

# January 1, 2016 – June 30, 2016

## *AMP Report*



## **July 1, 2011 – Partnership of Iowa Foster Care Youth Councils**

Eight non-profit agencies led by Youth & Shelter Services, Inc. (YSS), headquartered in Ames, Iowa, have come together to create a statewide collaboration known as the Partnership of Iowa Foster Care Youth Councils. The statewide Partnership seeks to unleash the full potential for personal growth among foster and adoptive youth in Iowa. Youth will be trained to become advocates for themselves and others and will also participate in valuable leadership opportunities. Youth will share their personal stories with each other, provide understanding and support for one another, gain life skills necessary to become healthy, independent adults, and build partnerships with adults in the community.

Starting July 1, 2011, the highly regarded program, formerly known as ELEVATE, was renamed Achieving Maximum Potential (AMP), a new name selected by foster care youth themselves. AMP is maintaining the look and feel of ELEVATE but now adds involvement and advocacy by eight local non-profit agencies. The Partnership plans to expand the AMP membership and outreach to foster care youth throughout Iowa.

Thirteen AMP Youth Councils have been funded through a grant from the Iowa Department of Human Services. In April of 2014, the AMP Mobile Facilitator, a full-time position was created. This position travels to shelters, facilities, and detention centers to reach youth who cannot travel to a council meeting. This is one way AMP is attempting to overcome the transportation hurdles and gather additional youth voices. This position was converted to an hourly position as of July 1, 2014. The partner agencies have been encouraged to raise local funds to expand and enhance each local council. AMP offers leadership opportunities, service learning projects, speaking opportunities, and educational/vocational assistance to youth ages 13 and up who have been involved in foster care, adoption, or other out-of-home placements. AMP also provides education on various life skills that foster care youth need to become self-sufficient, independent adults.

AMP is a youth engagement program summarized by the motto “Nothing about us, without us.” AMP empowers young people to become advocates for themselves and gives them a voice in system-level improvements in child welfare policies and practices. When supported through productive partnerships with adults, youth can be authoritative advocates for making foster care more responsive and effective.

The eight partner agencies that are facilitating and leading the statewide foster care youth program include: American Home Finding Association (Ottumwa Council), Children’s Square USA (Council Bluffs and Sioux City Councils), Foundation 2 (Cedar Rapids), Four Oaks (Waterloo Council and Iowa City Councils), Francis Lauer Youth Services (Mason City Council), Hillcrest Family Services (Dubuque Council), Youth Shelter Care of North Central Iowa (Fort Dodge Council), and Young House (Mount Pleasant/Burlington Council), as well as Youth & Shelter Services (Ames, Davenport, Marshalltown, Eldora/State Training School, and Mobile Councils), and its branch in Des Moines, known as Iowa Homeless Youth Centers (Des Moines Council).

In addition, the Partnership has links to two consulting agencies, ISU – RISE (Research Institute for Studies in Education) to conduct program assessment (PAAT) and analysis of outcome data, and The Child and Family Policy Center for legislative advocacy. The Partnership is networking with other stakeholders including, but not limited to, the Iowa Foster and Adoptive Parent Association, Iowa KidsNet, the Iowa Aftercare Services Network, and group homes/PMICS and shelters.

The Partnership agencies are offering AMP youth a comprehensive menu of support, community connections, and leadership opportunities in order for them to “Achieve Maximum Potential.” Visit [www.ampiowa.org](http://www.ampiowa.org) for more information.

**AMP Central Council (AMP-CC)** is a youth leadership council providing project oversight for AMP and continues to be a guiding force within AMP. It is made up of two elected members from each council. The major responsibility of AMP-CC members is to communicate information from local councils to staff and to relay information back to their respective councils. AMP-CC does not convene in large meetings like they used to. The AMP-CC has a website feedback loop with the Statewide Coordinator and meetings at AMP Camp. They are also connected on the AMP Facebook page.

**Council Facilitators** may be alumni of the system, supportive community members, or local foster parents, and are responsible for guiding/mentoring the local AMP council meetings.

**Local Support Position** is a community person able to transport youth to and from speaking engagements, as well as assist with council meeting set-up. Safety checks are completed on each person considered for this role. Once these safety checks are clear, this person is allowed to volunteer with AMP.

**AMP Contract Manager:**

Doug Wolfe	Iowa Department of Human Services, ACFS Division	Program Planner
------------	--	-----------------

**AMP Management Team:**

Ruth I. E. Buckels, LMSW	Statewide AMP Coordinator	
Terri Bailey	Des Moines and Ames Council Facilitator and AMP Statewide Assistant Coordinator	
Jeannette Hamil	AMP Special Project Staff	
Terri Johanson	Rosedale/Aftercare Director and Ames Service Area Leader, Youth & Shelter Services, Inc. (YSS)	Lead AMP Agency
Chastity Schonhorst	AMP Fiscal Representative	Youth & Shelter Services, Inc.
Rhonda Clark	Public Information Officer	Youth & Shelter Services, Inc.

### **Council Facilitators:**

1 & 2	Terri Bailey	Ames and Des Moines	Youth & Shelter Services, Inc. and Iowa Homeless Youth Centers, Inc.
3	Indy (Jessica Perry) Akicita	Dubuque	Hillcrest Family Services
4	Megan Heffernan	Davenport	Youth & Shelter Services, Inc.
5	Shelby Holsapple	Cedar Rapids	Foundation 2, Inc.
6	Jerry Wallace	Council Bluffs	Children's Square, Inc.
7	Alyson Hicks	Marshalltown	Youth & Shelter Services, Inc.
8	Cassie Johnson & Ebony Rice-Caston	Fort Dodge	Youth Shelter Care of North Central Iowa, Inc.
9	Jen Schaper	Sioux City	Children's Square, Inc.
10	Holly Dommer	Ottumwa	American Home Finding Association
11	Jan Shelman	Burlington	Young House Family Services
12	Lisa Pelz	Mason City	Francis Lauer Youth Services
13	Jessica Christman	Waterloo	Four Oaks, Inc.
14	Evelyn Garrison	AMP Mobile Facilitator – covering central Iowa	Youth & Shelter Services, Inc.
15	Jo Myers-Walker	Iowa City Facilitator	Four Oaks, Inc.
16	Jessica Kropf	Eldora State Training School (STS)	Youth & Shelter Services, Inc.

### **AMP Sub-Contractors:**

Mari Kemis	ISU, Research Institute for Studies in Education (RISE)
Mary (Mandi) Anderson	

### **AMP Legislative & Policy Consultants:**

Sheila Hansen & Angelica Cardenas	Child & Family Policy Center
-----------------------------------	------------------------------

### **AMP National Affiliates:**

Laticia Aossay	2015 All-Star – Foster Club
Jacob Carmi	2015 All-Star – Foster Club
Jessica Edgar	2014 All-Star – Foster Club
Matt Rosen	Foster Youth in Action (FYA)

What follows is our report to the Iowa Department of Human Services, which covers activities from January 1, 2016 through June 30, 2016. You will find our responses to a more specific scope of service requirements outlined in the Contract to Administer the Iowa Foster Care Youth Council.

## Contents

1. Establish and maintain 10 existing local councils. Ensure there is at least one local council in each of the five agency regions (also known as DHS Service Areas). Local council changes require agency approval.....	9
2. Maintain active membership of at least 10 youth per local council .....	9
3. Organize and implement all aspects of local council meeting arrangements (i.e., site, date/time, refreshments), as well as provide meeting notices and agenda.....	9
4. Maintain an agency-approved procedure for establishing a new local council and maintaining programmatic consistency among local councils.....	9
5. Bilingual staff or community volunteers shall be provided to translate, if requested, by clients who are not able to speak fluent English.....	10
<b>1.3.1.2 Youth Development .....</b>	<b>10</b>
1. Provide on-going recruitment of council participants ages 13 through 20 years old .....	10
2. Develop and implement a strategy for participant recruitment, which is inclusive and effectively draws a diversity of youth. The council is intended to represent the population of children in foster care. Also, the implementation strategy shall address ways the Contractor will reach out to youth in the various placement types (family foster care, residential treatment centers, relative placements, institutions, aftercare, etc.). The council will be youth driven and reflect the racial, cultural, and ethnic diversity of youth in foster care and provide access to youth from all levels of foster care. The strategy shall include recruitment of foster care alumni .....	12
3. Provide for training, as needed, for council participants to assist them in their role as a participant including, but not limited to, training focusing on leadership skills, team building, effective communication (including advocacy skills and healthy disclosure), and accessing and promoting community resources.....	13
4. Provide opportunities for each participant to become involved within the council according to their strengths and interests, through various means which may include writing, speaking engagements, committee work, council leadership, creation of a website specific to youth in foster care, or some other method chosen by the participant(s) .....	14
5. Provide a means to honor or recognize participants for accomplishments or growth... ..	15
6. Provide leadership opportunities for participants .....	15
7. Provide social/recreational opportunities for participants to encourage social support and to facilitate youth "buy in" .....	16
8. Link with existing effective youth councils, advocacy groups, or child serving organizations .....	16
9. Design, develop, and host a website for youth using a premium content management system that will allow youth to help manage the website's content. The website will have several components including, but not limited to, an events calendar, feedback, frequently asked questions, and news and press releases. The website shall be available to youth no later than January 1, 2012 .....	17

10. Facilitate an opportunity for one youth in foster care or alumni to participate in the 2015 Foster Club All Star Program. Contractor shall act as a point of contact for Foster Club through the duration of the youth's participation. The Contractor shall provide funding for the youth and to Foster Club for the Iowa youth participation, which includes, but is not limited to, travel and youth stipend. The youth may be a council participant but council participation is not required .....	17
11. Provide education to participants and staff regarding human trafficking, including, but not limited to, the definition of human trafficking, protection for victims and services available. Post a national hotline number for victims of human trafficking on the council website.....	18
12. Recognizing that youth placed at the State Training School have limitations on travel and community engagement, work with the juvenile court services and State Training School staff to facilitate youth engagement, relationship building, and youth development practices .....	18
<b>1.3.1.3 Youth Engagement in Child Welfare</b> .....	18
1. Identify youth for representation at agency workgroups, training (i.e., staff, care providers, key stakeholders), or other venues in which youth input would benefit the development or implementation of child welfare policies and practices .....	18
2. Prepare and train all youth who participate in public meetings and presentations to prepare them and to minimize risk to the youth .....	20
3. Develop procedure to respond timely to requests for youth input into child welfare and related activities, initiatives, and workgroups .....	20
4. Develop and implement a mechanism to compensate youth for time and travel expenses. Compensation and travel payments shall not be limited to participants. Compensation must comply with Agency Travel Guidelines.....	20
5. Contact the Agency Program Manager for Child Welfare Emergency Services and Foster Group Care to explore opportunities for the Iowa Foster Care Youth Council to engage youth at these placements .....	20
<b>1.3.1.4 Annual Foster Care Youth Conference</b> .....	21
1. Provide an annual statewide conference for youth (ages 13 through 20 years old) in foster care and alumni .....	21
2. Provide invitations, agenda, arrange presenters, and oversee the entire delivery of the youth conference .....	21
3. Partner with other organizations, agencies, youth groups, or advocacy groups as appropriate.....	21
<b>1.3.1.5 Reporting of Services Delivered and Outcomes</b> .....	23
1. Submit semi-annual reports to the agency within 30 days of the end of each reporting period, detailing staff activities, status of projects, community connections, recruitment efforts, participant and facilitator training provided, and opportunities and barriers experienced. All Contractual Deliverables in the Scope of Work shall be reported, as well as performance measures .....	23
Ames.....	23
Burlington.....	27

Cedar Rapids .....	30
Council Bluffs .....	33
Davenport .....	35
Des Moines .....	37
Dubuque .....	42
Eldora .....	44
Fort Dodge .....	46
Iowa City .....	48
Marshalltown .....	49
Mason City .....	52
Mobile Facilitator .....	55
Ottumwa .....	58
Sioux City .....	61
Waterloo .....	62
2. Conduct an agency-approved youth survey to measure council participants' satisfaction of overall council operation annually and submit to the agency within 30 days of the end of each annual contract year. The survey will measure participant satisfaction with the council and effectiveness of council projects and activities, including training received .....	67
3. Develop a procedure for participants to formally offer suggestions and/or register written complaints. Also inform all participants of their right to do so .....	67
<b>1.3.1.6 Quality Assurance and Program Improvement Activities .....</b>	<b>68</b>
1. Develop and implement an internal continuous quality assurance process using data analysis, process and practice modification, supervision, and other methods .....	68
2. Develop and implement a Quality Improvement System which involves input from participants, staff, and collaborating partners .....	68
3. Provide access to monthly clinical supervision for local council facilitators, volunteers, and leadership staff involved with the Youth Council .....	70
4. Conduct and maintain records absent of any criminal history or child abuse for all paid staff and volunteers who work directly with children and youth .....	70
5. Maintain all programmatic and financial records related to the services funded under this contract in a secure physical location .....	71
6. Program evaluation shall be used for all local councils and results will inform quality improvement activities .....	71
7. Staff training in cultural competency shall be provided annually. The contractor shall provide documentation that council facilitators and the statewide coordinator attend cultural competency training annually .....	71
8. Participate in an annual all contractors' meeting .....	71
<b>1.3.1.7 Evidence Based and Promising Practices .....</b>	<b>72</b>
1. Utilize the federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) process and the accompanying child welfare outcomes and indicators .....	72
2. Align activities with the Agency's Model of Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Practice and embrace the Family Interaction strategy .....	73

3. Develop a program which reflects the racial, cultural, and ethnic diversity of youth in foster care.....	75
4. Develop a program which provides access to youth from all levels of foster care .....	76
5. Promote significant adult relationships by involving foster parents, biological parents, and other adults as appropriate .....	76
6. Utilize youth development methods and approaches that nurture in participants a sense of competency, influence, belonging, and value.....	77
7. Engage youth in decision making at all levels, to instill confidence and allow youth to develop leadership experience .....	77
<b>1.3.2 Performance Measures</b> .....	79
1. Performance Measure 1: Youth will develop an improved support system.....	80
2. Performance Measure 2: Youth will contribute to improvements in the Child Welfare System.....	80
3. Performance Measure 3: Youth Development .....	81
4. Performance Measure 4: Permanency .....	82

- 1. Establish and maintain ten existing local councils. Ensure there is at least one local council in each of the five agency regions (also known as DHS Service Areas). Local council changes require agency approval.**

**SEE ATTACHMENT – STATEWIDE MAP**

Sixteen councils are open and operating, with one of those traveling to the youth who are in restricted environments in central Iowa. AMP has completed and hired for a council in Marshalltown to be facilitated by YSS Staff Alyson Hicks beginning July 1, 2015. Reaching out to youth in the southern counties remains a targeted goal.

