

A GUIDE TO IMPLEMENTING THE HOST FAMILY MODEL IN THP-PLUS

**PROVIDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES TO
YOUTH FORMERLY IN THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM**



DEVELOPED BY THE THP-PLUS STATEWIDE IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT

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This guide is the product of the Transitional Housing Placement-Plus (THP-Plus) Statewide Implementation Project, a two-year collaboration between the John Burton Foundation, the Corporation for Supportive Housing, and the California Department of Social Services. The goal of the Project is to reduce homelessness among former foster youth by expanding access to THP-Plus, the state's only housing program targeting this growing population. In order to achieve this goal, the Project is facilitating the development and expansion of THP-Plus programs in counties across California.

The Project consists of efforts at the state, county, and local levels to promote the development, management, oversight, and evaluation of THP-Plus. These activities include:

- Refinement of THP-Plus program development guidelines.
- Training and technical assistance for THP-Plus providers and county agencies.
- Development of monitoring and evaluation tools.

Through these activities, the THP-Plus Statewide Implementation Project is working toward three important outcomes:

1. **Decreased homelessness among former foster youth.** The Project is working to increase statewide capacity to serve approximately 1,500 homeless former foster youth by the 2008-2009 fiscal year. At this service level, approximately 1 in 4 young adults ages 18-24 in need of housing will be able to access the program.
2. **Established network of THP-Plus practitioners and supporters.** The Project is developing an organized coalition of non-profit organizations, county administrators, young adults, foster care providers, THP-Plus providers, families of origin, and others who are informed and engaged in the policy-setting process as it relates to housing for homeless former foster youth. The development of this coalition is vital to ensure ongoing public funding of THP-Plus and the creation of programs that embody youth development principles.
3. **Expanded knowledge of effective housing approaches for former foster youth.** The Project places a high priority on the quality of housing and supportive services, not simply the quantity of them. Toward that end, the Project is expanding the knowledge base among practitioners and supporters about the housing and service needs of homeless former foster youth and effective practices to meet those needs. This information will be used to strengthen programs and program oversight by counties and the state.

For more information about the Project, please contact one of the following Project representatives:

Michele Byrnes
John Burton Foundation
 235 Montgomery Street
 Suite 1142
 San Francisco, CA 94104
 (415) 693-1323
michele@johnburton-foundation.org

Transitional Housing Program
 California Department of Social Services
 744 P Street
 Sacramento, CA 95814
 (916) 651-7465

Anne Cory
 Corporation for Supportive Housing
 1330 Broadway, Suite 601
 Oakland, CA 94612
 (510) 251-1910
anne.cory@csd.org

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DOCUMENT OVERVIEW

The purpose of this guide is to assist community-based organizations and county child welfare agencies in the development of high quality host family programs for young adults formerly in the foster care system. It is also designed to assist current host family providers in refining their services and addressing specific questions about operating effective programs.

THP-Plus provides housing and supportive services to former foster youth who aged out of foster care while under the supervision of the Department of Social Services or County Probation Department.

The document discusses the concept of **permanency** and outlines specific ways that permanency practices can be incorporated into the host family model of THP-Plus. It also outlines the eight steps required to fully implement the host family model, from including the host family model in the THP-Plus county plan to full program implementation. At the end of the document, there is a list of Frequently Asked Questions about the host family model.



Throughout the document, you will see links both within the text and in the left-hand column alongside the text, like the icon you see here. The icon refers to documents you can use as templates in the development of your THP-Plus host family program. Templates are available in the document appendix and at www.thpplus.org.

PRACTITIONER INTERVIEWS

Throughout the guide, practical advice is shared by programs that currently provide host family services to former foster youth through THP-Plus. These practitioners include:

- Beyond Emancipation (Alameda County)
- Bill Wilson Center (Santa Clara County)
- First Place for Youth (Alameda County)
- Santa Clara County Department of Family and Children's Services
- Stanislaus County Community Services Agency



A BRIEF HISTORY OF THP-PLUS

The Transitional Housing Placement-Plus (THP-Plus) program was established as a statewide program by the California State Legislature in 2001 to address the needs of a growing yet largely overlooked group of at-risk young adults: those who “age out” or “emancipate” from the state’s foster care system. Each year in California, approximately 4,200 young adults exit foster care when they turn 18 or 19, depending on their educational status. Of this total, two out of three have an “imminent housing need,” according to a 2002 study by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS).

The THP-Plus program provides affordable housing and comprehensive supportive services for up to 24 cumulative months to help former foster care youth who are at least 18 and less than 24 years old make a successful transition from the child welfare systems to adulthood. The program is administered and regulated by CDSS, which distributes THP-Plus funds to the county child welfare agency. The county agency then contracts for services with private, nonprofit organizations, which are certified by the county agency.

THP-Plus providers contract with the county child welfare agency to provide rental subsidies and all supportive services for a negotiated pre-approved THP-Plus rate. Experienced practitioners in some of the highest cost areas of the state receive a rate of \$1,800 to \$2,500 per youth, per month, which allows them to fully cover their costs and provide optimal supportive services. However, counties have the option to negotiate up to the maximum rate, allowed in the THP-Plus statute.

2001

Assembly Bill 427 established THP-Plus, California’s first investment towards ending homelessness for emancipated foster and probation youth.

2002

Assembly Bill 1119 de-linked THP-Plus from the Supportive Transitional Emancipation Program (STEP), removing a key barrier to implementation.

2004

THP-Plus was changed from a one-time allocation to an annual appropriation.

2005

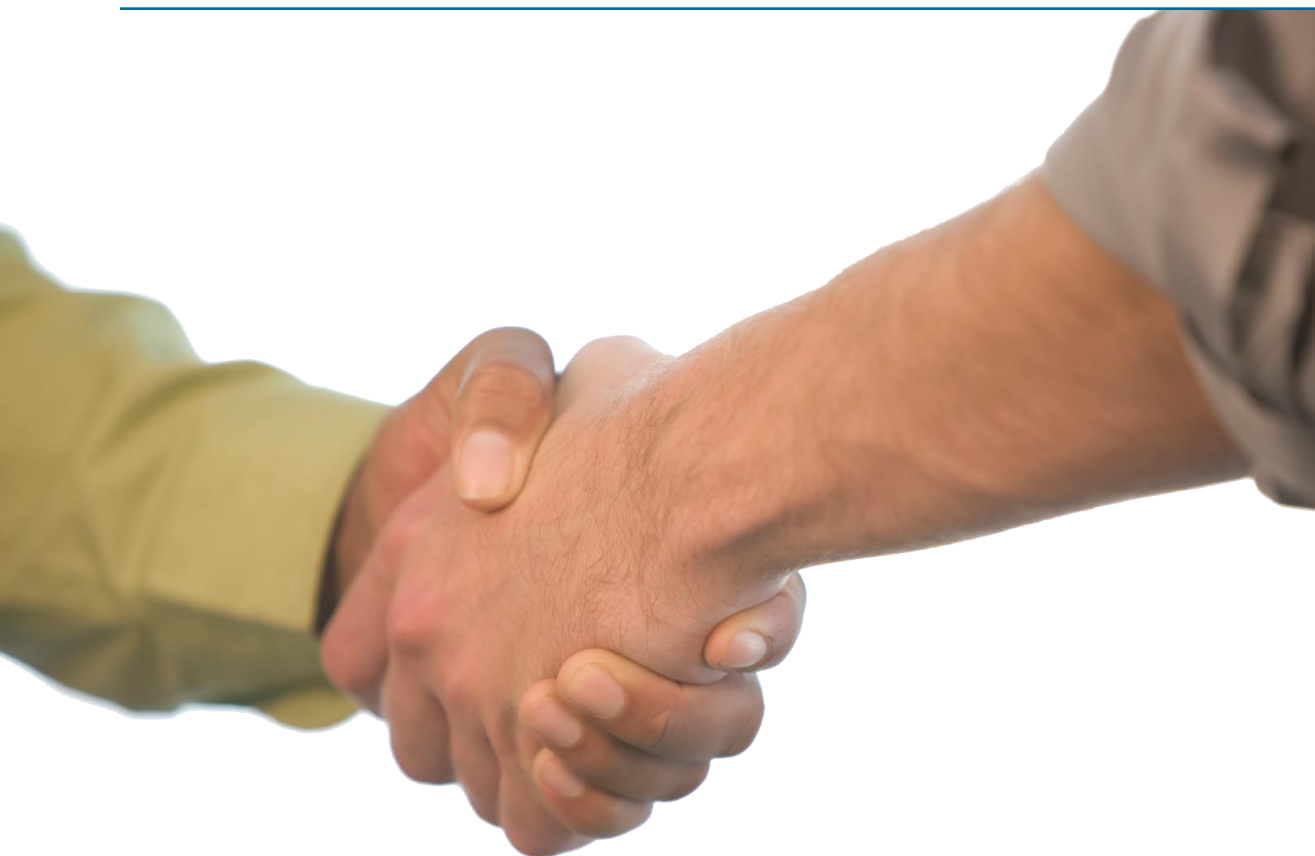
Assembly Bill 824 extended the THP-Plus age limit from 21 to 24.

