



California Youth Empowerment Network

a program of the Mental Health Association in California

CAYEN PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTEGRATED PLAN GUIDELINES

California Youth Empowerment Network (CAYEN) has been established as a program of the Mental Health Association in California (MHAC) to ensure that the voice of transition age youth is reflected in state and county mental health policy decisions. Success during the TAY years is the most important barometer of overall success for clients since the success rate drops off dramatically for those who do not achieve the ability to live and work independently by age 25.

Attached is a paper reflecting the findings of the Mental Health Association in California regarding the importance of successfully serving TAY. The following are our preliminary recommendations for the integrated plan guidelines.

1. Recognize Transition Age Youth (TAY) as an underserved community and include progress in serving TAY as a reporting requirement.
2. Require programs which serve TAY to be designed for TAY and only serve TAY and be separated from services to children or adults over 25. Program design must also recognize that 60% of TAY in California are ethnic minorities with over 40% Latino.
3. For all youth who receive FSP (full service partnerships) track their educational, employment, and living situations through age 25 even if they have been discharged from services.
4. Require counties to ensure the TAY voice in decisions by establishing independent TAY organizations (supported by a local community based organization) to provide the TAY perspective on county program development and policy. (Sacramento County and MHA Sacramento already do this)
5. Establish TAY centers for youth to get peer support and information about a wide array of services they may need not just for mental health but also other challenges in becoming independent and successful adults. (San Bernardino and San Diego already have these.)