- 2. Maintain active membership of at least ten (10) youth per local council.**

**SEE ATTACHMENT – PARTICIPANT LIST**

Attendance fluctuates in each council based on many different factors. The primary reason we hear for low attendance is transportation needs. Recently we have heard that the youth are connected on Facebook/website so the meeting times become work times for them as the internet is always “open”. However, even with fluctuations, AMP has been able to recruit 1040 new attendees. Between July 1 and October 31, AMP served 5729 total youth.

- 3. Organize and implement all aspects of local council meeting arrangements (i.e., site, date/time, refreshments), as well as provide meeting notices and agenda.**

Each individual council is responsible for keeping a list of youth, area professionals, and foster parents interested in AMP. At least 48 hours before council meetings, the facilitator is asked to send the agenda to their contact list. Some facilitators send it out one to two weeks in advance. Each facilitator supplies the AMP office with a copy of their agenda. Those are kept on the YSS Mainframe in the Family Life Center.

Procedures and Protocols can be found in the AMP Manual. This manual is a living document and is in a constant state of additions and considerations as we develop the AMP programming. For this reason, each facilitator has the manual on a flash-drive. AMP passed its CARF certification process in March and it was the only YSS program called out by name in the review process and praised for being innovative. The evaluators were impressed with the use of youth voice and advocacy. The task of keeping the manual updated will be the responsibility of Jeannette Hamil, AMP Special Projects Coordinator.

- 4. Maintain an agency-approved procedure for establishing a new local council and maintaining programmatic consistency among local councils.**

The procedure for establishing a new council location was developed with the partnership agencies, DHS, and youth input a number of years ago. After working to set up the Marshalltown Council, AMP updated the protocol.

**5. Bilingual staff or community volunteers shall be provided to translate if requested by clients who are not able to speak fluent English.**

This is being provided as requested per council. The AMP Mobile Facilitator is bilingual. Other councils have access to community support people who are bilingual and can be accessed, as needed. AMP also has access to a sign-language interpreter on an as-needed basis.

**6. Maintain one full-time position at the State Training School (STS) to deliver quality services to youth to facilitate transitions for participants, and to promote the Iowa Foster Care Youth Council. Selection and training of this position shall be driven by an effort to meet the unique needs of youth at the State Training School. Services shall be designed to complement State Training School services and support.**

AMP advertised and hired Jessica Day for the AMP Facilitator position opening at the State Training School. She began her work in August 2014. Jessica maintains an office in the school where the youth attend daily. She is in their units to hold AMP meetings and she is part of planning celebrations when the youth reach significant milestones. In December and May, AMP does a campus outreach to each of the young men living on campus and provided them a calling card for attending and learning about AMP. Jessica's work is overseen by Brett Lawrence on campus. See Eldora report for more information on this council.

### **1.3.1.2 Youth Development**

**1. Provide on-going recruitment of council participants ages 13 through 20 years old.**

AMP continues to recruit members through advertising, word of mouth, agency involvement, speaking engagements, and through collaborative work with our partnership agencies, Iowa KidsNet, and the Iowa Foster and Adoptive Parent Association (IFAPA). As time and space allowed during this reporting period, we submitted articles to these organizations' newsletters, which reached our target audience. Our YSS Media Specialist, Rhonda Clark, facilitated a number of radio and newspaper slots that featured AMP and allowed us to educate the community. AMP youth, Terri Bailey, and Ruth Buckels have all been special guests on five radio broadcasts during this report period. AMP continues to share human trafficking stories throughout Iowa with some 2000 people educated during this report period.

AMP has worked with PS-MAPP organizers to provide youth speakers and/or DVD's on AMP in each class of new foster/adoptive parents. This means the new resource parents come into service knowing AMP youth, AMP needs, and AMP outcomes for the

youth they might serve. AMP is accessed well in some parts of Iowa and other parts never call or use this service.

Additionally, AMP youth have been featured speakers at many community events in every council. See the council's Individual Reports for a list of their speaking engagements and community service activities. AMP uses each of these events to recruit new members. AMP speaking engagements and community activities are listed on the AMP Councils Agenda provided to a large number of supporters before every council meeting in each council site. AMP informational tables have been set up at many community-based conferences and events to advertise and supply information to the community, and specifically to foster/adoptive parents that have access to our youth. If the area council youth members cannot make it to the community event, Ruth Buckels will take Ames Council youth and attend the event to support the local council and educate the community with youth voices.

**Following our youth-directed recruitment plan, AMP will:**

- Put calendar on website - schedule it out a month or two in advance so we can get our work schedule set up around the AMP needs.
- Get the council agenda posted in advance.
- Put it out in the school newsletters/announcements. (AMP completed a school packet and has shared it within the school districts where we have operating councils. It is an informational packet, as well as an invitation to come to AMP.) This is ongoing with each new school year. Contacts are made in August and September.
- For the AMP youth in school, have them take flyers to the school guidance office.
- Use the Counselor's office in the school, Dean's office, etc. On a college level, AMP meetings happen at DMACC at the Ankeny and Urban campus; Iowa Western Community College in Council Bluffs; and Iowa Central Community College in Fort Dodge and UNI in Waterloo, hosted by an Iowa All-Star.
- AMP has a list of all Guidance Counselors in Iowa and an electronic AMP brochure was shared this fall with them.
- Do Public Service Announcements (PSAs). AMP hosts a Press Conference in January at the Capitol. Media partners cover this event.
- Youth buildings, shelters, homeless shelters, IHYC, etc. With the continued support of Jim Chesnik and Doug Wolfe, the letter sent in 2014 encourages CWES agencies to get their youth to AMP. AMP reports to both Jim and Doug when progress happens.
- Partner with DHS workers, JCO, and/or police to make a referral if a youth is removed. (The success of this is regional. Some places have embraced AMP, others are not as receptive.)
- Call individual foster homes that host teens and invite them to AMP. Do individually so the youth involved know someone before they come to a meeting. With the help of Iowa KidsNet, AMP did receive a list of foster homes with teens this fall and each council made contact with their homes. We are thrilled with this youth-to-youth opportunity.

- At the State Training School, a \$10 calling card was used as an AMP recruitment invitation to a meeting and to participate in AMP on site. Over 120 JCO youth in Iowa received this tool and met with the site facilitator.

**2. Develop and implement a strategy for participant recruitment, which is inclusive and effectively draws a diversity of youth. The council is intended to represent the population of children in foster care. Also, the implementation strategy shall address ways the Contractor will reach out to youth in the various placement types (family foster care, residential treatment centers, relative placements, institutions, aftercare, etc.). The council will be youth driven and reflect the racial, cultural, and ethnic diversity of youth in foster care and provide access to youth from all levels of foster care. The strategy shall include recruitment of foster care alumni.**

Please note answer to number one (above) for the specific ideas generated by youth for recruitment and for media exposure.

Per the individual contracts with the partnership agencies, all councils will be implementing targeted recruitment, as well as the statewide recruitment AMP will do. This way we are addressing multiple levels of reaching youth and also utilizing unique community recruitment.

To address all kinds of diversity, AMP advocates for all youth in care without discrimination. Having a diverse voice adds validity to the AMP message. Please see our website for opportunities specifically selected to share AMP diversity. The AMP staff participates on an YSS Diversity Task Force and also the LGBTQ Youth Best Practice Committee. All facilitators are invited to attend; information is dispersed after each meeting.

To address the issue of various placement types, as well as cultural and ethnic diversity, AMP, through the Partnership of Iowa Foster Care Youth Councils, has shifted the meeting locations onto residential grounds, community grounds, and/or treatment sites in order to reach more youth. Past experience has shown that transportation still remains one of the largest hurdles youth face in order to access AMP Council meetings. Currently, the council facilitators and their support staff take up to an hour before and after council meetings to pick up and return youth to their homes. In central Iowa, the AMP Mobile Facilitator is taking AMP to the youth in the facilities and this is working well.

AMP has reached out to TPS/Aftercare/PAL Self-Sufficiency Advocates and their participants. AMP has shared educational materials with the IASN providers and asked them to share it with participants. A major venture AMP completed with ten alumni mentors was at Variety AMP Camp in 2013, 2014, 2015, and will happen again in 2016. The 4-H Camp in rural Boone County hosted us and contributed a lot of the skill building programming. 2016 will be our fourth camp and our partnership with 4-H/ISU Extension, and the 4-H Campground will be the location. To give back to the 4-H

Campground, Ames AMP participates in the annual campground clean-up weekend in April. Six youth and staff helped this year.

To reach adopted, guardianship, and kinship youth who are no longer connected to the system, AMP provides advertisements and articles in IFAPA's Weekly Word and in their News and Views Quarterly Newsletter. Since the location of these youth falls under confidential information, this is the best way to reach out to their families. AMP also has staff that train for IFAPA and can share about AMP when they meet face-to-face with families in training.

Finally, AMP has a Facebook page and we have an active website for youth to access when meeting attendance is not possible. Alumni report this is a great addition to AMP.

- 3. Provide for training, as needed, for council participants to assist them in their role as a participant including, but not limited to, training focusing on leadership skills, team building, effective communication (including advocacy skills and healthy disclosure), and accessing and promoting community resources.**

Please see individual Council Meeting Reports for the specific examples offered at the local levels.

AMP "New Member Training" is the uniform training all youth are asked to go through in order to earn their polo shirts. All participants are given t-shirts (as supply allows), but only those completing New Member Training are given a polo shirt. New Member Training can be provided by any of the trained facilitators, but the Statewide Coordinator has requested an invitation to each of these trainings so she may attend and welcome youth to the council.

AMP staff and youth partner with YSS to host a youth conference. In 2015, it was Risky Business; in 2016 the youth will host their own conference called "Plugged In and Charging" in Ottumwa on April 16, 2016. 153 youth attended the Plugged in and Charging conference and the reviews were outstanding. Youth asked for more of these type of conferences throughout the year in varying locations. AMP is seeking other community colleges willing to partner with us and host the youth.

Within council meetings, other training areas target improving advocacy, communication, health, healthy relationships, and general life-skills. Each facilitator offered these using their knowledge or that of volunteer/community members. The facilitator was expected to ask the youth for training topics and then, seek out/schedule and facilitate a community member coming into a meeting and sharing their knowledge with the youth. This exposed the youth to community-involved adults and allows them to make connections.

AMP's current training topics can be found on the website. AMP has been known to write targeted/specialized trainings to meet audience needs as requested. Many AMP leaders are trainers and adding in youth voice to training is a skill-area we offer.

AMP wrote an LGBTQ training that is available upon request. Terri Bailey and youth offer this. Ruth offers a variety of trainings on Human Trafficking in Iowa. This coming year, AMP staff will work on the Normalcy Trainings coming into Iowa so youth voice is heard.

AMP completed the rollout of the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities with DHS by distributing materials statewide as we travel and present. Doug Wolfe, our AMP Contract Manager, led the rollout plan. Ensuring the success of the implementation is on-going. AMP expanded this to the JCO officers and youth in 2015.

- 4. Provide opportunities for each participant to become involved within the council according to their strengths and interests, through various means which may include writing, speaking engagements, committee work, council leadership, creation of a website specific to youth in foster care, or some other method chosen by the participant(s).**

Please see the individual council reports for a broad variety of how youth are involved.

This is an area in which AMP excels and it is supported by youth report via our Satisfaction Survey attached to this report. The youth are presented many opportunities to share their strengths and creativity. All the council facilitators take the extra time to ask youth about their areas of interest and if they want to participate, give, share, teach, or support their council in this area. Consistent with our past, current AMP youth volunteer for what they are comfortable sharing. No youth is forced or required to do any activity for AMP.

With our website, [www.ampiowa.org](http://www.ampiowa.org), youth in each council are able to update their local council page, learning and teaching this skill to the council. In 2011, AMP received a technology grant from the Carver Foundation for \$25,000. These funds were used to purchase each council a laptop, a projector, a recorder, speakers, screen, and power-strip. This equipment allows the councils to update their websites at council meetings, as well as to prepare and present power points, presentations, trainings, and many other promotional tools for their council.

On the main website, there is an “Amplified Poets” poetry book, which includes written works submitted by youth. This addition of works was added to the site to feature AMP’s gifted writers. Thanks to the web design, the book can have unlimited pages so youth will be able to submit poetry for this book for years to come.

Facebook and Twitter have been added to our youth list of connectors. At last count, there were 238 friends of the “Achieving Maximum Potential – AMP” Facebook page. One of the highly anticipated features of the Facebook page is the instant communications/feedback loop AMP has needed for some time. It is now possible for us to ask “friends” to answer questions on our blog, as well as post comments and answers on our wall.

The Des Moines Art Council has given the Des Moines AMP Council many “artistic meetings” in the past year under a grant they received. They do a project at Variety AMP Camp each year as well. Added to this is the partnership with the Science Center of Iowa that shares Sunday afternoon time with AMP youth and they do science experiments. The youth love it.