2006

Senate Bill 1808 removed the 60% county match requirement, making the program fully state-funded, removing another key barrier to implementation.

2007

THP-Plus moves toward full implementation with 46 counties with approved THP-Plus plans.



KEY PRINCIPLES OF THP-PLUS

THP-Plus is grounded in four key principles. These principles provide a framework toward an overarching goal of THP-Plus: to prepare youth for a healthy and productive adulthood. Each THP-Plus program should be designed so that at the completion of the 24-month program, participants have the skills and resources they need to live on their own.

- *Age appropriateness:* THP-Plus programs must recognize that emancipated foster youth are legal adults and should be subject to fewer restrictions than those who are younger. Similarly, in most cases, there are greater responsibilities for and expectations of THP-Plus participants than for youth in foster care.
- *Distinct from foster care:* THP-Plus programs must have program rules that are distinct from those that apply to youth currently in the foster care system.
- *Greatest amount of freedom possible:* THP-Plus programs must allow young adults to have the greatest amount of freedom possible in order to prepare them for adulthood
- *Strong emphasis on supportive services:* THP-Plus is not solely a housing program. Instead, it is a supportive housing program, which regularly provides young adults a wide range of supportive services.

OVERVIEW OF THE HOST FAMILY MODEL

As THP-Plus has expanded throughout the state, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of permanency in the lives of former foster youth. At the same time, an understanding of the ways in which THP-Plus can support permanency efforts has translated into concrete practices that support long-lasting positive relationships for these young adults.

The host family model of THP-Plus provides a safe, stable environment that supports and nurtures an existing relationship between a former foster youth and a caring, supportive adult. As with all THP-Plus programs, the host family model serves young adults who are at least 18 and under 24 years of age for up to 24 cumulative months. The host family receives a monthly THP-Plus stipend and guidance and support from the THP-Plus service provider, while the participant has access to safe, stable housing and a comprehensive array of supportive services. Certain host family models also provide the youth participant a monthly stipend.

“Children in foster care are given very little opportunity to be stable enough to develop permanent lifelong connections. To expect youth who haven’t ever had stability in their lives to be fully self-supporting all of a sudden is asking a lot. The host family model helps to solidify the permanency piece and to build a longer and more gradual bridge out of the home and into the community. This is the typical route taken by many youth who come from intact families.”

–Crystal Luffberry, California Connected by 25 Initiative

The host family model creates a framework that provides financial support and supportive services to nurture a longstanding relationship between a young adult participant and a caring adult. The program creates an opportunity to extend an existing relationship, thereby affording former foster youth the same experiences available to young adults from intact families.

PERMANENCY AND THE HOST FAMILY MODEL

Each year in California, approximately 4,200 young adults “age out” or emancipate from the child welfare system, many without access to a network of supportive adults to assist with their transition. As a result, many foster youth are forced to move from foster care to independent living with limited support and few long-term resources.

The outcomes for these youth are poor. Studies of youth who exited foster care to live on their own without permanent connections to a family or supportive adult, show that a large number of youth:

- Experience, or are in imminent danger of experiencing, homelessness
- Face high rates of unemployment and underemployment
- Are more likely to suffer from physical and mental health problems, but lack access to adequate health care
- Do not finish high school
- Lack the skills and resources necessary for adulthood
- Are at high risk of coming into contact with the criminal justice system

The host family model is one strategy to foster permanency for former foster youth while supporting their growing independence. Equally important, it mirrors the same kind of transitional assistance that intact families commonly provide to their young adult children.

Permanency is achieved when a current or former foster youth establishes a permanent, lifelong connection with at least one caring adult who makes a mutual commitment to permanently stay in the life of that young person. Permanency provides stability and consistency to young adults learning to live on their own. Permanency also helps young adults develop a network of adults who can provide ongoing resources and support. By offering the host family model of THP-Plus, counties and their nonprofit providers can promote permanency in the lives of foster youth in transition and contribute to a successful transition into young adulthood and beyond.

According to the California Permanency for Youth Project, permanency is an enduring family relationship that:

- Is safe and meant to last a lifetime
- Offers the legal rights and social status of full family membership
- Provides for physical, emotional, social, cognitive and spiritual well-being
- Assures lifelong connections to extended family, siblings, other significant adults, family history and traditions, race and ethnic heritage, culture, religion and language

PRINCIPLES AND RATIONALE OF THE HOST FAMILY MODEL

The host family model offers a number of benefits to participants, providers, and the community. In particular, the host family model:

1. ***Supports permanency for former foster youth.*** The host family model facilitates a formal process for the THP-Plus participant and host family to make a mutual, long-term commitment to each other. This approach is most effective when the THP-Plus providers assist the host family and the participant to define permanency for their own relationship.
2. ***Mirrors the experience of young adults from intact families.*** When paired with a caring adult who plays a parent-like role, participants experience the same type of unconditional, supportive relationship that all young adults deserve. Participants also have the opportunity to receive the emotional support and acquire the skills that come from living in a family setting. This process occurs during a period of natural transition in the life of the young adult. While most young adults are not financially independent from their parents until the age of 26, and many live with their parents well into their 20s and 30s, the host family model allows former foster youth to receive the same type of support as they make the transition from adolescence to adulthood.
3. ***Provides daily hands-on support for participants.*** Participants receive informal mentoring and support from the host family, including the opportunity to practice daily living skills, such as cooking and household budgeting. This support complements the case management and other services provided by the THP-Plus provider.
4. ***Maintains existing family connections.*** The host family model has been used effectively to enable THP-Plus participants to live in the home of a caring adult with whom they have a relationship, such as a former foster parent. This structure supports precious sibling relationships that are frequently disrupted during foster care.
5. ***Expands a community's continuum of housing options.*** When communities offer a full housing continuum that includes single site, scattered site, and host family options, providers and counties can work collaboratively with participants to select the program that best meets the participant's needs. In communities with limited housing stock and/or a very small number of youth emancipating every year, the host family model may present the most viable housing option for transitioning foster youth.

