To support youth development among current and former foster youth at all levels of the organization;
- To monitor legislation and advocate for current and future policies to reflect the needs of youth in the foster care system;
- To promote a positive image of foster youth, and allow them the opportunity to voice their opinions for change.

...What we've been up to...

We have been very busy here at the Connecticut Youth Alliance. Our youth have participated in digital storytelling workshops, national focus groups, community-wide screenings and presentations for the Connecticut Bar Association and Quinnipiac and U-Conn law schools.

Summer 2008

Children In Placement and The Color of Words (a New Haven based organization, specializing in digital and new media production) teamed up to provide New Haven youth with a unique summer opportunity. Seven youth participated as beginning level interns through The Color of Words Summer Media Institute. The youth interns produced seven digital stories and one public service announcement (PSA) featuring the stories of current and former foster youth. The PSA, which debuted at Children In Placement's annual meeting, will be featured on CYA's Blog (currently in development).

CYA New Haven Community Media Lab

The CYA Digital Storytelling Project workshops were held at the newly built community media lab located at St. Andrews Church in New Haven's Newhallville neighborhood. The Mac based media lab features eight laptops, one desktop, a scanner, projector, digital cameras, and all the software CYA youth need to develop and produce media projects that inspire change.



CYA Digital Storytelling

Spring 2007 – Six youth participated in the CYA Digital Storytelling Project, a comprehensive six-week digital media internship, facilitated by The Color of Words.

During the internship, youth learned how to produce digital stories - from story idea to final product. Students participated in workshops that taught them how to write their scripts, work with digital cameras and with professional software such Photoshop and Final Cut pro. A neat part of the project was the Peer-to-Peer training the CYA youth received from five of The Color of Words' advanced digital media interns.

The participating youth produced six digital stories that were then screened in two separate community-wide screenings in New Haven and in Bridgeport.



NYC CASA Reception Winter 2007



CYA youth and CIP staff boarded a Metro-North train and headed to New York City on a cold winter night last December to mix and mingle at the Lotus Club, on the Upper East side, with members of National CASA, regional CASA chapters, Broadway actors, as well as representatives from CBS News, and Susan Taylor former editor of Essence Magazine and Founder of National Cares Mentoring Movement. Our youth had an opportunity to polish up their networking skills and proved that working the room isn't just for adults.

CYA in The Big Apple: *Tavish Warren, Valerie Rodriguez, Susan Taylor, Anthony Draper and Amanda Nieves. Not pictured: Joan Jenkins, CIP Executive Director; Dulce Nieves, CIP Coordinator and Magalis Martinez, CYA Coordinator.*