The STS has hosted poetry, yoga, art, CrossFit and more, for the students this report period. These will all be worked in on weekends for the youth there. See Eldora Council report for more details.

**5. Provide a means to honor or recognize participants for accomplishments or growth.**

Please see individual Council Meeting Reports for the specific examples offered at the local levels.

For AMP, the recognitions vary for youth/council. Some have asked for gift cards, some asked for merchandise, and some asked for suitcases, clothing options, art, and more. The budget allows for \$50/month/council for youth recognition activities.

AMP has continued to provide the suitcases for youth aging out of system care funded by local grants in various councils. We hope to do this as long as there are area supporters for this activity. When the Statewide Coordinator speaks to community groups, this is one of the many options she presents for groups to support us. These suitcases are a great community outreach. Recipients do not have to participate in AMP to receive a suitcase. A note inviting them to AMP and giving them connections to people and resources in their community is provided within each suitcase. AMP presents the suitcase after we are contacted and updated on the need for one.

Another area that falls beneath the heading of recognition is for AMP to recognize those who support us and our youth. AMP has developed a Certificate of Appreciation to be given by the youth to the individuals that support, encourage, guide, and advance youth and/or youth issues. Locally, recognition can be done anytime the youth vote to do it. Annually, AMP youth recognize one to five supporters at the press conference in the Capital in January of each year. The adult supporters recognized are AMP’s biggest fans and supporters both in and out of the Capital.

**6. Provide leadership opportunities for participants.**

Please see individual council reports for various youth leadership activities and presentations.

The basic structure of AMP is, and will always be, youth driven. Currently, few program changes are made without youth input or review. AMP has identified AMP-CC members that each of the facilitators and the Statewide Coordinator can access for

programming. Youth are asked to set up meetings, greet participants as they arrive, provide them with healthy snacks and positive conversation, give them access to support, education, resources, and information, as needed, before bidding them a safe journey upon leaving.

Opening each meeting with “High’s and Low’s” is a task for the AMP-CC. Then, a youth will introduce the guest speaker prepared to present a topic selected by the youth in an area where they have need. Council Facilitators create a community connection for AMP with this presenter by making arrangements for time, space, and location. Once this is set, the youth are to welcome, assist, and fulfill any of the speaker’s requests. This system supports many AMP leadership opportunities. With the AMP youth that have been attending long term, they have begun setting up speakers and making the arrangements with minimal facilitator direction. This shows youth confidence and leadership.

Other examples of youth leadership include: public speaking, advocating on councils/boards, work within the Legislature, giving trainings to various groups, volunteering to be a featured youth in various formats, making calls locally and nationally, representing AMP on local/state/national calls, giving awards/recognition, writing speeches, visiting other councils, reaching out to youth not yet in AMP, and so much more.

**7. Provide social/recreational opportunities for participants to encourage social support and to facilitate youth "buy in".**

Social and recreational opportunities offered by AMP are an important part of connecting youth to others and building their “buy in.” A few examples are: holiday parties, recognition events, and group community service, Variety AMP Camp, yoga, music, art, and science classes. Please refer to the individual council reports for extensive evidence of this.

Roxanne Thompson has retired from AMP and YSS but remains a volunteer with AMP/YSS. IN this role, she continues to coordinate and participate in the community volunteering of four AMP youth at Food at First (market and meal) four times per month which is ongoing. Very positive feedback is received regarding the youth’s involvement!

**8. Link with existing effective youth councils, advocacy groups, or child serving organizations.**

Please see individual reports for this information on a local level, as well as our state level work mentioned here.

AMP has continued our membership in Foster Youth in Action. This advocacy program is on a national level and it is hoped their ability to monitor national advocacy work will allow AMP an opportunity to learn and share. This coming fall, 4 youth and 1 leader will travel to Washington DC to represent Iowa and AMP at the national conference.

As previously mentioned, AMP is linked with the Child and Family Policy Center for our state-side advocacy work.

In an effort to reach the Aftercare and PAL youth, AMP Facilitators have added the list of Aftercare/PAL providers to their contact lists and have been supplying them with agendas for the AMP Council meetings. Aftercare/PAL staff has been willing to share educational information with their participants, as well as attend the AMP Council meetings in their area so the youth can learn about Aftercare/PAL and get to know the advocate.

AMP links with Creative Visions and the World Youth Leadership Academy (WYLA). WYLA youth attend AMP meetings and they also work in four community gardens. This is linked to AMP via our AMP Mobile Facilitator.

Urban Dreams and AMP have worked on the community gardens together and their youth have attended an AMP meeting so they share information and ideas. This is linked to AMP via our AMP Mobile Facilitator.

Forest Avenue Outreach is another group with library fair connections and AMP. This group has been sharing AMP with inner city youth and vice versa. This is all in the spirit of service back to the community. This is linked to AMP via our AMP Mobile Facilitator.

Additionally, AMP has been and will continue to work with the new Youth Work Readiness Program (YWRP), a program of Children and Families of Iowa. Through this work, youth will get direct youth job training, tutoring, and work assessment opportunities. This is linked to AMP via our AMP Mobile Facilitator.

AMP partnered with Indian Hills Community College for the first annual Plugged in and Charging Conference in April 2016. 153 youth attended this conference and learned about secondary education programs.

9. **Design, develop, and host a website for youth using a premium content management system that will allow youth to help manage the website's content. The website will have several components including, but not limited to, an events calendar, feedback, frequently asked questions, and news and press releases.**

**SEE ATTACHMENT: TOP CONTENT**

**SEE ATTACHMENT: CONTENT SUMMARY**

10. **Facilitate an opportunity for one youth in foster care or alumni to participate in the 2015 Foster Club All-Star Program. Contractor shall act as a point of contact for Foster Club through the duration of the youth's participation. The Contractor shall provide funding for the youth and to Foster Club for the Iowa youth participation, which includes, but is not limited to, travel and youth stipend. The youth may be a council participant, but council participation is not required.**

We are not funding this opportunity in 2016 based on feedback the youth gave upon their return to Iowa.

**11. Provide education to participants and staff regarding human trafficking, including, but not limited to, the definition of human trafficking, protection for victims and services available. Post a national hotline number for victims of human trafficking on the council website.**

AMP, being a youth driven organization, is fully aware of how youth are pulled into human trafficking in Iowa. With this knowledge comes the responsibility to educate and protect Iowa's youth by educating them about who, when, why, and how they can be trafficked. Through education, it is hoped that we can offer a layer of protection for these youth. With each presentation completed by Ruth Buckels, it is asked that those in attendance share the information with ten more. Human trafficking information and a hot line number are published on our website as we are fully aware that, nationally, the estimate is that 74% of people in the trafficking industry came out of the child welfare system. We need to decrease this number through education. Ruth served with Doug Wolfe in a consultation role about training coming out for all DHS staff.

In the fall of 2015, AMP/YSS became the host program/agency for Teens Against Human Trafficking (TAHT). The fundraising was successful and a full-time position was created to get teams set up in as many central Iowa schools as possible. Working in the schools is the best youth-to-youth outreach. In the Spring of 2016 the TAHT program was funded by two separate VOCA grants and 2 staff are being hired to increase the number of Teams in schools and identify/refer survivors for services. The second grant funded 0.5 positions doing community education and this will be in addition to donations we have for a full time person to do education and law enforcement training.

**12. Recognizing that youth placed at the State Training School have limitations on travel and community engagement, work with the juvenile court services and State Training School staff to facilitate youth engagement, relationship building, and youth development practices.**

Having a facilitator on site at the STS allows AMP to be included in planning, organizing, and sharing with youth as time and activities allow. AMP offers motivational speaking, art, poetry, and CrossFit on campus. The facilitator has hosted a number of fall classes based on youth requests. Jessica reports many successes in her individual Eldora STS Council report.

**1.3.1.3 Youth Engagement in Child Welfare**

**1. Identify youth for representation at agency workgroups, training (i.e., staff, care providers, key stakeholders), or other venues in which youth input would benefit the development or implementation of child welfare policies and practices.**

AMP has continued, without interruption, to serve on the same child welfare committees statewide as we did under ELEVATE. Youth share their stories with child welfare workers about how the decisions workers make impact youth. AMP strives to be a source of youth representation for the Department of Human Services (DHS) workgroups, trainings, or other venues in which youth input would benefit from the development or implementation of child welfare policies and practices. AMP members were presenting at staff trainings and were part of the training that new department workers receive. When a youth could not be present, AMP staff asked to be present and represent the youth voice. Information gathered in these venues is taken to the councils for distribution and collection of ideas/direction.

**AMP youth/staff were involved in the following committees or events:**

Please see individual Council Meeting Reports for the specific committees served locally. AMP staff and youth attend any and all meetings we are asked to attend by DHS or JCOs. Meeting attendance has become less time consuming as the meetings have become more targeted with shorter duration.

- Children’s Policy Coalition – Ruth, Statewide Coordinator
- Child Welfare Advisory Committee – Jacob
- Education Collaborative – Terri, Des Moines and Ames Council Facilitator, Ruth, Statewide Coordinator; Youth: No specific youth
- DHS Human Services Council – AMP youth
- DMACC Mini AMP Partnership – Terri, Des Moines and Ames Council Facilitator
- Juvenile Re-Entry Meetings – Jessica Kropf, STS Facilitator, and Ruth, Statewide Coordinator
- Juvenile Justice – Service Area Five – Terri, Des Moines and Ames Council Facilitator
- Juvenile Justice/Ames – Terri, Des Moines and Ames Council Facilitator, and Ruth, Statewide Coordinator
- LGBTQ Summit – Terri, Des Moines and Ames Council Facilitator, and youth
- PS-MAPP trainings – statewide – youth and adults vary
- Reggie’s Sleepout – IHYC Terri, Des Moines and Ames Council Facilitator
- YSS Legislative Committee – Terri, Des Moines and Ames Council Facilitator, and Ruth, Statewide Coordinator
- Attorney General’s Workgroup (HTEPI) on Human Trafficking – Ruth, Statewide Coordinator
- Network Against Human Trafficking Board – Ruth, Statewide Coordinator
- Central Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking – Ruth, Statewide Coordinator
- LGBTQ Best Practice Committee –Terri, Des Moines and Ames Council Facilitator, and Ruth, Statewide Coordinator
- YSS Diversity Task Force – Terri, Des Moines and Ames Council Facilitator, and Ruth, Statewide Coordinator
- AFFIRM (LGBTQ) – Terri, Des Moines and Ames Council Facilitator
- Transition Advisory Board – Jessica, Waterloo Council Facilitator

## Nationally

- Foster Youth In Action – monthly calls - Ruth, Statewide Coordinator, Terri, Des Moines and Ames Council Facilitator

In addition to regular work on any of the above committees, AMP youth, or staff, or both, were frequent guest speakers at other meetings. Many speaking engagements were not local, but they provide a way to get the word out about AMP and increase awareness of local AMP Councils. CASA again had an AMP youth as its Keynote speaker this Spring.

### **2. Prepare and train all youth who participate in public meetings and presentations to prepare them and to minimize risk to the youth.**

To meet this objective, the AMP Facilitators have taken on this role with the youth. Each youth goes through New Member Training and then as they gain speaking confidence they volunteer to do more events. When asked, the youth and their facilitator write their speech and practice it before the event. The Facilitator or Statewide coordinator are expected to explain to the youth the purpose and focus of the engagement they are asked to do so the youth can target the audience appropriately. To date, this process has worked well and all parties feel success.

### **3. Develop procedure to respond timely to requests for youth input into child welfare and related activities, initiatives, and workgroups.**

The procedure in the AMP Manual continues to be how DHS and others access AMP youth for their committees and speaking engagements.

### **4. Develop and implement a mechanism to compensate youth for time and travel expenses. Compensation and travel payments shall not be limited to participants. Compensation must comply with Agency Travel Guidelines.**

This procedure has been developed and approved by DHS and is included in the AMP Manual.

### **5. Contact the Agency Program Manager for Child Welfare Emergency Services and Foster Group Care to explore opportunities for the Iowa Foster Care Youth Council to engage youth at these placements.**

DHS arranged a meeting with AMP staff and the Child Welfare Emergency Services (CWES) Program Manager to discuss ways AMP could better reach the youth placed in residential and shelter placements. Jim Chesnik, Agency Program Manager, fully supported AMP's efforts to reach these youth. Currently we share success and needs with Jim or Doug Wolfe as needed. This remains an ongoing need for our youth as they want a voice and the residential facilities are limited in their ability to get youth to

meetings. AMP has chosen to go to the facilities to gather youth voice and share successes.

#### **1.3.1.4 Annual Foster Care Youth Conference**

- 1. Provide an annual statewide conference for youth (ages 13 through 20 years old) in foster care and alumni.**

On April 16, 2016, 153 youth/alumni enjoyed the hospitality of Indian Hills Community College in Ottumwa, IA. This Conference was named Plugged in and Charging with youth art and AMP colors highlighting the event.

- 2. Provide invitations, agenda, arrange presenters, and oversee the entire delivery of the youth conference.**

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**Saturday, April 16, 2016**  
**Achieving Maximum Potential**  
**Spring Conference**  
**Where: Indian Hills Community College**  
**525 Grandview Avenue, Ottumwa, Iowa**  
**Registration: 8:15am**  
**Conference: 9am-4:30pm**

For more information, contact Holly Dommer at [hdommer@ahfa.org](mailto:hdommer@ahfa.org)  
**Plugged In and Chargin'**  
**Saturday, April 16**

ATTACHED: PLEASE SEE CONFERENCE BROCHURE

In the Conference evaluations, the youth shared many insights for us to consider next year. One theme was they would like to see this type of conference all over Iowa (less travel) and twice a year. The full conference evaluation is available upon request. It was emailed out to all AMP Staff and Supporters after the conference.