"We believe it is the responsibility of the entire community to make sure that each youth who leaves the foster care system in California has a permanent lifelong connection with a caring adult."
-Bob Friend,
California
Permanency for
Youth Project

IMPLEMENTING THE HOST FAMILY MODEL

FOLLOWING IS THE STEP BY STEP PROCESS TO IMPLEMENTING THE HOST FAMILY MODEL OF THP-PLUS.

STEP 1 OF 8.

INCLUDE THE HOST FAMILY MODEL IN THE THP-PLUS COUNTY PLAN

Counties that are interested in offering the host family model should include this model in the county THP-Plus plan, which is submitted annually to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). Key elements of the county plan are outlined below. The THP-Plus Statewide Implementation Project has developed a county THP-Plus template which provides further information about the development of the plan. Required elements include:

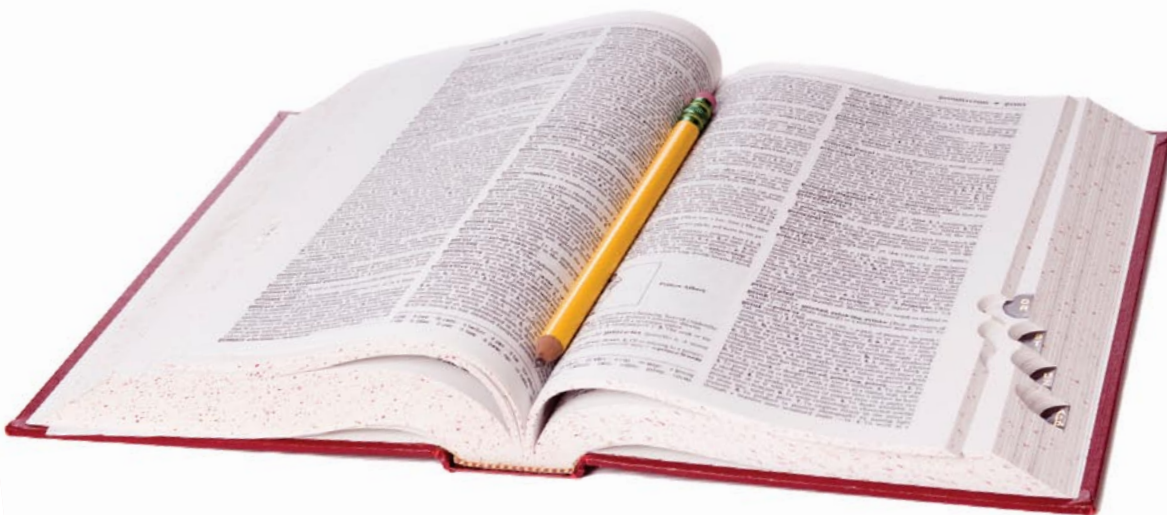
- **THP-Plus actual paid rate:** This is the actual rate that will be paid by the county to the THP-Plus provider delivering the host family model. It is different from the maximum THP-Plus rate, which is defined as 70% of the average group home rate for 16 to 18 year-olds in the county as of June 30, 2001. Counties may pay providers different rates for different housing models. They may also pay THP-Plus providers throughout the state different rates for the same model, based on the circumstances of the provider in the individual county and/or the need-profile of the youth being served. Currently, counties that are implementing the host family model of THP-Plus have an “actual paid rate” of \$1,800 to \$2,500 per participant per month. However, counties may negotiate a rate up to the maximum rate allowed by THP-Plus.
- **Referral and screening process:** This is a statement about how the county Independent Living Skills Program (ILP) will collaborate with the selected THP-Plus providers to establish and implement a referral process.
- **Provider selection criteria:** Counties may select one or more nonprofit service provider(s). This section of the plan provides a brief explanation about how the county will select the THP-Plus providers(s). Options for selecting a provider include issuing a Request for Proposals, Request for Qualifications or extending an existing contract with an established provider.
- **Assessment, outcome, and evaluation measures:** This is a statement that the county agrees to collect specific information about the performance of its THP-Plus program.
- **Target population and services offered:** This is a description of the total number of youth who emancipate from the county annually, the number of youth to be served by the respective housing providers and characteristics of youth to be served (e.g. parenting youth).
- **County contact person:** This is the name, phone number, email address, and office address of the one person in the county who works most closely with the THP-Plus program and its providers. The THP-Plus contact person receives important communication from CDSS and should be available to respond to informational requests.
- **Housing model(s):** This is a description of the number of youth who will be served by the three recognized housing models of THP-Plus: scattered-site, site-based and host family.

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY:

In this document, a **THP-Plus provider** refers to the entity that provides affordable housing and THP-Plus supportive services. A county may serve as the provider, but more frequently a nonprofit organization contracts with the county to fulfill this role.

A **host family** refers to the supportive adult(s) who have an existing relationship with a young adult. The family commits to opening their homes for 24 months and working with the THP-Plus provider to support the participant in meeting his or her goals.

A **participant** refers to a former foster youth who lives with the host family and participates in supportive services provided by the THP-Plus provider. The participant also has a set of agreed-upon responsibilities.



STEP 2 OF 8.**DEVELOP HOST FAMILY STIPEND AND RENT PAYMENT STRUCTURE**

An important step in planning for the host family model is determining the financial structure for the program. A monthly THP-Plus rate covers all rental subsidy and supportive services in the host family model. To determine an appropriate rate for this model, providers and county THP-Plus representatives will want to determine four important elements: the monthly stipend paid to the host family, the rent payment structure, whether or not to provide a direct stipend to the youth participant and whether or not to make the rent a savings program.

1. Monthly Stipend for Host Family

Host families receive a monthly stipend to cover some of the costs associated with the youth who will either begin or continue to be a member of the household, such as utilities, food, and transportation. In currently implemented programs, host families receive an average stipend of \$500 per month. Although host families are selected for their commitment to the young adult, providing a monthly stipend may make a difference in their financial ability to fulfill this role. This structure also assists participants with learning how to make monthly rent payments while receiving services and support from the provider and the host family.

2. Rent Payment Structure for Youth Participant

As with all THP-Plus programs, the host family model is at its heart a housing program. Educating participants to pay rent on a consistent and timely basis is one of the important outcomes of all THP-Plus programs. Therefore, it is recommended that all host family participants be expected to pay some type of “rent” while in the program. Provided below are two different approaches to the topic of youth rent payment in a host family model:

- **Rent paid by THP-Plus provider:** In some counties, the THP-Plus provider pays the stipend directly to the host family. The portion of the rent paid by the youth participant increases over the course of the 24 month program while the portion paid by the THP-Plus provider decreases.
- **Rent paid by participant:** In some programs, participants pay their portion of the rent directly to the host family. In this scenario, the THP-Plus provider pays a decreasing share of the rent over time.

Sample Rent Structure

Program Month	THP-Plus Participant Contribution
Months 1-3	\$50/month
Months 4-6	\$100/month
Months 7-9	\$150/month
Months 10-12	\$200/month
Months 13-15	\$250/month
Months 16-19	\$325/month
Months 20-22	\$400/month
Month 23-24	\$450/month

At program completion pay \$500/month



3. Whether or Not to Provide a Youth Stipend/Allowance

Another consideration to weigh is whether your THP-Plus host family program will provide the youth participant a direct stipend. This approach is employed by Santa Clara County, which provides a \$359 monthly living stipend to participants. This stipend is designed to assist participants with basic living expenses and to allow them to exercise some independent decision-making. Participants use the stipend to assist with their portion of the rent (paid directly to the host family), and to cover other basic expenses such as transportation and purchasing food on their own. In all of these scenarios, the participant receives consistent support from the THP-Plus provider to prepare for the rent increases and to submit timely payment.