- 3. Partner with other organizations, agencies, youth groups, or advocacy groups as appropriate.**

See answers in 1.3.1.2 #8 and #2 above.

**In addition, AMP has the following partnerships:**

- 4-H has been an active partner in most of the councils statewide. This has proven so successful that the counterparts across Iowa are seeking out AMP Councils to partner with. This allows them to reach a population in Iowa they did not have access to and it allows AMP to have research-based materials to share/teach.

- Variety AMP Camp – 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016!
  - Mentor training for Variety AMP Camp
  - Funded by Variety, The Children Charity, via a grant to AMP
  - Hosted at the ISU – 4-H Campground in Madrid, Iowa
- Partnered with Aftercare, PAL, TLP, youth were given stipends to assist and mentor at camp.
- Gingerbread Walk/Run for Adoption – 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016. Over 300 community members attended with youth. Insurance is secured by YSS/AMP.
- Partners: Iowa KidsNet and the National Center for Adoption.
- National Adoption Saturday – locations statewide
  - Partnership with Iowa KidsNet and many others as AMP youth are asked to do a variety of different things based on their location
  - This is a service activity for AMP youth
- Children’s Policy Coalition
- The AMP Legislative advocacy, from agenda writing to bill signing, is one of the most time intensive areas AMP focuses on. Our Partnership with the Child & Family Policy Center has been critical to the growth AMP has experienced in the past two years. Our youth meet their legislators On the Hill (AMP Day on the Hill in January), as well as in committee meetings, emails, and calls to the Capitol. Our agenda is asked for and read by many. The past three years, our AMP youth have been given a standing ovation from the Legislators (both House and Senate) after being introduced and given credit for their work.
- AMP has partnerships with four community colleges in Iowa as we are working to keep the youth enrolled in secondary education. We think AMP councils on site will encourage and support the youth to continue the pursuit of their goals.
- AMP also connects with State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council (SIYAC). Each year we work on one advocacy bill that is healthy for youth. Healthy living has been their target area now for two years.
- AMP and the Iowa Youth Congress (IYC) will both be working on the Anti-Bullying bill in the spring of 2016. This is a planned legislative partnership.
- The Dream Seed provides funds for an AMP youth with a “dream” to fund this dream and see it through to completion. This is funded now and the paperwork for distribution for Council Youth is out. Seven “dreams” are funded.
- 3M is a partnership in Ames that funds the suitcase drive for transitioning youth. This partnership is with a business that has taken on this task for youth.
- Good Company is a women’s singing group that has received a grant to work with AMP youth and help them develop vocal talents. Eleven AMP youth practiced and performed with Good Company.
- The Des Moines Art Center and AMP has had a two-year continuing grant to do special projects at the Art Center with youth learning new techniques. AMP youth go to the Art Center once a month for this.
- The Des Moines Science Center has begun hosting a group on Sundays to share science fun facts and do experiments.
- AMP across Iowa has volunteered with local food banks and also with serving community meals to those in need.

- AMP has contracted with local artists for art classes; with the Ames CrossFit for classes; with Wisdom Beyond Words for poetry workshops; and with a yoga/hip-hop teacher for exercise/dance classes at the State Training School.
- Please see individual council reports for more local partnerships.

### 1.3.1.5 Reporting of Services Delivered and Outcomes

1. **Submit semi-annual reports to the agency within 30 days of the end of each reporting period, detailing staff activities, status of projects, community connections, recruitment efforts, participant and facilitator training provided, and opportunities and barriers experienced. All Contractual Deliverables in the Scope of Work shall be reported, as well as performance measures.**

This report is due to the agency by July 30, 2016. It will be completed and submitted on time. AMP's working relationship with the agency is supportive and cooperative.

**Ames:**

### Section 1: MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE

Ames AMP Council

Ames, Iowa

Facilitator: Terri Bailey

Ames AMP meets the second and fourth Thursday of each month from 6:30-8:00pm in the YSS Jacobson building at 420 Kellogg Ave. in downtown Ames. AMP serves youth from Rosedale Shelter, Youth Recovery & 712 houses plus foster/adoptive teens from Ames and surrounding areas (Nevada, Gilbert & Story City). Ames AMP consists of youth 13-18 years old from YSS treatment, shelter and a few foster/adoptive homes. Members over age 18 from Aftercare or YSS transitional Living programs attend occasionally, most are busy working and/or attending college. Others have no or unreliable transportation. Youth lead the meeting as much as possible but it's hard for youth to get comfortable when their maximum time in the treatment center is 90 days. By the time we get to know them they're gone! Teens help set up, clean up and make sure everyone feels welcome. With this high turnover, it's difficult to pursue leadership opportunities. Our members celebrate success most often during hi's and lows. Teens in treatment are proud of being drug/alcohol free, being positive in their treatment plan, visiting family, graduating their level/program and returning home. Youth stay connected as they travel between Ames and Des Moines shelters, treatment programs and group care. The Ames AMP Council is fortunate to have the full support of resources from Youth & Shelter Services in Ames. YSS staff present at AMP council meetings. Julie Holscher, the support volunteer, is an Aftercare Self Sufficiency Advocate that works full time in Des Moines at Iowa Homeless Youth Centers. She attends Ames AMP Council meetings as the council's support person, teaches the youth about Aftercare services and also is a natural mentor because she aged out of foster care. She fills in when this facilitator is double booked or on vacation, transports youth to AMP council meetings and volunteers with the 712 girls at Food at First meals for the homeless twice per month. Roxanne Thompson is retired now yet she still volunteers with the young men

from Youth Recovery House when they help distribute food at the Food at First Market twice per month. This report period, AMP was assisted by an outstanding intern from Iowa State University, Jenni Berger. This young woman accompanied this facilitator to every Ames AMP Council meeting, ten PS/MAPP classes, as well as trainings on human trafficking, safe zone and diversity. Jenni learned how to make changes to the website, added several pages about homeless youth, resources and volunteered to lead activities in an AMP meeting. She made flyers for the foster parent conference, AFFIRM brochures and worked on a prudent parenting training with this facilitator. Snacks for AMP youth are provided in part by donations from Panera Bread, Fareway, Target and community groups such as Holiday Inn and ISU clubs. Julie Fontanini, YSS donations coordinator, supports this council with clothing, books, games, sports equipment, Christmas gifts, furniture, bedding and much more depending on what comes through donations. Other donations such as toothbrushes, journals, crosswords, pens/pencils, socks etc. are included as a small gift to a youth coming in to foster care.

This council has a strong connection to Iowa State University and benefits from presentations by Engineers Without Borders and Emerging Leaders in Engineering. Engineers use fun games to teach physics and the numerous careers a person can pursue with an engineering degree. One of my favorite council meetings was when youth built boats with limited materials and competed to see which group's boat could hold the most weight before sinking. As the youth watched what happened to their boats, they could see that a wider surface distributed the weight and strong sides helped hold the marbles. The conversation led to how buildings were constructed; how pipe cleaners were the rebar in cement and how heavy cruise ships can float. Youth began to vision a career in engineering and thinking about how things are built! Another favorite Ames Council meeting was when DHS representatives attended to have a conversation on how the system was working. Youth gave feedback about their social workers, juvenile court officers, the system and even parenting advice! A few youth offered to stay after the meeting to talk with DHS further and answer questions on how to improve their relationship with youth. The next AMP meeting I heard comments about feeling respected, their voice was heard and best AMP meeting ever! Ames youth felt that their contribution to the conversation made a difference.

Our first success story was a young man making a comment about wanting to go to college but he needed to graduate high school first. He was 2 weeks from turning 18 and worried about transitioning to adulthood. Jan Huff the transition planning specialist was at this council meeting and spoke with him after AMP and helped be a resource for this young man while he was at Rosedale Shelter. He was so relieved that he thanked us after the meeting and AMP provided a suitcase for him when he graduated! Our second success story was working with the girls at the Food at First meal for the homeless. I got to experience first-hand how polite, friendly and caring they were; whether it was setting up to serve the meal, serving or cleaning up afterwards there were smiles on their faces. After they returned to 712 house the adult volunteers commented on the girls says how pleased they were and what a good job they did. This facilitator gave a presentation about AMP to another Ames church because they wanted more information on these wonderful teens! Both the girls and guys were so proud when I told them how well they were liked by the Food at First crew!

Andrew Allen, CEO of Youth & Shelter Services, has not attended an Ames AMP council meeting this report period. He is busy transitioning in to the new CEO of Youth & Shelter Services and other matters demand his attention. He makes a point to talk to AMP youth when he attends the same function, congratulating them on a job well done and posing with them for Facebook photos. They love talking to Andrew especially after hearing his story at the AMP statewide conference in Ottumwa last April and realizing he's walked in their shoes. AMP youth see him as an adult who has overcome and come full circle to be the CEO of the agency that reached out to help him when he was a teen.

One of our legislative successes was establishing the office of human trafficking in the Department of Public Safety. There are siblings in the Ames Council who have adopted sisters that were trafficked and this was very important to them. The second legislative success was giving foster parents the right to give permission for normal youth activities. Many of our foster youth can now go to school dances, get jobs and play sports. Two girls went to prom for the first time! This facilitator was impressed with Lisa Heddens fighting for families with the new Medicaid insurance. Her speech on the house floor was heart wrenching, she had a conversation with a mother of a special needs daughter that passed away and the mother's comment was, "at least I don't have to fight the insurance anymore!"

## **Section 2: MEASURE OF COORDINATION / COLLABORATION**

Each quarter Roxanne takes AMP youth to Serenity Solon in Ames to explore career choices. Six to eight youth learn about the field of cosmetology as they receive makeovers from the solon employees. The girls have their nails done, hair cut or styled while listening and asking questions about this career. The stylists give the girls hand massages while they wait and give advice on choosing a beauty school that will fit their needs. Pictures are posted on the Ames AMP website! 3M of Story County has donated \$5000 this year to the Suitcases for Success Program. This allowed Ames AMP to give 50 suitcases to youth in need from AMP as graduation gifts, youth leaving treatment at YSS Youth Recovery and 712 Houses, Aftercare and TLP youth as well. 3M is very proud to partner with AMP and takes pride in helping young people begin adulthood with bedding, towels, alarm clock, kitchen items and assorted hygiene products.

Are favorite speaking event was a panel of three youth at a mental health conference in Perry Iowa last March. Two very experienced teens and one new speaker answered questions about foster care, adoption and their mental health diagnosis. The teens were honest, funny and shared how they learn to advocate for their needs in AMP. They shared coping skills and being bullied because they were in the child welfare system. Several participants came up to the youth afterwards and thanked them for speaking, admired their courage. The audience was amazed at how candid the teens were and they were impressed with AMP. The second speaking event that comes to mind would be the YSS legislative breakfast at Ames City Hall. Seven teens took turns with community members and asked legislators questions that pertained to the 2016 AMP legislative agenda. Each youth gave a small comment about why the topic meant so much to them and why it needed changed. Community members and legislators thanked the teens for attending and were delighted to see young people involved in changing laws in Iowa. Ames AMP members have a close relationship with Lisa

Heddens, Beth Wessel-Kroschell and Herman Quirnbach. They are very receptive when Ames youth attend AMP Day on the Hill and introduce the youth to the house and senate.

I participate in the following boards as a representative of AMP:

- ICYD Advisory Committee
- YSS Juvenile Justice Committee
- YSS Public Policy Committee
- YSS LGBTQ Best Practice
- Kidsnet Recruitment & Retention
- Central Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking
- AFFIRM
- Iowa Girls Justice Initiative

Trainings this facilitator has attended this report period are CPR & First Aid on March 25<sup>th</sup>. This training was interesting because I attended it with an AMP youth who needed the certification to graduate high school. She had trouble doing the hands on activities and was frustrated when I tried to help her. I told her it was important to do it correctly; it could save someone's life. I pointed out, "would you like me to forget how to save you?" "Good point," she said. I took three classes at the IFAPA Conference April 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>. Fostering Attachments taught me from a youth's point of view how important attachments are to young person. Some attachments are trauma attachments so youth have a hard time understanding consequences. When given consequences, youth need to restore hope in positive behavior instead of punishment that increases difficulty in attachment. Connections Matter focused on building brain connections in youth. Youth need to feel safe so they can think and learn. I learned that developing a relationship helps youth be resilience and that an adult/child relationship heals children. This class proved what I know to be true with science vs what I've learned when working with teens. The third class dealt with trauma in teens. The part on communication talked about praising your teen in public but criticizing in private. Too often I think adults criticize youth in public which is devastating to their self-esteem. I will use all these items with my AMP youth. Lastly, on June 1<sup>st</sup> I attended a training at YSS called Lock 'n Load: Mastering Change. The speaker talked about how people resist change and the reasons why. I think this had to do with the new YSS branding and how it will affect programs. It made me think of all the changes AMP youth go through as they move through the system and their feelings about change. I hope to be more understanding when I hear their frustrations when things in their life change

### **Section 3: MEASURE OF SERVICE CAPACITY**

During council meetings this facilitator will show youth items on each site as a way to familiarize them with what's posted and how to locate information. Youth love to see photos of themselves and other AMP members and those that frequent the sites copy photos shared. The AMP Facebook seems to be their preferred site because they can interact with each other.

Ames youth like to have Planned Parenthood present at AMP. At first, they act like they know everything about sex yet afterwards they say things like, I never knew that copper

keeps a girl from getting pregnant!” In February a student from ISU came to AMP and did magic tricks. The youth watched very carefully to try and guess how he did the tricks but were fooled every time! The magician showed them all one trick and spoke about the history of magic. Later they tried to stump the magician, showing him card tricks that they had learned. The student was a math major and explained that his love of magic involved math so AMP youth were amazed that math could be fun! Our discussion on having manners took a common topic to a new level. I’d never heard the AMP talk so much about respect for others and what was expected in their families. Youth learned the perspective of adults and how things have changed over the years. They spoke about adults respecting youth and gave examples of how they were disrespected by adults who should act better than they do (police officers, parents, teachers and social workers).