4. Whether or Not to Make Rent a Savings Program

Another consideration to weigh is whether your THP-Plus host family program will treat the rent paid by the youth as a savings program by refunding the rent paid at the completion of the program. Advocates of this approach note that it provides youth with a small savings at the completion of the program and helps make the case for paying rent to the youth. For example, in My First Place, a program of First Place for Youth, the rent is structured as a savings program, so that the participant contributions are set aside in a savings account. This incentive structure has proved helpful in conducting outreach for the program to participants who may question the need to pay rent to an adult with whom they already have an existing relationship.

5. Whether or Not the Payments are Taxable.

A final important consideration regarding any payments made to youth participants or host families is whether or not it is taxable income. On this issue, there is currently no consensus. Certain counties are treating the stipends as tax-exempt aid payments, while other counties are considering the income taxable. Counties and their providers should consult with their county counsel and tax attorneys. If the determination is made that the stipends are taxable, the THP-Plus provider is responsible for submitting Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 1099 to the host families and youth participant, if applicable, who then submit the completed form to the IRS.

3

IDENTIFY YOUNG ADULT PARTICIPANTS

STEP 3 OF 8. IDENTIFY YOUNG ADULT PARTICIPANTS

After determining the rent structure, young adult participants must be identified. The participant may refer him or herself directly to the program, or it may be initiated by child welfare, probation, or Independent Living Program staff, the THP-Plus provider, attorneys or other program staff who identify youth who have a permanent connection and would benefit from the family environment of the host family model. This identification process is most effective when it is a collaboration between the county social services agency or juvenile probation department, the THP-Plus case manager, and the young adult.

In a number of California counties, child welfare workers begin to work with youth to identify and foster permanent connections before they are discharged from foster care. Recent legislation requires social workers to ask youth to identify the important adults in their lives and to assist them with maintaining those relationships. A prospective participant may be identified and referred to a program before their formal discharge from foster care, which may facilitate a smoother transition. In other instances, a participant may be referred, or may refer him or herself, to the host family model several years after they have left foster care.

Host family practitioners note that the host family model works better for some youth than others. Their collective experience suggests that the referral process take into account the considerations outlined below.

The host family model is most effective when the young adult:

1. Has an existing connection with a caring adult who can fulfill a parental role and is willing to fulfill the role of a host family
2. Is comfortable living in a family setting that will include certain expectations and some amount of adult oversight
3. Is open to negotiating a new relationship with the host family, which will include signed agreements and the involvement of a THP-Plus case manager
4. Understands that program rules will apply, and that he or she will be responsible for paying a portion of the rent

It's great, because you already have a relationship built with the host family, so you pretty much know what they expect... And they realize that you're an adult now – they have more respect because you're choosing to be there, when you could go off on your own.

–Participant, My Home THP-Plus Program,
Stanislaus County



4 IDENTIFY HOST FAMILY AND OFFER PROGRAM ORIENTATION

STEP 4 OF 8. IDENTIFY HOST FAMILY AND OFFER PROGRAM ORIENTATION



The process of identifying the prospective host families is most effective when it is driven by the young adult participant with the support of the THP-Plus provider case manager. After the participant has indicated an interest in participating in the host family program, the THP-Plus case manager works in partnership with ILP and the young adult to identify a caring, supportive adult with whom he or she has an existing relationship. This process may involve identifying multiple possibilities, such as a previous foster caregiver, a teacher, an extended family member, a mentor or Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA). At this stage in the process, it is

important to allow the participant to identify numerous connections, and to assist him or her in determining the most realistic and suitable match. To foster real permanency, it is essential that the participant have a longstanding relationship with the prospective host family; families should not be recruited from the wider community, nor should they be someone whom the participant has just met.

Despite the presence of an existing relationship with the potential host family, participants may feel anxious about approaching them to fulfill this important role. Contacting potential host families should be a collaboration between the THP-Plus case manager and the participant. To assist in this process, the case manager of the THP-Plus provider can conduct role-plays with the participant to prepare him or her for the type of questions to expect from the prospective host family, and then accompany the participant during this initial discussion. Additionally, the THP-Plus staff member is available to provide counseling and support to assist the young adult with setting expectations for the relationship and dealing with feelings that will arise if the person approached to become a host family declines.

After identifying prospective participants and host families for the host family model, THP-Plus providers offer an orientation session to introduce applicants to the specific elements of the host family model. This orientation can be provided to small groups or to individuals, and can be offered to potential host families as well. It can also be offered in collaboration with the county's ILP. In Santa Clara County, for example, prospective participants and host families participate in a joint intake session, which helps to lay the groundwork for a strong relationship between the host family and the young adult.

It is essential that the process of identifying the host family be driven by the young adult participant. It is then our responsibility to ensure that the prospective host is committed to the relationship and interested in playing this important role.

—Nenita Dean, Stanislaus County Community Services Agency

5

SCREEN AND CERTIFY THE HOST FAMILY

STEP 5 OF 8. SCREEN AND CERTIFY THE HOST FAMILY

Through a comprehensive screening process of the prospective host family, the THP-Plus provider ensures that the host family will provide safe and stable housing and create an environment that will support and complement the THP-Plus supportive services. It is also important for the provider to communicate openly with the host family about any issues that may complicate the living situation, such as the participant's previous or current drug use.

Initial Assessment

The screening process starts with an initial assessment of the prospective host family to determine their level of commitment and willingness to provide ongoing support to the young adult, and to inform them of the details of THP-Plus and the host family program. Providers benefit by looking for consistency in answers provided by the participant and the host family about their expectations for the relationship. At the end of the orientation or intake session, some providers ask participants and prospective host families to complete a written assessment to determine their continued interest and fit for the program. This assessment represents the final step before a participant officially enters the program. The provider should also notify the county when the host family has been selected. In Stanislaus County, this assessment is conducted with both the participant and the host family and takes up to two hours to complete. This assessment serves as an essential tool for determining the level of commitment of the host family, the appropriateness of the match, and to highlight any issues that may deserve special attention. Provided in the appendix of this document is a sample written assessment that is used by Stanislaus County in its THP-Plus program.

Home Visit

After the initial screening, THP-Plus providers conduct a home visit and a more detailed assessment of the family. Providers screen for the family's stability by asking about the host family's employment situation, the length of time they have lived in the home, and the number of people living there. They also try to gauge the impact of having a young adult move into the home. For example, it is important to assess if there are other children in the home, and if the host family is currently a foster parent. Determining these living arrangements in advance can help providers determine what stresses may be placed on the relationship between the youth and the host family and the level of case management support that may be required.

The home visit provides an opportunity to assess the physical safety of the home and to assure that the THP-Plus participant will have an adequate amount of privacy. It is recommended that participants have their own bedroom.

Background Check

State regulations require that all employees of THP-Plus programs have thorough background checks. Providers have extended this requirement to all adults living in the host home. For most providers this includes a Live Scan background check, which can be conducted by the county agency or by the contracted THP-Plus provider. The process for this should be determined prior to executing a contract with the THP-Plus provider, along with the criteria that are used to determine whether a host family home is acceptable.

Certain counties utilize the same Community Care Licensing background check criteria used for minors in foster care. Other counties apply a different standard, which reflects the reality that THP-Plus participants are legal adults and not minor children. For example, counties and their host family providers will not allow anyone with a child endangerment or serious criminal offense to become a host family. However, they may make exceptions for very old infractions and less serious offenses that have no bearing on the potential safety of the participant.

STEP 6 OF 8. PROVIDE TRAININGS TO PARTICIPANTS AND HOST FAMILIES

The host family model will be most effective when the participant and host family enter the arrangement with a full understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities and receive ongoing support. A comprehensive training provided by the THP-Plus provider is the first step in this preparation process.