Pictures of Ames youth were in the legislative newsletters of Lisa Heddens and Beth Wessel-Kroschell after AMP Day on the Hill. Sheared information about Variety AMP Camp in the IFAPA Weekly Word and the Spring Newsletter.

One youth graduated from Roland Story High School and learned how to make good friends during her Junior & Senior year. She worked two jobs, purchased a car, found an apartment and registered for DMACC in the fall. She did have great foster parents but she was an example for others in AMP to show that foster kids can be successful! Many youth graduate the YSS drug & Alcohol treatment facilities and leave clean and sober. I get to see the changes as they work on their program for ninety days (sometimes longer) and leave treatment with a new perspective on life. Some of them won’t succeed but I try to think they learned the coping skills to navigate life drug/alcohol free. I admire them for trying!

The future of Ames AMP is continuing to reach out to foster/adoptive parents to bring their teens and let them experience AMP. My dream is to have more parents and youth see its value and attend on a regular basis.

## **Burlington:**

*Submitted by Jan Shelman*

### **Section 1: MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE**

Council Name/City: Burlington chapter

Staffing: Debbie Schmidt was named the facilitator for the Burlington Chapter as of March 1, 2016. Prior to her hire, Jan Shelman, Facilitator Supervisor, acted as the AMP Facilitator from January 1- March 1, 2016.

The Burlington chapter meets in Mount Pleasant twice per month. In June 2016, the AMP meetings will change from the first and third Mondays to the first and third Thursdays evenings. Meetings are located at the Christamore Family Treatment Center.

January 11, 2016-AMP Meeting  
Day on the Hill Video  
Youth attended: 15

January 25, 2016-AMP Meeting  
Deb and Mark Scott-sharing What is it Like to be a Foster Parent?  
Youth attended: 13

February 8, 2016-AMP Meeting  
Jason Marlow, Iowa State Patrol-Improving Relationships with Law Enforcement  
Youth Attended: 13

February 21, 2016-AMP Meeting  
Vicky Riniker, Iowa AfterCare Advocate-Played the Bean Game  
Youth Attended: 15

March 7, 2016-AMP meeting  
Nic Taylor- Personal testimony from a former child of the system/prisoner  
Youth Attended: 14

March 21, 2016-AMP Meeting  
Guided Painting with Scott and Robin Fisher  
Youth Attended: 14

April 4th - AMP Meeting -  
Introductions and Input from Participants  
Show Video "What is AMP? Discussion  
Youth Attended - 14

April 18th - AMP Meeting  
Human Trafficking – Presenter - Ruth Buckels  
Youth Attended – 16

May 9 – AMP Meeting  
“Healthy Relationships” – Britt Griffin, Presenter, from the Domestic Violence  
Intervention program  
Youth Attended – 16

May 23, - AMP Meeting  
Rich Taylor, Iowa State Senator “Advocacy  
Youth Attended: 15

June 2, 2016 AMP Meeting  
“Trauma Informed Yoga” – Britt Griffin, Presenter, from the Domestic Violence  
Intervention program.  
Youth Attended : 15

June 16, 2016 – AMP Meeting  
Youtube - Young Kids, Hard Time Director's Cut Calamari Productions - Presenter –  
Debbie Schmidt

Youth Attended: 17

April 18th - AMP Meeting on Human Trafficking – Youth became aware of the hidden social problem of human trafficking and how it is up to all of us as a society to look for victims and help them. They also became aware of how vulnerable a victim can be.

The youth loved the Guided Painting on March 21, 2016. Even the youth who did not think they could paint produced beautiful pictures.

Jason Marlow, Iowa State Patrol, did an awesome job of connecting with the youth. He commanded their attention and shared poignant examples and scenarios of how quickly law enforcement needs to make quick decisions to protect the safety of others and themselves. The question and answer time was especially informative for the youth.

The Burlington Chapter took three youth to the Day on the Hill in January 2016. Rich Taylor, Iowa Senator attended an AMP meeting during this reporting period.

As a result of Dave Heaton meeting with the youth in December 2015, he continues to look for opportunities to engage them. Most recently, he purchased a dessert at a Silent Auction Fundraiser, and gave it to the youth to eat. Several youth from the AMP chapter were in attendance at the event; Dave sought them out for conversation and compliments.

Shauna Freitag, YHFS CEO, attended an AMP meeting during the last reporting period.

## **Section 2: MEASURE OF COLLABORATION**

The Burlington Chapter continues to seek occasions for the youth to provide community service. This is generally completed through the Mt Pleasant Parks and Recreation Department. The youth will be attending the upcoming foster parent picnic this summer.

They are always willing to help with the games with the foster children and/or clean up.

One of the AMP youth presented at the Foster Parent PS-MAPP class in March. She proudly told her story, answered questions, and, in general, won the hearts of the foster parents in attendance. Prior to her presentation, the facilitator took her out for dinner and helped her prep for the presentation, gave her an AMP polo shirt to wear and a small gift and gift card for bravely telling her story in front of a group of 30+ adults. She did an awesome job!

Presentation promoting AMP at DHS Unit Meetings in April and June, 2016.

- Presentation about AMP and an AMP youth sharing her story at the PS-MAPP training on March 17, 2016.
- The Young House AfterCare Advocate attends AMP meetings and reaches out to youth who are in the chapter and will soon age out. She provides (unbillable) Pre-PAL services to them.

Dream Seed Project: Two youth received awards through the Dream Seed. One dreams of becoming a photographer/artist and the other to take dance lessons.

Trainings I have attended:

\* "No Such Thing As A Bad Kid" -Presenter: Charles Appelstein, MSW; April 21 – 7.5 Hours. Benefit - Training helped to Understand and Respond to At-Risk Children, Youth & Families Using Positive, Trauma-Informed, Strength-Based Theories and Techniques.

"Trauma Informed Care, Part One" -Presenter: Sarah Butler . Benefit: Training helped to Identify roles with clients, their perceptions of themselves and communications strategies.

### **Section 3: MEASURE OF SERVICE CAPACITY**

AMP youth share the following comments:

"I am able to be free to express myself, ask questions and feel respected."

"The topics that we cover are creative and interesting."

"We learn about different topics and have good speakers."

"The leaders are nice and respectful."

"I liked everything but mostly the painting activity."

"I like it that people come and talk to us about the things they have been through."

"I like everything about AMP."

"I like it that I am asked for input."

The most media coverage the Burlington AMP Council has experienced has been through Social Media and AMP website.

Presentations to DHS workers occurred on April 25, 2016 at Jefferson County DHS and June 15, 2016 at Des Moines County DHS. The promotion of the council and meetings to DHS staff occurred during their unit meetings.

When one youth was discharged from placement, she asked the AMP facilitator to be involved in her Youth Dream Team Meeting. She wanted to remain connected to the AMP chapter, but logistically, she had moved to an area too far from the Burlington Chapter. She has been provided information for a chapter closer to her. She has expressed how grateful she was for AMP and how it helped her to make peace with her past and move forward. This youth was also a Dream Seed recipient.

Establish a working relationship with the new IFAPA Liaison.

Establish rapport with foster parents, so foster youth can be encouraged to attend AMP.

Increase the number of community youth who attend AMP.

Increase number of opportunities for AMP to become more visible in SE Iowa.

#### **Cedar Rapids:**

*Submitted by Rachelle DuVall*

Cedar Rapids AMP Youth Council

Cedar Rapids, IA  
Facilitator: Shelby Holsapple

### **Section 1: MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE**

The Cedar Rapids AMP Council meets twice a month on the first and third Thursday of each month. We meet from 6:30-8:30pm at The Four Oaks Bridge located at 2100 1<sup>st</sup> Ave NE, Cedar Rapids IA 52402. AMP meetings are facilitated by Shelby Holsapple. Meetings start with greetings and council meeting rules facilitated by our current Central Council Member Tiara Mosley, followed by youth introductions and highs/lows of the week for each youth. After introductions are finished youth break for a full family style meal provided each meeting by Junior League of Cedar Rapids. While the youth eat dinner we have a member from Junior League of Cedar Rapids do "Life-Lessons with League" which is a short lesson typically pertaining to a life skill that youth would benefit from learning. Afterward we have our key note speaker/ activity for the night. The council meeting is ended by cleaning up our meeting space.

One of the council's favorite meetings was when we had guest speaker Emily Zimmon, Homeless Prevention Outreach Advocate with the Willis Dady Shelter come and speak with our youth about risks of being homeless on April 7, 2016. This was an educational meeting that caused a large discussion of prevention techniques of becoming homeless. Emily stayed after the meeting and spoke at length one on one with clients about personal situations regarding experiences with homelessness. Because of Emily's presentation there were youth who were able to get meetings set up with her to prevent them from being homeless in the future which was a success. Another meeting that was a council favorite was our Annual Future Fest that took place on March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016. This year was the third year we were able to hold this amazing event. We invited all youth ages 16 and up from Linn, Benton and Jones County to participate. We had over 50 youth attend this year and our CEO was in attendance this night. The keynote speaker was Words Taylor who spoke on resiliency and overcoming obstacles no matter what others say. We had over 20 community organizations participate that directly relate to needs and supports our youth will need in relations to their education, employment, housing, physical and mental, supports and services. Youth participate in an interactive Independent Living game; where they get actual experience for handling money, paying bills and the unexpected life circumstances that can arise. The youth were able to engage in the activity for prizes. This event also sparked media interest. A local television station came out and did a short story on the event. This event was a success because our youth were able to participate in a resource fair that gave them tools to help them succeed as they transition into adulthood.

One legislative success that had affected our council would be the 3/9/16 signing of SF2288 by the Governor in regards to keeping Juvenile court records confidential. This impacts our youth because many of them have received juvenile charges that could affect them when they become a legal adult and attempt to apply for a job or an apartment.

### **Section 2: MEASURE OF COLLABORATION**

One amazing collaboration that the Cedar Rapids AMP Council was able to be a part of was with the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library (NCSML). We began this

collaboration in November of 2015 with one meeting about the end goal of the collaboration. AMP youth began meeting once a month with the NCSML to begin brainstorming ideas for a mural that would be painted in the parking garage of the NCSML. The prompt that youth were given to design the mural was “What are basic human rights and freedoms?” AMP youth came up with ideas for the mural of basic human rights and freedoms that youth experience while they go through the child welfare system. In June of 2016 AMP youth and staff, along with staff from the NCSML began a week long process of painting the mural that was 17ft wide and 9ft tall. This collaboration has not only brought a lot of advertisement and attention to the AMP organization but also has given our youth a sense of ownership to a piece of art. During the week of painting the youth continually talked about how amazing the opportunity was to paint the mural. The youth also talked about how excited they were for the official unveiling of the mural so that they could bring their friends to see it. This mural will be in the parking garage of the NCSML for the foreseeable future. There will be an official unveiling of the mural in the summer of 2016.

In February of 2016, Ashley Hart of Iowa KidsNet approached our AMP chapter to be a part of a “Community Conversation” that addressed the disproportionality of black youth in the child welfare system along with other issues that directly affect youth who are currently in foster care. AMP youth were able to start conversations about the needs of black youth and how important it was for youth to be able to continue traditions, access correct hygiene needs, and feel comfortable in foster homes of people different from them. The event was open to people of the community in hopes to get community members of color more interested in becoming foster parents. Youth who were involved in the event were very excited to be able to be a part of a solution to issues that face youth in the child welfare system. Youth stated that they hoped that things would change because they knew that things were not working out very well now.

Rachelle DuVall, Cedar Rapids AMP council supervisor attended a Foundation 2 board meeting to share ILP successes which included; increase in IASN participation, AMP increased participation and the partnership with the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library to produce mural on the topic of, “What are basic human rights and freedoms?”. Also AMP Facilitator Shelby Holsapple and central council member Corey Anderson attended an IFAPA Transition Conference on June 18<sup>th</sup> 2016 to discuss AMP.

In this reporting period AMP staff Shelby Holsapple and Rachelle DuVall attended a Suicide Symposium on May 17, 2016. This event gave staff knowledge of resources for youth struggling with suicide as well as suicidal ideation as well as a breakout session designed to assist staff with correct verbiage of gender identity. Rachelle DuVall attended a two day training called ASIST known as Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training on June 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. This approach looks at the modality of Pathways for Assisting Life.

### **Section 3: MEASURE OF SERVICE CAPACITY**

At a council meeting in May, Junior League came in and did a mini life lesson on gratitude. Each youth was given a half sheet of paper and asked to write a thank you note or share positive comment to another member. Youth were able to distribute these notes to as many people as they wanted. It really made an impact on our youth, gave

them a chance to show appreciation to others for who they are. Another way that youth have expressed appreciation was through a survey after Future Fest. Youth were able to fill out a survey that asked youth about what aspects of the event they liked. Some of the answers were ““Going around and learning stuff that will help us in the future” and “The outreach with local businesses I can reach out to”. Youth also expressed how much they enjoyed listening to the guest speaker Words Taylor. When asked in the survey if the youth learned something at the event 27 of the youth who filled out the survey said “yes” and zero youth said “no”.

The Cedar Rapids AMP council has had a good amount of media coverage for this reporting time frame. We have had a couple of AMP youth interviewed individually regarding services that are available for youth transitioning out of the child welfare system. Our Council has also gotten media coverage for the collaboration with the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library.

Each year we have a meeting to discuss transitioning out of care along with a panel of participants of Iowa Aftercare Services Network (IASN). This year we were able to select youth who had aged out of the IASN program, had been in the program for at least a year and a youth who had just begun. Each youth takes the time to share their experiences while in care, the transition period along with what is going on in their lives currently. The AMP youth get a chance to ask questions and participate in open discussion with the panel.

As the Facilitator of this council the dreams that I have for the council would be to continue to reach new youth. Our youth council numbers have continued to grow over the past year and I would like to see it grow even more. We have started a discussion into looking for a new meeting space because we are close to outgrowing our current location. Another goal that I have as the facilitator is to make sure the youth who have been a part of the council meetings for a while continue to grow and step more into leadership/mentorship role. I would like to see youth taking ownership of their meetings and pride in the work that they have done. I would like to see our council be more involved in community outreach and giving back to the community that we all live in. These goals I believe are achievable and realistic for our council.

### **Council Bluffs:**

*Submitted by Mary Elks*

Council Bluffs AMP Council

Council Bluffs, IA

Facilitator: Jerry Wallace

### **Section 1: MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE**

The Council Bluffs AMP council conducted twelve meetings during the first six months of calendar year 2016. During these meetings we had 105 contacts with AMP members between the ages of 13 and 17. Our largest group meeting was on March 1 with 16 youth members present and our smallest group meeting was on February 8 with 3 youth members present. We had 30 different youth attend at least one meeting during this six month period and 22 of these 30 youth attended their first AMP meeting ever during this period. We had 16 youth contacts in January, 14 in February, 26 in March, 22 in April, 14 in May and 13 in June. Ten youth attended 5 to 10 meetings; ten youth attended 2

to 4 meetings; and ten youths attended only one meeting during this six month period. 21 of the 30 youth who attended meetings during this six month period were females and 9 were males. The 9 males attended 30 total meetings while the 21 females came to 75 total meetings. Our agency CEO stopped by for our February 16 meeting.

Three of our thirty youth (Dante, Jasmin & Zalena) travelled with our council facilitator to “AMP on the Hill Day” in Des Moines on January 25<sup>th</sup> and two more (Brandon C. & Gage) attended our Spring “Plugged in and Charging” Conference with our council facilitator in Ottumwa on April 16<sup>th</sup>. Jasmin was especially impacted by her opportunity to speak one-on-one with the Chairwoman of the Health and Human Services Committee of the House of Representatives. The legislator’s willingness to take action on the tragedy of human trafficking in our state was especially gratifying to both Jasmin and Zalena. Dante was also impressed by the Senate majority leader bringing Dante down on to the floor of the Senate chamber and posing for photos with him at his speaker’s floor seat. Brandon C. and Gage were both impacted by the opportunity to meet with instructors and department heads at Indian Hills Community College during the spring conference in Ottumwa. They were both allowed to operate tool and lathe machinery in the manufacturing technology lab. They really paid attention when the department head told them that every student who had completed the 12 month certification program in the last 3 years there had a full-time job contract waiting for them with a manufacturing plant in the state of Iowa before they were even completed with the program. Both boys expressed that they thought finishing a program like that (for them) now seemed “do-able” whereas it had not seemed so prior to their visit.

With regard to a couple of our most favorite recent meetings; we had a presentation by Iowa Legal Aid at our May 17 meeting. The attorney tailored her information to the questions which our members surfaced during the presentation. Faith felt particularly enlightened by the information on what steps a landlord must follow regarding unwritten bartering of services for rent payment. Brandon C. was glad to be filled in on the steps his parents should take if they ever feel as if they may have been the victims of identity theft. On June 7 our facilitator gave each youth present at the meeting a copy of the U.S. Department of Education’s just published “Transition Tool Kit for Foster Children.” Erika and Brendon M. were especially appreciative to hear that minors have the capacity to obtain essential identification, citizenship and residence documents. Devinne noted that for each type of assistance noted in the “Tool Kit” there was a hyper-link printed which could allow them to get any additional information they might require and, in some cases, to even apply for certain resources themselves, on-line. The youth were happy that they left that meeting with these tool kits in hand.

## **Section 2: MEASURE OF COLLABORATION**

In addition to the previously mentioned Iowa Legal Aid, Indian Hills Community College and U.S. Department of Education with whom we have collaborated for presentations and trainings; we have also taken advantage of associations with the American Red Cross, Iowa Western Community College, the Child Welfare Provider Training Academy, the Coalition for Family and Children’s Services of Iowa, Daniel Houston & Associates, Youth in Sheltered Services of Central Iowa and the Lavender Umbrella Organization for instruction, presentation and professional development.

Recent beneficial trainings for our council and for our facilitator (within the last month) includes “First Aid and Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation”, “A Fresh Approach to Culture and Diversity” and “Gender identity, sexual orientation and authentic gender models.” The desired outcome of all these attempts at training and orientation is to create a safer, more comfortable and more welcoming environment for all the transitioning teens who come in contact with our local AMP council; to make it more likely that youth who can benefit from our services are not confronted by barriers to becoming strong self advocates; and to provide allies, mentors, coping skills, support systems and safety for all transitioning young adults.

### **Section 3: MEASURE OF SERVICE CAPACITY**

Some youth comments indicating learning and appreciation of our services include: “I like having people care about foster and adopted people.” “I like learning new stuff.” “We get to go bowling on the holidays and have barbecues when the weather is nice.” “AMP has helped me learn it’s alright to just be me.” “I appreciate people taking the time to do stuff with us.” “I am emotionally stronger than I used to be, thanks for helping me to get here.”

We believe it is fully possible that we could give our members an opportunity to use the IWCC telecasting studio to make a news report about what we do here and what we do with our local contracted agency. Coordination and outreach can make that happen.

#### **Davenport:**

*Submitted by Megan Heffernan*  
Davenport AMP Council  
Davenport, IA  
Facilitator: Megan Heffernan

### **Section 1: MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE**

The Davenport Council operates directly under the leadership of Youth & Shelter Services and is facilitated by Megan Heffernan. Margie Mitchell is Davenport’s main Community Support Person yet large support comes from several volunteers and other organizations. The Davenport Council generally meets the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays of the month from 6-7:30pm at Family Resources: 2800 Eastern Ave., Davenport, IA 52803. The CEO of Youth & Shelter was not available to attend during this reporting period.

During the month of April, Hannah May, 4-year AMP volunteer, coordinated several students from St. Ambrose University to attend both of our AMP meetings. During these meetings, the college students spent time individually and in groups talking with youth about respect, teamwork, and young adulthood. All of the AMP youth were engaged with the college students, were able to have fun, and learned there were other young people who cared about them and their experiences. The youth were inspired by the responsibility and maturity they observed in the college students. Similarly, the college students were inspired by their interactions with the youth and the stories they heard. These meetings were successful in strengthening the partnership AMP has been building with St. Ambrose University and inspiring more young community members to

get involved with AMP youth. They were also successful in inspiring the AMP youth to believe in themselves, their worth, and what they are capable of.

The Davenport council supports state-wide policy and legislative efforts of AMP. AMP youth from the Davenport Council provided feedback and support for AMP's Legislative Agendas. The Davenport Council invites local DHS representatives and local state Senators and House Representatives to council meetings. Specifically, Representatives Cindy Winckler and Phyllis Thede have expressed their interest in the voices of the Davenport AMP youth.

## **Section 2: MEASURE OF COLLABORATION**

Although the Davenport AMP council partners and collaborates with several individuals, groups, and organizations, two that stand out are Family Resources and Community Partnerships for Protecting Children (CPPC). Family Resources has been instrumental in allowing the AMP meetings to be hosted on their campus, coordinating the attendance of youth from their residential programs, and in their general support for the AMP program. Within the umbrella of Family Resources, several other groups, including Braking Traffik, Iowa Kids Net (IKN), Iowa Aftercare, Building Forever Families (BFF), and the Trauma-Informed Care Consortium, have also provided ongoing support, partnership, collaboration on events, and marketing efforts. CPPC has been an ongoing partner that has assisted with funding, marketing, general support, and supplies.

On May 21<sup>st</sup>, AMP partnered with IKN, BFF, & DHS to host a foster and adoptive appreciation picnic. On June 25<sup>th</sup>, AMP partnered with IKN and BFF to host a foster and adoptive awareness walk. Several foster and adoptive youth and parents as well as other stakeholders in the community attended these events. Davenport AMP Facilitator had the opportunity to share AMP program information with both groups as well as speak with and recruit youth from the community. Facilitator was able to hear the concerns and barriers of community youth participating in AMP and make plans to eliminate them. Several individuals expressed interest in joining the AMP distribution list and in other AMP related opportunities.

### **Involvement with Community Boards, Groups, Meetings:**

1. PS-MAPP Foster Parent Training Classes (Facilitator- Megan & AMP Youth)
2. Event Planning & Consulting Meetings with IKN, BFF, DHS, Family Resources (Facilitator- Megan & Community Support- Margie)
3. Community Partnerships for Protecting Children / Transitioning Youth & Iowa Youth Dream Team Committee (Facilitator- Megan & Community Support- Margie)
4. Foster Care Review Board (Community Support- Margie)
5. Court Appointed Special Advocate (Community Support- Margie)
6. Scott County Kids, Provider Panel (Facilitator- Megan)
7. Networking for Community & School Partnerships Committee- Davenport District (Facilitator- Megan)

### **Trainings Facilitator Attended:**

1. April 16: "Plugged In and Charging", AMP Conference

2. May 7: “Smashing Stigmas through Hope and Opportunity” 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference
3. June 29: Cyber Ethics for Those Working With Vulnerable Populations

### **Section 3: MEASURE OF SERVICE CAPACITY**

#### **Comments & Feedback from AMP Youth:**

1. Now I know youth can make a difference.
2. There are people that will listen at AMP.
3. I like how positive AMP is!
4. AMP taught me it’s possible to make changes!
5. I never realized I could be a leader until I was told that I was a leader... my leadership grew from there.
6. I learned to respect myself, don’t do drugs, be safe, and be you!

The Davenport Council has not had any specific media coverage during this reporting period.

Due to the high number of AMP participants being involved in residential treatment services, several youth transition between various residential programs and eventually discharge and either enter independent living, return home, or transition into a different home environment. Among youth making these transitions, several have credited AMP for their treatment progress, expressed interest in continuing their involvement with AMP in their home councils, and have been grateful for suitcases filled with home and hygiene supplies to assist them in their transitions. Youth have learned they are not alone and are part of the larger AMP family who care about them and are there to support them.

The Davenport Council is mostly comprised of youth who are currently involved with residential treatment services. One of the ongoing goals or “dreams” for the Davenport council is to increase the participation of other youth from the community so that youth from a variety of settings are represented and benefit from the AMP program. Specifically, more youth involved with foster and adoptive services are desired. The Facilitator has continued to market and partner with various local agencies and organizations in an attempt to reach more community youth and will continue to do so in the coming months.

#### **Des Moines:**

*Submitted by Terri Bailey*  
Des Moines AMP Council  
Des Moines, Iowa  
Facilitator: Terri Bailey

### **Section 1: MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE**

Des Moines AMP meets on the first and third Tuesday of each month at Polk County Riverplace, 2309 Euclid Ave. Des Moines, IA 50309 in room 1 from 5:30-7:30pm. AMP has youth ages 12-26 attending on a regular basis. We have strong older members who are excellent speakers and were mentors at AMP Camp. These older youth still

struggle and look to AMP, each other and their facilitator for strength and guidance. The younger AMP members range from 12-17 years old. Younger teens are allowed to attend AMP when appropriate with their older siblings and facilitator permission. Teens from Farrand House, a local group home associated with Children & Families of Iowa, struggle with behaviors as it is a treatment group home. We celebrate their successes during council meetings such as attending public school, graduating high school, positive visits and returning home. Several girls continue to attend AMP after they leave Farrand House along with those who move into assisted living after age 18. The girls enjoy coming to AMP and often attend outside AMP activities such as the Des Moines Art Center, the Des Moines Science Center and speaking/community events. Kathy Sheehy, a Des Moines foster parent, prepares the main meal before AMP meetings when food is not donated, and transports youth to AMP meetings and extra events. Each AMP meeting a full meal is provided to this AMP council as they need time to mingle and visit with friends plus several members are living on their own and appreciate a home cooked meal. Des Moines AMP works with Aftercare at Iowa Homeless Youth Center to expose youth at Buchanan & Light Houses to AMP opportunities. Aftercare speaks to youth at AMP meetings to teach them about services available to youth when they age out of care. During the past six months the Des Moines AMP Council has been supported by several volunteers, professionals and businesses.

Andrew Allen, CEO of Youth & Shelter Services, has never attended a Des Moines AMP council meeting. He has met with AMP youth before and after speaking events, congratulating them on a job well done and posing with them for Facebook photos. They love talking to Andrew especially after hearing his story and realizing he's walked in their shoes. AMP youth see him as an adult who has overcome and come full circle to be the CEO of the agency that reached out to help him when he was a teen.

One of my favorite meetings was when we pretended there was a nuclear holocaust and decided who would survive! Ten youth volunteered to be the possible survivors and acted out their roles to encourage the group to vote for them depending on what skills they would bring to the new population of the world. AMP teens really got in to the activity and talked about how a lawyer would know how to set up the new government and a military man could keep the peace, prevent the holocaust from happening again. The younger characters stated they were able to have children which was needed to repopulate the earth. It was hilarious to hear the reasons the group chose survivors based on how much food they would eat or if they were strong enough to work, like a farmer growing food. They were very quick to get rid of the people with physical disabilities and mental illness so we discussed how that reflected real life. Youth were bothered by this as many of were seen in that category by peers and kept arguing how they were still worthy of survival. After the discussion the four people they chose to survive were the farmer to grow food, the doctor to deliver babies and keep them healthy, the scientist to invent new things and drugs to help them stay alive and the military man to keep the peace so the holocaust never happened again! Our second best meeting was when Evelyn Garrison, Des Moines AMP mobile facilitator, presented on the positive and negative influences in life today using an activity with water. Youth took turns standing inside two shower curtains attached to hula hoops. One curtain had negative words written inside and the other contained positive words. Each teen was to

remember the word that grabbed their attention and how it related to their life. It was heart wrenching when they shared about the negative words like stupid, ugly and worthless, remembering a time that people had said that to them and how it felt. Positive words had the same reaction like beautiful, funny and caring made the youth feel good when others shared. Evelyn showed slides of a scientific study where positive words were spoken in a jar of water and beautiful snowflake crystals formed when viewed under a microscope! When negative words were spoken in to a jar of water, the view under the microscope looked like the surface of the moon or like someone threw up! Another example was a jar filled with cooked rice. After a month of sitting on a window sill the rice that had “I hate you” spoken in to it was full of mold where the jar that had “I love you” spoken in it was mold free! Our discussion on positive and negative thinking, how we treat others and the impact of those actions on us was amazing! AMP youth were looking at their entire life from a new perspective and how their lives could have been so different depending on the positive or negative input for others and themselves!