Training for Participants

New participants will benefit from a training curriculum that assists them in understanding their skills and abilities and how they can maximize the resources available to them through THP-Plus. The skills gained during the trainings will set the foundation and will be reinforced by living with the daily guidance and support of their host families and by the extensive individualized case management they will receive.

If possible, it is effective to have parts of the participant training conducted by youth who are currently living in a host family program or youth who formerly lived with a host family. Providers should encourage the youth trainers to be candid in their assessment of the pros and cons of this housing model, rather than unconditionally positive. The transition from foster care is a challenging one and even the most committed host family and participant will have challenges throughout the program. For example, participants may have difficulty adjusting to a family setting if that was not their prior living experience, and unresolved issues of grief or trauma may surface during the transition. It is important for providers to anticipate these challenges, and to provide adequate emotional support and case management when they arise.

THP-Plus providers also use the trainings to provide a detailed overview of the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the host family and the participants. The trainings represent an important step in the development of the formal agreements that will guide and structure the host family relationship, which are explained in more detail in the next section.

Training topics for new participants may include:

- What can a participant expect from a host family program?
- How is the host family program different than foster care?
- How are the rules of the house established and negotiated on an ongoing basis?
- What are the responsibilities of participants in the host family program?
- How do these responsibilities change over the 24-month duration of the program?
- What happens if the participant doesn't fulfill those expectations?
- How is the rent structured?
- What recourse does the participant have if he or she thinks that the host family isn't meeting its obligations?
- What services are provided to the participant by the host family program?
- What services are provided to the host family?
- What happens at the end of 24 months?

Our trainings focus on supporting participants to develop skills in education, employment, communication, personal advocacy, and relationships. Having the ability to maintain healthy relationships makes permanency possible.

-Andrew Niklaus, First Place for Youth

6 TRAINING

Training for Host Families

Ideally, host families and participants engage in a series of trainings at the same time.

Trainings for host families are designed to provide more detail about the THP-Plus program and the host family model philosophy and goals, and to ensure that host families have a clear understanding of how the participants' experiences with the child welfare and/or probation systems may impact their relationship.

Some of the questions addressed during the training may include:

- What has been the experience of a youth who is emancipating from foster care?
- What are the stages of adolescent development and what impact has the participant's foster care experience had on them?
- What is permanency and why is it important?
- What expectations are there of the host family at the end of the 24-month program period?
- What services will be provided to the young adult participant?
- What services will be provided to the host family?
- How often will the THP-Plus provider be visiting the home?
- How is the host family model different from foster care?
- What recourse or supportive resources does the host family have if the participant is not fulfilling his or her obligations as a participant?
- Are additional funds available for special events?
- What happens if the household composition changes (e.g. the head of household has a child, gets married, gets divorced)?
- How can the host family foster a trusting relationship with the participant?
- When the family takes a family vacation, can they include the participant? Are they expected to?



Once again, it is best if part or all of the training for host families can be conducted by a current or former host family, as well as a young adult who is currently or formerly in the host family program, if possible. These individuals will be able to provide the specific examples and information to best answer the questions of prospective host families.

Trainings can be tailored based on the specific experiences and needs of the host families. Host families who are experienced foster parents may need very little training about the child welfare system, but will benefit from a training that focuses on the differences between foster care and the host family model.

Trainings should also establish a framework for host families to consider potentially challenging issues that may arise, and to set realistic expectations. Prior to moving in, host families and participants will likely be optimistic and excited about the arrangement. After the initial “honeymoon” period, however, it will be important for them to be prepared to address difficult situations. For example, what if the young adult goes away for several days without informing the family? Will overnight guests be allowed?

Even with training before entering the program, participants and their host families will continue to need intensive case management to support and develop their relationship as issues arise. In particular, this applies when the host family has little or no experience of foster care or the participant has mental health challenges or a lack of experience in family settings. Host families who have been or are currently foster parents will often need continuous hands-on training about the difference between foster care and providing support to a transitioning young adult in a THP-Plus program.

Several providers conduct trainings geared toward host families with little or no experience with foster care. The training includes a discussion of how a foster care history may affect the host family participants. This scalable training can be conducted for one or more people, depending on need. Trainings are timed so that host families and participants finish their training at the same time.

STEP 7 OF 8. CREATE AGREEMENTS

An important component of an effective host family program is the development of agreements between the host family, the participant, and the THP-Plus provider. In addition to solidifying their roles and responsibilities, creating mutual agreements sets the stage for open communication and may raise issues that deserve further attention and support from the THP-Plus case manager. In addition, both participants and host families are more likely to take agreements seriously if they were involved in their design.

A significant amount of time and effort will go into developing strong agreements to ensure that they reflect the preferences of everyone involved. THP-Plus case managers should be prepared for situations in which the agreements may be violated, and outline the repercussions of these violations in advance. The THP-Plus case manager can facilitate targeted conversations between the participant and the host family to plan for these sorts of situations and to resolve conflicts when these situations occur.

By developing the agreements together, including the repercussions for a young adult or host family failing to meet his or her responsibilities, participants, host families, and case managers set the stage for a more successful living situation.

Please refer to the document appendix for samples of the shared housing agreement, participant contract, host family contract, and a restatement of the Transitional Housing Misconduct Act.

HOST FAMILY MODEL AGREEMENTS

Type of Agreement	Essential Elements
Shared Housing Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarifies key roles and responsibilities of youth participant and host family
Participant Contract	Participant's rights and responsibilities and expectations for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy • Household cleanliness • Visitors and overnight guests • House rules (television, pets, household curfew)
Host Family Contract	Host Family's rights and responsibilities and expectations for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy • Household cleanliness • Visitors and overnight guests • House rules (television, pets, household curfew)
Budget Agreement	Overview of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent payment expectations • Items included in rent payment • Party responsible for paying for utilities, clothing, & food
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of the participant's belongings and an outline of the participant's responsibilities for treatment of host family's belongings. • A restatement of the Transitional Housing Misconduct Act, which outlines participants' housing rights and responsibilities.

STEP 8 OF 8. IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAM AND PROVIDE SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Special Considerations for Providing Supportive Services

THP-Plus providers are responsible for providing all 15 THP-Plus services as outlined in the Department of Social Services Manual of Policies and Procedures Chapter 30-900, either directly or through collaborative agreements with partner organizations. A full description of these supportive services is available in the publication, *Effective Practices in THP-Plus: Providing Affordable Housing and Supportive Services to Youth Formerly in the Foster Care and Juvenile Probation Systems*, developed by the THP-Plus Statewide Implementation Project.

While this document outlines the required supportive services to be provided in all THP-Plus programs, experienced practitioners have recommend several customized approaches for participants living in a host family setting. These include:

1. Address Fair Housing Concerns

As with all THP-Plus programs, the THP-Plus provider implementing the host family model must demonstrate compliance with fair housing law. The host family model is subject to the Transitional Housing Participant Misconduct Act (Health and Safety Code Section 50580, et seq.), which applies to transitional housing programs of 30 days to 24 months in duration. Recommended resources include:

- “Understanding the Transitional Housing Misconduct Act” published by the nonprofit organization HomeBase, which can be ordered from www.homebaseccc.org
- California Department of Consumer Affairs publications about fair housing available at www.dca.ca.gov/publications/landlordbook/before-rent.shtml

Some of the key fair housing considerations for host family providers include:

- **There is a high standard for eviction:** A participant can be evicted only if there is “clear and convincing evidence of abuse” and “great or irreparable injury” or a violation of a pre-existing injunction or temporary restraining order (TRO). A THP-Plus provider, at the request of the host family, can seek a court order for a temporary restraining order if the participant has engaged in misconduct or abuse.