Andrew Allen, CEO of Youth & Shelter Services, has not attended an Ames AMP council meeting this report period. He is busy transitioning in to the new CEO of Youth & Shelter Services and other matters demand his attention. He makes a point to talk to AMP youth when he attends the same function, congratulating them on a job well done and posing with them for Facebook photos. They love talking to Andrew especially after hearing his story at the AMP statewide conference in Ottumwa last April and realizing he’s walked in their shoes. AMP youth see him as an adult who has overcome and come full circle to be the CEO of the agency that reached out to help him when he was a teen.

The legislative success that affected the Des Moines AMP council most was the passage of SF2258. Legislation on “Normalcy” was passed for youth in placements so now the girls from Farrand House are attending driver’s education! This facilitator taught a twenty year old how to drive this year and she passed the test to get her license because when she was at Farrand House four years ago when attending driver’s education was not offered. Two Farrand girls attended prom at North high school and more are working at jobs than ever before!

## **Section 2: MEASURE OF COORDINATION / COLLABORATION**

The Des Moines AMP Council is supported by Youth & Shelter Services in Ames and Iowa Homeless Youth Center in Des Moines. YSS in Ames supports AMP youth through donations of food (Fareway, Target & Panera Bread) for AMP council meetings, clothing, furniture and Christmas gifts. Children & Families of Iowa bring girls from Farrand House to AMP meetings. Occasionally, youth from independent living programs such as Sequel Care and Woodward bring youth but they are erratic. Lutheran Services in Iowa bring older girls, in their 20’s, which are in mental health assisted living programs but have attended AMP since they were teens. We have several aftercare youth who attend on their own and a few from local foster homes in Polk County.

This report period Des Moines AMP collaborated with Youth Policy Institute of Iowa on a project for AMP Day on the Hill dealing with Normalcy. Youth from AMP and Aftercare gave input on a one page flyer that was passed out to legislators that gave statistics on normal activities that youth in care missed because they lived in foster care or an out of

home placement. DSM AMP youth used this flyer to share their personal situations with Senator Janet Peterson and Representative Ako Abdul-Sammad while 15 other councils shared the flyer with their local legislators.

Another long standing collaboration was with the Des Moines Art Center. Once a month AMP youth attend the art center on a Sunday afternoon and view a piece of art from the gallery; the class theme has to do with the artist's style and or why they produce art. This report period we learned about an artist who believes in the earth's natural resources so he produces art using ice, leaves, rocks etc. Part of the art is watching the ice melt or the leaves floating down a stream to show how the earth, like its people are constantly changing. The most interesting was the art made by a young lady who came to America as an immigrant and used her body as a mold in the earth, snow, grass etc. to prove that she was a person who existed somewhere. AMP youth could really relate to feeling misplaced as they entered the foster care system and why the artist wanted to belong somewhere!

Our most successful collaboration this year is with Polk County Riverplace. Mike McInroy asked this facilitator for art to decorate the conference rooms! Abby Wolfe donated photographs of Des Moines locations that included rivers to place in the conference rooms with river names. Youth from Eldora, Iowa City and Mason City councils donated paintings and drawings. Des youth will be painting the children's play area in August at the DHS Carpenter building in DSM; youth drew a sketch of a train and it carries super heroes. Plans are to write the words, "Be a Hero" on the wall and paint some comic book super heroes as well as everyday heroes like doctors, construction workers and social workers!

There were two memorable speaking events this spring. The first one was I took two older youth to talk about AMP at a new DHS worker training and sitting in the training was a former foster youth who recently graduated from Drake! To see a young person come full circle, earn a human services degree and plan to help foster youth was so inspiring! All these years she had also advocated for youth voice, just like my AMP youth and to know that she would appreciate the youth perspective as a DHS worker was amazing. AMP youth were excited to learn that she was one of three new DHS workers hired that were former foster youth. Such a validation of all the hard work done by Iowa's youth, making a difference to improve child welfare.

The second speaking event that sticks out to me happened at a PS/MAPP meeting. AMP youth were part of a panel telling their personal story of their journey through the foster care system. One young lady who has been active in AMP for many years was talking about her 18 month old son and his challenging behaviors. She shared that recently her biological grandmother, who can't handle the little boy's behavior any more has said, "Why don't you just give him to the system?" My AMP panelist began to cry and couldn't believe her grandma said that! She told the class, "I know what it feels like to be given away, given up on; I could never do that to my son!" AMP is my family now; they don't give up on people just because they are going through a tough time.

Des Moines AMP collaborates with IFAPA, this facilitator taught a class on teens at the spring conference and a DSM AMP youth sits on the IFAPA board plus works full time for Iowa Homeless Youth Center. We work closely with Jan Huff, who is a transition Planning Specialist. Jan attends AMP council meetings and helped this council find a church where we can start cooking classes for youth this summer.

I participate in the following boards as a representative of AMP:

- ICYD Advisory Committee
- YSS Juvenile Justice Committee
- YSS Public Policy Committee
- YSS LGBTQ Best Practice
- Kidsnet Recruitment & Retention
- Central Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking
- AFFIRM
- Education Collaborative
- Iowa Girls Justice Initiative with AMP youth, Nicole Hart & Jazmine Garrison
- CWAC – AMP youth Jacob Carmi attends
- IFAPA Board - AMP youth Jacob Carmi attends
- Foster Youth in Action - AMP youth Jacob Carmi attends webinars with this facilitator and is on the conference planning committee

Trainings this facilitator has attended this report period are CPR & First Aid on March 25<sup>th</sup>. This training was interesting because I attended it with an AMP youth who needed the certification to graduate high school. She had trouble doing the hands on activities and was frustrated when I tried to help her. I told her it was important to do it correctly; it could save someone's life. I pointed out, "Would you like me to forget how to save you?" "Good point," she said. I took three classes at the IFAPA Conference April 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>. Fostering Attachments taught me from a youth's point of view how important attachments are to young person. Some attachments are trauma attachments so youth have a hard time understanding consequences. When given consequences, youth need to restore hope in positive behavior instead of punishment that increases difficulty in attachment. Connections Matter focused on building brain connections in youth. Youth need to feel safe so they can think and learn. I learned that developing a relationship helps youth be resilience and that an adult/child relationship heals children. This class proved what I know to be true with science vs what I've learned when working with teens. The third class dealt with trauma in teens. The part on communication talked about praising your teen in public but criticizing in private. Too often I think adults criticize youth in public which is devastating to their self-esteem. I will use all these items with my AMP youth. Lastly, on June 1<sup>st</sup> I attended training at YSS called Lock 'n Load: Mastering Change. The speaker talked about how people resist change and the reasons why. I think this had to do with the new YSS branding and how it will affect programs. It made me think of all the changes AMP youth go through as they move through the system and their feelings about change. I hope to be more understanding when I hear their frustrations when things in their life change.

### **Section 3: MEASURE OF SERVICE CAPACITY**

This facilitator received several requests from the AMP website asking for information on the Des Moines council, where it meets or add requester to the agenda list. This facilitator manages the AMP website and Facebook making frequent changes and additions to each site. Any activity or event that Des Moines youth participate in is

shared on the AMP Facebook and website. During council meetings this facilitator will show youth items on each site as a way to familiarize them with what's posted and how to locate information. Youth love to see photos of themselves and other AMP members and those that frequent the sites copy photos shared. Facebook seems to be their preferred site because they can interact with each other.

The Des Moines AMP council hasn't had much media coverage this report period. This facilitator shared information about Variety AMP Camp in the IFAPA Weekly Word and the Spring Newsletter.

It amazes me when youth begin attending AMP and I get the privilege of watching them transition to adulthood! I look at the Farrand House girls, and remember their behaviors when they first attended AMP and now how they are aging out and becoming young adults. Hallie had a hard time paying attention, frequently interrupted presenters and didn't care about transition. She admitted she was scared to live on her own but now is transitioning to independent living, has a job at Hy-Vee and only needs 2 credits to graduate high school! Rachael is a true artist and is active in Art Force. Soon she will transition to a foster home which she advocated for herself; returning home was not a positive option for her.

Abby graduated high school and received scholarships to attend DMACC in the fall. This summer she is working at the 4H Camp in Madrid, Iowa. After attending two years of AMP Camp she loved it so much that she was hired as a camp counselor! She still does photography with the camera she purchased with her Dream Seed grant and will take pictures again this year at the Iowa State Fair for the Bill Riley talent sprouts. She is pursuing a degree in photo journalism.

The future of Des Moines AMP is continuing to reach out to foster/adoptive parents to bring their teens and let them experience AMP. Once they attend AMP they will see its value. This council consists mainly of older youth who have been with AMP for several years. We need younger members to revitalize this council! Writing articles for IFAPA newsletters seem to reach some, continuing to attend committee meetings and collaborating with anyone and everyone should reach the rest! The best testimony comes from our youth when they tell adults that AMP is their family and what that means to them in support and caring. I'm still waiting to find that magical connection that will encourage foster parents to bring their youth. I'm pursuing changing our meeting location or starting a second AMP group in WDM.

### **Dubuque:**

*Submitted by Jessica Akicita*

Dubuque AMP Council

Dubuque, IA

Facilitator: Jessica Akicita

### **Section 1: MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE**

Dubuque AMP continues to be facilitated by Jessi (Indy) Perry, with assistance from volunteer Juliet Martin. February and March saw larger numbers of youth attending, as youth living in the Hillcrest homes were engaged with the program; however, the March meeting had a physical altercation between several youth (a rollover from tensions between some of the houses), and between this incident and changeover of employees

at the homes, attendance once again dropped. We continue to struggle with getting foster families to AMP meetings.

The most powerful meeting this year so far was one of the January meetings, where we discussed disproportionality in the DHS/JCS system. It was a small group, however, youth were able to be involved in discussion with our guests about the impact of this disproportionality and ways they could become involved to make positive change in the system. One of the youth of color was able to connect with a positive male role model who is also a person of color; this has been something they have identified in the past as a need. Youth are now coming together to see how they can help to address this issue.

Another awesome meeting was in April, where we again had a smaller meeting; however, this meeting was for the intention to create an art project about sexual assault. Youth created art work for display on the Hillcrest campus, and shared that it was nice for them to be able to share some of their stories in a safe environment.

In January, Dubuque AMP attended the Day on the Hill with several other AMP councils. Our council was able to meet with the President of the Senate, Ann Jochum, and ask questions and share about the legislation they are working on.

June is LGBTQ+ Pride month, and Dubuque AMP wrote and submitted the proclamation for the city. One of our youth accepted the proclamation on behalf of our council at the city council meeting.

The agency CEO did not attend any AMP meetings during this reporting period.

## **Section 2: MEASURE OF COLLABORATION**

Currently, our strongest collaboration is with Foster AlumNet. This organization is a local group started by a young adult who was in the foster care system and has established herself in the community while facing the challenges of transitioning. Foster AlumNet pairs teens in foster care and young foster alumni with local mentors for the transition to adulthood. We are also collaborating with our local DHS, IFAPA, and KidsNet.

Youth have been speaking at classes for new foster parents, and have identified that they felt heard and hopeful. Audience was engaged—asking questions and making comments to affirm the youth.

Youth and this facilitator have participated in a board on disproportionality.

Facilitator attended a forum on hate crimes/bias incidents.

## **Section 3: MEASURE OF SERVICE CAPACITY**

After the altercation at a meeting, several youth independently approached this facilitator and admitted responsibility for the incident, and also brought up ideas on how to prevent future incidents.

An AMP youth accepted the proclamation for LGBTQ+ Pride Month at the Dubuque City Council meeting, which was recorded and televised. Members of the city council shared that they were impressed to have a youth representing.

One of our youth who was in foster care has been adopted by their foster parent, after several months of discussing pros and cons.

To engage youth who are currently in foster families!

**Eldora:**

*Submitted by Jessica Kropf*

Eldora State Training School, Eldora

Facilitator: Jessica Kropf

**Section 1: MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE**

Here had the Eldora State Training School we have 4 different councils, one for Cottage 3, Cottage 5, Receiving Cottage and Cottage 7. Each group meets twice a month, days and times vary as to what will work best with the cottage. We also bring in speakers and events that are for all councils and other youth on campus.

One of my favorite meetings was when we talked about “reaching for a future” my goal was to make them dream of the person they want to be and the life that they want to have and to realize how what they have been doing will jeopardize this. I had them start with making their own dream path. My cottage 5 group is usually more difficult and tends to not take things seriously. Every single one of them responded so well and had deep conversations of what they truly wanted to do in life. They stopped thinking of what was expected by them from friends, family, workers and just thought about what THEY wanted from life. And it was all positive things!!! They talked about fears of being locked up and missing out on more life experiences. One student teared up thinking what he has missed with his son and the person he wanted to be for his son. They seemed to truly get what else is out there for them and that it is possible for them to change their life around even now and that is what made this group successful.