- **The standard for determining “misconduct” or “abuse” is reasonably high.**

Misconduct: Participant behavior is defined as misconduct if it meets all three following criteria:

1. The participant intentionally broke the program rules;
2. The participant’s conduct significantly impairs the host family’s ability to run the housing program AND
3. The conduct relates to a) drunkenness, sale or use of drugs, theft, arson, or destruction of another person’s property; or b) violence or threats of violence directed at, and immediate harassment of, immediate neighbors of the program site, program employees, or other participants.

Abuse: Participant behavior is defined as abuse if:

- The participant did or attempted to attack, strike, batter, or sexually assault other participants, program employees, or immediate neighbors of the program site; OR
- The participant threatened to attack, strike, batter, or sexually assault the above individuals.

2. Reinforce case manager instruction with hands-on application

A benefit of the host family model is that many of the THP-Plus services are reinforced by the day-to-day interactions between the participant and the host family. The host family may also provide extra support for the participant by implementing and reinforcing the case manager's advice and guidance. For example, host families can support participants in developing cooking and nutrition skills by sharing meals; building community by incorporating participants into their social network; and budgeting and economic literacy by helping them balance a checkbook and reviewing bank statements. Host families can also be involved in participant trainings focused on employment, education, and how to access services, which allows them to be better advocates on behalf of the participant. Good case management recognizes the host family's important role and supports them in fostering the skills developed by the participant.

3. Realize that participants' public benefits may be affected by living in a host family setting

THP-Plus participants are frequently eligible for a range of public benefits, including food stamps and the Earned Income Tax Credit. All emancipated foster youth qualify for Medi-Cal until the age of 21. Participants ages 21-24 may also be eligible for Medi-Cal based on their income.

However, young adults living in a host family are part of a household and as such their income may be considered when determining a participant's public benefits, such as food stamps, TANF and access to child care subsidies. For this reason, it is very important to work closely with a young adult to evaluate the effect of living with a host family on his or her public benefits, particularly for custodial parents who may be receiving several sources of public assistance. Likewise, young adults living in a host family setting should fully disclose this information to county eligibility workers to prevent any future of charges of welfare fraud.



The host family model is unique because the provider is working with an entire family unit. By providing comprehensive supportive services to the host family and the young adult participant, we foster a relationship that will endure far beyond the THP-Plus program.

– Frank Motta, Santa Clara County
Social Services Agency

4. Maintain a low ratio of host families to case managers

Good case management is the cornerstone of successful THP-Plus programs. In the host family model, case managers work with the entire household, with an emphasis on the young adult participants and the hosts. Therefore, it is recommended that case managers serve no more than ten participant/host family pairs at a time.

Support the relationship: Case managers will need to be prepared to work closely with the participant and the host family to maintain a healthy relationship over time. It is important that the host family is prepared to stay in the relationship for the long-term, and not be discouraged by potential issues that may arise over time.

Maintaining the relationship between the host family and the young adult is one of the most important elements of the host family model. Even in situations where the living situation is not sustained for the full 24 months, case managers should work closely with all members of the household to ensure that the success of the relationship is not contingent on the success of the housing situation. Just as other young adults may move out of their family's home at a certain age, sometimes due to conflict, the goal is for the host family-participant relationship to be unconditional.

Offer mobile case management: Meetings are more productive and more likely to occur when they are held in a location that is easily accessible and comfortable for the participant and the host family, such as their home. It is important to keep caseloads low to enable adequate time for travel to host families scattered throughout the county.

5. Clearly specify expectations around food and other necessities

Case managers can assist participants and host families in determining how food will be provided. In current programs, participants are primarily responsible for purchasing their own food, either with earned income or with the stipend provided by the host family program. However, sharing meals provides an opportunity for connection and learning. Some providers ask that participants and host families share at least one meal a week. One program provides participants and host families with a "family night out" stipend, which allows the host family and participant to eat dinner at a restaurant. These expectations should be outlined and agreed upon in advance in the Shared Housing Agreement.

6. Don't assume the host family connection is sufficient to achieve permanency

There are a number of steps that providers can take to ensure that the host family is fully committed to the relationship and has a strong understanding of what it means to be a "permanent connection" to a young adult. As noted earlier, the screening and assessment processes provide important measures of a prospective host family's level of commitment to the young person, and their capacity and willingness to remain in the relationship for the long-term.

As noted in the Host Family Contract in the document appendix, current providers ask host families to demonstrate their commitment to be a permanent connection in the young adult's life, including providing emotional support and mentoring. A critical element of fostering a healthy relationship is the continued support provided by the THP-Plus case manager. Conflicts are to be expected in any relationship, and when properly supported, can provide an opportunity for the participant and the host family to develop healthy communication and conflict resolution skills. Even when the housing situation does not work out, providers have found that the relationship can be sustained.



In some situations, the host family and participant determine that it is best for the participant to move out. The THP-Plus provider plays an important role in helping to mediate any conflicts and in ensuring that the relationship is maintained for the long-term.

–Sal Perez, Stanislaus County Community Services Agency

7. Assess participants’ level of connectedness and create a plan for supporting a network of adult connections.

The host family represents an important relationship that can foster permanency and stability for participants. However, in order to promote real permanency, it is important to recognize that participants will benefit from a larger network of caring, supportive adults. This network may include extended family members, neighbors, teachers, and other adults who are committed to staying involved in the participants’ lives over the long-term. THP-Plus providers can provide resources and support efforts to identify and promote other adult connections.

A number of California social service agencies and Independent Living Programs are participating in “The Family Finding Program,” which uses computer technology to locate relatives for current and former foster youth. The results of these efforts have been quite effective, and have allowed youth and young adults to build connections with immediate and extended family members and, in many cases, establish lasting relationships. In communities where family finding is already underway, providers may want to partner with their local social service agency to identify additional permanent connections for THP-Plus participants.

There needs to be resources when problems arise so that the promise of a permanent relationship won’t be broken.

–Jen Troia, California CASA Association

CONCLUSION

The host family model of THP-Plus presents an innovative way to incorporate permanency practices into safe, affordable housing. As the only fully state-funded housing program for former foster care youth, THP-Plus programs are uniquely positioned to assist young adults in the development of the skills, experience and assets they need to make a successful transition to adulthood. In the 2006-07 fiscal year, 17% of youth in THP-Plus were living in a host family model. A number of counties who will start implementing in the 2007-08 fiscal year will also be incorporating the host family model into their services.

While most young adults are not fully independent from their families until the age of 26, former foster youth are expected to master independent living at the age of 18. The host family model supports a young adult's transition from adolescence to adulthood in a structure that mirrors the experiences of young adults from intact families. With proper support, this natural transition period can set the stage for future success. Current providers and participants identify the benefits of giving participants the opportunity to learn new skills, foster permanent relationships and support their growing independence with the support of an entire team, including a family unit, other caring adults, and THP-Plus staff.

Permanency efforts are most effective when a former foster or probation youth can develop a rich network of supportive relationships. The host family model presents one element in a continuum of services and supports to promote permanency. By providing the participant with a safe, stable place to live, the support of a family setting and additional supportive services, the host family model provides an exciting development in THP-Plus.

California Permanency for Youth Project
www.cpyy.org

Casey Family Programs
www.caseyfamilyservices.org

Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative
www.jimcaseyyouth.org

Family Builders by Adoption
www.familybuilders.org

Kids are Waiting, Pew Charitable Trusts
www.kidsarewaiting.org

1

Q: Why does THP-Plus funding need to be involved in these relationships? Wouldn't the youth be welcome to stay with the host families anyway without paying any rent?

A: The host family model provides an important level of financial support and other supportive services that can make a significant difference in the success and sustainability of the relationship between the host family and the young adult participant. The THP-Plus provider's supportive services focus on the entire household unit, and emphasize preparing the participant for successful adulthood. The model also recognizes the economic reality of many families, who may not be able to independently afford the cost of an additional member of the household.

2

Q: Is the host family model less expensive to operate than a scattered-site or single-site housing model?

A: Each county may negotiate up to the maximum THP-Plus rate. In existing programs, the host family currently costs approximately the same as the scattered-site and single-site programs, between \$1,800 and \$2,500 per month per participant. This cost includes the monthly rental stipend and all THP-Plus supportive services. Although the average rental subsidy of \$500 is lower than that of a scattered-site or single-site model, the cost of case management may be slightly higher; providers recommend a ratio of one case manager to ten host family pairs to ensure adequate time for case management.

3

Q: Is the stipend provided to the host family considered taxable income?

A: This is undetermined at this point. THP-Plus providers are responsible for submitting Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 1099 to the host families, who then submit the completed form to the IRS. For specific tax questions, THP-Plus providers and host families should refer to the IRS or another tax expert.

4

Q: Are the outcomes for the host family model better than for the scattered-site or single-site THP-Plus housing models?

A: The THP-Plus host family model was first implemented in 2006, and participants have not yet had the opportunity to complete the full 24-month program. Therefore, outcome data is not yet available for the host family model. However, by the end of the 2008-09 fiscal year, there will be sufficient outcome data to examine the effectiveness of this program.

5

Q: Do young adults emancipating from foster care really want to live with a host family?

A: As with all THP-Plus models, the host family model is attractive to some young adults, and not others. Current participants have strong relationships with a caring adult, and are interested in living in a family-like environment. They also recognize that the host family model is a voluntary program, and is not an extension of foster care. Counties that currently offer the host family model have found that demand for the program exceeds the existing capacity.

6

Q: Can the host family serve parenting participants?

A: Yes. The host family model is available for parenting participants and their children. In this case, providers will need to work closely with the host family and the participant to clearly set expectations around what this living situation would look like, and to determine the roles and responsibilities for everyone involved. For example, how will the host family be impacted by the presence of a child in the home? Will the host family provide any type of parenting guidance? Will they ever provide respite for the parenting participant by watching the child?

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

7 Q: What happens at the end of the 24-month THP-Plus program period?

A: It is important that the THP-Plus provider, the host family, and the participant work together to ensure that at the end of the 24-month program, the participant has safe, stable housing. This preparation should begin within six months of beginning the program, and revisited on a regular basis. The participant can continue to live with the host family, after the 24-month program period, without the services or program rules provided through the THP-Plus program. The host family and participant, with the support of the THP-Plus case manager, should determine the ongoing rent structure and expectations for this continued living situation well before the end of the program. Alternatively, participants may move into another housing situation, such as renting an apartment or living in a college dorm.

8 Q: Can a host family be a former social worker, probation officer or teacher?

A: Current THP-Plus regulations do not prohibit former social workers, probation officers, or teachers from serving as host families. It is important for THP-Plus providers to work collaboratively with participants to identify adult connections who are willing and able to be host families and maintain a relationship beyond the 24 month program.

9 Q: How much of a county's total THP-Plus capacity should be dedicated to the host family model?

A: The host family model represents one viable housing option. An ideal THP-Plus housing continuum includes the host family, scattered site, and single site models. Each county should determine the mix of housing options based on a number of community-specific considerations, such as: youth priorities within the region, rural or urban setting, and available county resources and services. The most important consideration is that each county provides a continuum of housing options, to promote choice among youth in their transition.

10 Q: Must the THP-Plus provider pay the rental subsidy directly to the host family?

A: It is up to the county's discretion to determine the best way to structure payment of the rental stipend (usually \$500). In some counties, the THP-Plus provider pays the stipend directly to the host family. In other counties, the provider pays a monthly living stipend to the participant, which assists with their portion of the rent and other expenses, such as transportation and food. Participants are then responsible for paying their portion of the rent directly to the host family.

1. Adult Screening Tool
2. Host Family Shared Housing Agreement
3. Participant Contract
4. Host Family Contract

ADULT SCREENING TOOL

(Adapted from the Stanislaus County Community Services Agency)

This form is to be utilized by the THP-Plus provider to document the interview responses and evaluation conducted for a proposed THP-Plus host family. This form is not to be provided to the host family to fill out directly.

1. What is your relationship to the participant?
When/how did you meet the youth and how long have you known him/her?
2. How frequent has your face-to-face contact been with the youth in the last 6 months?
3. How frequent has your phone contact been with the youth in the last 6 months?
4. How would you describe your “commitment” level to the youth?
Ask them to describe how they demonstrate their commitment to the youth (with examples)
5. How long have you lived at your current residence?
6. How long do you expect to remain at the current residence?
6. Are you married? Are you living with a significant other?
7. Are you employed?
 - What type of employment and for how many hours a week?
 - How long have you worked for this employer?
 - Is your significant other employed?
 - What type of employment and for how many hours a week?
 - How long has he/she worked for this employer?
8. If you are not employed, what is your source of income?
Amount?
9. What is the size/type of residence you live in? How many bedrooms are in the Residence?
10. How many adults live in the home?
11. How many children live in the home?
12. Provide names and DOB’s of the adults and children.
13. If the youth moved in, where in the home would he or she sleep?
14. Would he/she be sharing a room with others?
How many? With whom?
 - If sharing a room with others, how would you assure privacy at times for the youth?
15. Is there laundry access for the youth?
16. Has any adult in the home ever been arrested for a crime? (If yes, who, what crime, when, where)?
17. Has any adult in the home ever been convicted of a crime? (If yes, who, what crime, when, where)?
18. If you notice something valuable missing in your home, how will you handle this?
19. If you lived with this youth and noticed they appeared very angry about something but were not talking about it with you, how would you handle this?
20. If you lived with this youth and the youth’s parent contacted you to talk about the youth, how would you handle this?
21. Are you a licensed, certified or approved foster home?
If so, how will your licensing/certification/approval status be affected by having this youth move into your home?
22. Are there dependent children placed in your home currently (from what county or state)?
23. Do you have an approved commercially manufactured and functioning smoke detector installed in the hallway(s) in each sleeping area in the home that is audible in each bedroom or sleeping room?

DIRECT HOME INSPECTION VERIFICATION:

Sleeping arrangements and degree of privacy they will afford the youth is acceptable.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

I observed smoke detectors in the hallways in each sleeping area in the home, including the sleeping area that would be used by the youth.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Proposed Provider has obtained livescan criminal record for adults in home and submitted to THP-Plus provider.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

OR

Proposed Provider has submitted a Declaration Under Penalty of Perjury for each adult in the home regarding Criminal Record History.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Criminal History Records have been evaluated.

- ☐ Record is clear, certification is recommended
☐ Record is not clear and certification is recommended based on the following:

- ☐ Record is not clear and certification should be denied based on the following:

PROVIDER CERTIFICATION DECISION:

Is this a host family appropriate for certification?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Rationale

THP-Plus Case Manager's Name

Case Manager's Signature

Date

HOST FAMILY SHARED HOUSING AGREEMENT

(Adapted from First Place for Youth)

Adult Roles and Responsibilities

I agree to:

1. Demonstrate commitment to being a permanent connection in this youth's life, including providing emotional support and mentoring.
2. Provide a safe living environment in my home for at least two years or until the day before the youth's 24th birthday, or whichever one comes first. I understand that this housing must provide sufficient space for the youth and be clean and well kept.
3. Incorporate the shared values statement that is created together into the household and the relationship with the youth.
4. Support the youth in achieving the goals outlined in the Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP) and case plan.
5. Provide as much freedom as possible to prepare the youth to successfully live independently.
6. Collaborate with the THP-Plus Case Manager and other service providers to support the youth in meeting the goals of their TILP.
7. Attend monthly house meetings with the youth and the THP-Plus Case Manager.
8. Support youth in developing a housing plan after completion of the program if remaining in the home is not an option.
9. Support youth in developing a plan to stay in the home if remaining in the home is an option.
10. Abide by the rules and agreements outlined in the household agreement.
11. Work on communicating concerns and ideas to the youth and to continuously improve communication.
12. Respect the youth's confidentiality and right to privacy.

Participant Roles and Responsibilities

I agree to:

1. Demonstrate commitment to being an active participant within the home, within the relationship with the permanent adult, and within the Host Family Program.
2. Incorporate the shared values statement that is created together into the household and relationship with the adult.
3. Pursue the goals and participate in the activities outlined in my Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP) and case plan.
4. Respect the freedom provided me as an opportunity to prepare myself to successfully transition into independent living.
5. Attend weekly meetings in the home with the THP-Plus Case Manager and monthly house meetings with the adult and the THP-Plus Case Manager.
6. Abide by the rules and agreements outlined in the household agreement.
7. Follow all housing policies as listed in the participant contract.
8. To work on communicating concerns and ideas to the permanent adult and to continuously improve communication.

We agree to abide by the roles and responsibilities listed above.

Youth's Name

Youth's Signature

Date

Host Family Adult's Name

Host Family Adult's Signature

Date

Case Manager's Name

Case Manager's Signature

Date

[illegible]

PARTICIPANT CONTRACT

(Adapted from First Place for Youth)

This contract is made and entered into on _____, between _____ [Name of Youth] and _____ [Name of THP-Plus provider].

As a participant in this program:

1. I agree to respect the rules outlined in the household agreements.
2. I understand that possession, use, or sale of illegal drugs is prohibited, including at [Name of THP-Plus program]-related events. This includes any alcohol possessed by a minor.
3. I understand that I am not allowed to have any weapons or simulated weapons (legal and illegal) in the household or at any meeting or activity that involves THP-Plus participants or staff.
4. I will not steal or have any stolen property in my possession.
5. I will not use physical violence (attacking, striking, battering, or sexually assaulting), make threats of violence or harass immediate neighbors of the program site, program employees, household members, or other participants.
6. I will not destroy any property.
7. I understand that I will be held financially liable for any damages that I am responsible for at the property where I will reside.
8. I understand that I am responsible for the behavior of my visitors.
9. I understand that my eligibility to remain in housing is contingent on meeting program expectations. The expectations include:
 1. Meeting weekly with the THP-Plus case manager at the residence.
 2. Attending monthly house meetings with the adult and the case manager.
 3. Following all housing policies.
 4. Actively working on the goals outlined in my TILP and case plan.
 5. Attending any other meetings scheduled regarding my participation in the program.
10. I understand that I will have a 30-day evaluation for the first 90 days that I am in the program. If I am not meeting the goals listed in my evaluation, I understand that I will need to improve on them in the following 30-day period.
11. I understand that I will be evaluated after 6 months, 12 months, and 18 months in the program.
12. I understand that my rent is due on the first of the month and is considered late after the fifth of the month.
13. I have received the Monthly Rent Calculations worksheet and understand the amount of rent I need to pay each month.
14. I acknowledge receiving an addendum to this contract that lists the policies about rent payment and program participation.
15. I acknowledge receiving my rights and responsibilities under the Transitional Housing Misconduct Act (Health and Safety Code section 50580 et seq.) and "Instructions for Participants: Lawsuits to prohibit abuse or program misconduct."
16. I understand that [name of THP-Plus provider] staff will only enter the residence for weekly meetings, in cases of emergency, and /or with 24 hour notice if entry is required for any other reason.
17. I understand that [name of THP-Plus provider] will make its best effort to relocate me if residing in the home presents an imminent risk to my safety.

I have read and understand the above agreements and requirements for participating in [Name of THP-Plus Provider]'s host family program. I agree to abide by all of the above requirements.

Youth's Name

Youth's Signature

Date

Case Manager's Name

Case Manager's Signature

Date

HOST FAMILY CONTRACT

(Adapted from First Place for Youth)

This contract is made and entered into on _____, between _____ [Name of Adult] and _____ [Name of THP-Plus provider].

As a host family:

1. I agree to provide a safe living environment in my home or residence for at least two years while the youth is between the ages of 18 and 24. I understand that this housing must provide sufficient space for the youth and be clean and well kept.
2. I agree to refrain from discriminating against the youth based on race, religion, national origin, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.
3. I agree to respect the rules outlined in the household agreements and the roles and responsibilities outlined in the operating agreement.
4. I agree to inform [name of THP-Plus provider] if any member of the household is arrested or convicted of a crime during the duration of the youth's stay in the home.
5. I agree to inform [name of THP-Plus provider] if any new members begin to reside in the household.
6. I understand that [name of THP-Plus provider] cannot be held liable for any general wear and tear in the household. If the youth or his/her guests cause serious damage, [name of THP-Plus provider] will work with the Host Family to create an amenable solution to the problem.
7. I understand that the host family is required to provide any repairs to the residence related to the youth's stay in the home.
8. I understand the THP-Plus Case Manager will meet weekly with the youth in the home. The THP-Plus Case Manager will only enter the residence in cases of emergency and efforts will be made to contact the adult before doing so. If for any other reason a [name of THP-Plus provider] staff needs to enter the home, 24 hours notice will be provided to the youth and the adult.
9. I understand that pursuant to the Transitional Housing Misconduct Act (Health and Safety Code 50580 et seq.), [name of THP-Plus provider] can request a Temporary Restraining Order and/or permanent order requiring the youth to terminate the misconduct or abuse of the program, and in some instances, removal from the program. I understand that the following conduct is considered misconduct:
 - 1) the participant intentionally broke the program rules;
 - 2) the participant's conduct substantially interferes with the program operator's ability to run the housing program; and
 - 3) the conduct relates to
 - a) drunkenness, sale or use of drugs, theft, arson, or destruction of another person's property; or
 - b) violence or threats of violence directed at, and harassment of, immediate neighbors of the program site, program employees, household members, or other participants.

The participant's conduct is abuse if:

- 1) the participant did or attempted to attack, strike, batter, or sexually assault other participants, program employees, household members, or immediate neighbors of the program site; or
 - 2) the participant threatened to attack, strike, batter, or sexually assault the above individuals.
10. I agree to respect the youth's confidentiality and right to privacy.
 13. I agree to meet monthly with the THP-Plus Case Manager and the youth.
 14. I agree to meet quarterly with the THP-Plus Case Manager.
 15. I agree to attend quarterly continuing education workshops.
 16. I understand that I will receive a \$500 monthly payment by the fifth of each month.
 17. I understand that this payment will not be increased if the youth has a dependent child.

I have read and understand the above agreements and requirements for participating in [name of THP-Plus provider]'s Host Family Program. I agree to abide by all of the above requirements.

Host Family Adult's Name

Host Family Adult's Signature

Date

THP-Plus Case Manager's Name

THP-Plus Case Manager's Signature

Date



THP-PLUS STATEWIDE IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING FOR FORMER FOSTER YOUTH

John Burton Foundation
for Children Without Homes
235 Montgomery Street, Suite 1142
San Francisco, CA 94104
www.johnburtonfoundation.org