Another one of my favorite meetings started out as being about budgeting. They were given sheets with expenses and were to start with what they thought they would make and what they thought everything would cost. We then went over it as a group and talked about what a true salary their age would be with what they wanted to do and then brought reality over what things truly cost. I have some youth that like to glorify things that they have done and that are very open that they plan to continue this when they leave. I had two students begin talking and joking about how much they were going to make getting out of here (selling drugs and stealing). I began to challenge their thought process when another student jumped in (one whom is typically the most negative) and told them they were being “stupid and immature” how all those things were only going to

send them to prison. The others counteracted with how drugs shouldn't be illegal so they were going to do these things anyways and it all led into a big discussion, of which I did not take part in, they actually discussed different of opinions and thoughts openly and respectfully and it all led to was what they were doing worth getting locked up for, even if it was "easy" money it came with a huge price. It was incredible to watch them challenge each other and for it to not come to an argument or more negative thinking. We may not have been successful going thoroughly over how to budget, but I still felt it was successful by having a group comfortable enough to challenge each other and respond well and that it was all to help one another not hinder.

One success we have had is that juvenile records in Iowa are no longer going to be made public, with a few exceptions, meaning that those in the community will not be able to look them up, which will help them when they return of being less judged and help them find a job.

Another success, although it may not be legislative, is that their phone call prices have dropped tremendously and this was something the students here had been advocating for a while now. They are all very proud of this accomplishment.

## **Section 2: MEASURE OF COLLABORATION**

Our councils have not had any great collaborations with the community as this is not the community they will return to, and our situation is a bit different than other councils.

One speaking engagement our youth had was meeting with the JJAC (Juvenile Justice Advisory Council). I took two youth to speak with them. They talked about their relationships with JCOs and how they could be improved, what works and what does not work. They shared our legislative agenda with them. They also talked about needing phone prices to be dropped for students to be able to connect with their family. The youth did great and were so excited to be able to speak and be listened to. They felt that they were taken seriously and that what they said was important to their audience. The audience responded so well to them. They asked questions, made comments and came up to them and myself saying how great they had done and that they appreciated them coming.

Another speaking engagement that our youth do is taking a part of the Reentry Task Force every other month. Most of what is said is over their heads, but they have expressed how great it is to see so many people working for them to make the system better. The other members of the task force always appreciate having them and make a point to talk with them, ask them questions and thank them for coming.

- Juvenile Reentry Task Force.

Here at STS we have a lot of required trainings that have been beneficial. One of them on behavioral stabilization has really helped me learn on how to work with youth with behaviors and how to respond and react appropriately.

## **Section 3: MEASURE OF SERVICE CAPACITY**

My youth cannot have access to our website, but during meetings they have expressed interest in what we have covered and asked for more information to be brought in such as how to rent an apartment and filling out job applications.

We have not had any media coverage, this can be difficult because we have a lot of confidentiality problems to work out before any media coverage can happen.

I have had a youth that has been in AMP for over a year. Because of this he has had few similar groups. One being on filling out job applications and so he took over the group and taught them how to fill it out and gave advice and answered all the questions. It was great to see that he had learned and remembered what we went over almost a year ago!

I also get to hear success stories about our AMP youth that also receive aftercare. We get calls back and to hear that they are going to college or have gotten a job is a great feeling!

My dream is that we begin advocating more for changes on campus. I have had a group of AMP youth come to be with ideas and changes they would like made here on campus. We are meeting with management July 18<sup>th</sup> to discuss these changes. I am working hard with them so that this meeting will be successful and will open the door for more meetings. Once the youth can see that they are listened to and their thoughts and opinions do matter they begin to take more responsibility in their actions, knowing that they have to also earn things. It has been great seeing this group note changes that need made, but also note that some things they want need to be earned. I also hope to find more opportunities off campus for them to advocate for others in the juvenile system and share their journeys.

### **Fort Dodge:**

*Submitted by Ebony Rice-Caston*

Fort Dodge AMP Council

Fort Dodge, Iowa

Facilitator: Ebony Rice-Caston and Amber Lawrence, Co-Facilitators

### **Section 1: MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE**

The Fort Dodge AMP Council held ten meetings from January 1 - June 30, 2016. We took some AMP youth to a Rotary meeting and a PS-MAPP class to share their stories and what AMP is about. We also did a food drive and helped sort donations at a local food pantry. We took some youth to the Plugged in & Charging Conference in Ottumwa. We connected with It Gets Better Fort Dodge and participated in a fishing tournament fundraiser they held in June. Ebony Rice-Caston and Amber Lawrence facilitated the group. We currently do not have an CEO at Youth Shelter Care.

We did a food drive in February and two days later held our AMP meeting at the food pantry to sort those (and other) donations. It was a good experience for our youth to work together on these projects and feel like they were giving back to the community. They made signs to hang up and had some really good encounters with people in the community while we were set up at the grocery store.

Detective Keaton Lunn came to speak at one of our meetings about internet safety and cyber-crimes. It was a very powerful meeting, as the youth were very engaged and had lots of questions. This is a topic that is crucial for this generation to understand and it was obvious they were impacted by what was shared.

We sent letters to our local congressmen/women after the AMP Day on the Hill, asking them to support proposed AMP legislation. We shared what was going on with the legislation at many of our meetings to keep the youth informed. We also reached out to one of our local representatives, Helen Miller, to come speak at an AMP meeting and she is planning on coming to a meeting in the Fall.

## **Section 2: MEASURE OF COLLABORATION**

We connected with the Fort Dodge Rotary Club this spring and from that had a connection with a local banker who came in to speak on setting up a bank account and identity theft (per the youths' request).

We also had the leader of It Gets Better Fort Dodge & Beyond come to a meeting and speak on suicide prevention and anti-bullying. We have connected with this group in a local fishing tournament and have established a good relationship with them in collaborating on future events

PS-MAPP Class: We had four youth attend this class and two of them spoke and shared their stories of being in foster care. It was a very powerful experience for these youth, as one of them had only shared her story once or twice before. She was very proud that she was able to share her story with the group. We had a great reaction from the audience. They were very supportive and encouraging to our youth and received them well.

Groups/meetings the youth and/or facilitators participated in representing AMP:

- Rotary Meeting
- PS-MAPP Training Meeting
- Teens Against Human Trafficking Meetings
- Human Service Workers Meetings in Webster County
- Iowa Professionals for Change in Webster County

Anti-Human Trafficking Training - After attending several of these trainings, I (Amber) have put together a presentation that I gave to the AMP youth at one of our meetings and the staff at Youth Shelter Care. I have also used that information to help the Teens Against Human Trafficking Club form their own presentations for use with the school board, their peers at the high school and community groups.

## **Section 3: MEASURE OF SERVICE CAPACITY**

Most of our youth have had positive reactions to the topics and information that is presented to them. One that stands out is from our presentation on job interview tips and how to get a job. One of the young men from the boys' shelter stated that they really appreciated the tip on the importance of time when showing up to an interview. The youth were advised to give themselves at least an extra 15 minutes to a half hour when it comes to showing up for their interview. We had a financial advisor come to speak at a meeting and the youth were very interested and grateful for all the tips on protecting their identity and how to use a bank.

This year, the Fort Dodge Council only received coverage on social media on Facebook with pictures of council members participating in AMP CAMP. We have had a very difficult time getting media release forms from our youth, since most are in the shelter or at Rabiners.

One of our youth who recently graduated from high school, was able to make a successful transition to college, with support from AMP staff and has completed her first year at Iowa Central Community College. She has been able to maintain a part-time job as a CNA and is learning how to support herself and to function on her own.

A second youth recently turned 18 and along with support from AMP staff was able to find a suitable Group Home to live in and has since been in contact and reported that he is doing well.

One of our hopes is to be able to reach out to some of the youth who live in surrounding rural towns close by. Another hope is to bring more awareness of what AMP has to offer and the impact that it has had on those involved. We would also like to have more media coverage for our council in the upcoming months.

### **Iowa City:**

*Submitted by*

Iowa City AMP Youth Council

Iowa City, IA

Facilitator: Jo Myers-Walker

### **Section 1: MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE**

There have not been any staffing changes since the January report. We have been supported regularly by Della Mull as an adoptive parent and attendee at AMP groups and events. We have had sponsorship and/presentations from Johnson County Junior League, DVIP, Kirkwood Community College, and Johnson County.

Meeting synopsis – topics covered over the 6 months

Jan, 14-Discussions on Trafficking and Internet Safety

Jan 28—Junior League joined us in learning to refurbish furniture

Feb 11- Meeting at Kirkwood in IC to get info to kids (16+) about applying to college

Feb 28-Worked on ART of ACES projects to show 5/7 in CR library.

March 10- DVIP presented on Healthy Relationships.

April 16- Attendand the Plugged in and Charging Summit

April 28-. Worked on ART of ACES projects to show 5/7 in CR library

May 26- Poetry- Telling your story in different ways. Local poet presented and assisted.

June 9- PRIDE. Worked on booth and art for pride fest in Iowa City.

Iowa City AMP consists of youth 13-18 years old from Iowa City shelter, foster/adoptive homes, independent living and few members over age 18 attend occasionally as work/school schedules allow. Older youth not in shelter care lead the meeting as much as possible as it is difficult for youth to acclimate and fully participate on a transitory basis.

Youth help set up, clean up and make sure everyone feels welcome. With high council participant turnover, there are few to pursue leadership opportunities. Our members celebrate success most often during highs and lows.

There have been several council participants who have thrived and fully engaged in the artistic environment provided by the Council Facilitator and others who struggled to engage initially and ended up learning new skills or coping techniques.

Iowa City AMP participated with AMP Facilitator Jo Myers-Walker in Cedar Rapids ART of ACES displays in the Cedar Rapids Iowa City Library on May 7.

## **Section 2: MEASURE OF COORDINATION / COLLABORATION**

This Council collaborates with Four Oaks for services. We have had sponsorship and/presentations from Johnson County Junior League, DVIP, Kirkwood Community College, and Johnson County. There haven't been any AMP participant led presentations to other entities during this reporting period.

This Facilitator engaged Johnson County, DVIP, Kirkwood Community College, and Johnson County for support and presentations on life skills, community involvement, and recreational activities.

Trainings AMP facilitator has not attended trainings this report period.

## **Section 3: MEASURE OF SERVICE CAPACITY**

This Council is continuing to gain awareness in the community and has received several foster families and JCO staff asking about Iowa City AMP Council, where it meets or to present information to the group. The supervisor and facilitator collaborate to manage the AMP website making changes and additions to the site. Any activity or event Iowa City youth participate in is shared on the AMP website.

The Iowa City Facilitator has coordinate with other councils to help keep youth connected as they leave shelter or foster settings so they can maintain AMP attendance.

The future of Iowa City AMP will be to continue efforts to engage foster/adoptive parents to bring their teens to experience AMP and see its value.

### **Marshalltown:**

*Submitted by Alyson Hicks*

Marshalltown AMP Council

Marshalltown, IA

Facilitator: Alyson Hicks

## **Section 1: MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE**

During the January through June timeframe, the Marshalltown AMP council met twice per month (excluding one date in February due to inclement weather) and increased youth participation by new youth as well as had changes in adult volunteers, adding 2 new ones. The Marshalltown AMP council typically meets at the YSS of Marshall County office at 11 E. State Street. Council meetings are typically started with a mentor reading announcements in order to provide leadership opportunities and to designate to youth that there are older mentors involved in AMP. Following announcements and sign-in, all present share their highs and lows for the week highlighting a positive aspect or event from the week and optionally a low point as well. This gives the youth an opportunity for sharing personal stories and providing support. The designated activity

is then what takes the majority of our council meetings and we always close with everyone pitching in to help clean up the area.

One of the most impactful activities was our minute-to-win-it game night. We had various simple tasks using household objects that teams had 1 minute to try to accomplish. This happened to come at a time when we had 2 fairly new youth attending and a new adult volunteer present. All the youth as well as the adults volunteering found a lot of comic relief in the games. It was an impactful activity because through the laughter, the youth let their guard down and it became a team-building experience. The new youth in attendance formed connections with the other youth present.

Another favorite meeting was when we invited guest speaker, Pat Kremer, to speak about "Why we do what we do" a theory on self-control. This was great for teens to begin to understand that they have more control over themselves than they may realize and that they can be empowered if they understand the impact of their thoughts and actions on their feelings. The youth had a much better understanding of how to create positive actions through positive thoughts and that they are in the driver's seat.

The Marshalltown AMP council continued to follow the progress of many legislative agenda items and shared that this is a confusing process for them. The youth decided to invite Senator Sodders to be a guest speaker to help explain the process and he is scheduled to attend in August. Additionally, the youth had the idea to create a board on which the agenda items can be placed as they go through different steps of approval thereby giving the youth a visual depiction of the process of bills being passed. One mentor who regularly attends AMP shared with the youth that she had been in foster care when the grandparent-sibling visitation bill was passed and that she was able to take a copy of this to give her own DHS worker, which opened the way for her to have visitation with her grandmother. She shared that this was a major support for her and she'd previously been unable to visit her grandmother. Another youth shared that the newly passed legislation that juvenile criminal records be kept confidential has allowed her easier access to employment.

## **Section 2: MEASURE OF COORDINATION / COLLABORATION**

Marshalltown AMP had the opportunity to speak to the PM Kiwanis club in early 2016. At this speaking engagement, the youth who spoke moved many in attendance to tears with her story of difficulties in the child welfare system and due to this the club members had an interest in partnering with our AMP council on fundraising ideas. At this time, the PM Kiwanis are planning a donation to AMP in appreciation for the youth assisting with their semi-annual garage sale. The members of the PM Kiwanis are older adults with little to no experience in the child welfare system of Iowa and had many questions and a great interest in supporting AMP youth to continue to make changes for the better.

As previously mentioned, Marshalltown AMP had speaking engagements at the PM Kiwanis in January and this was very impactful on the adult present. The youth who shared her experiences was an effective speaker and was invited to return at a future date to speak again. The youth stated that by letting others know what she went through, she feels as though she's helping making change.

- Marshalltown AMP youth attended the local legislative forum at the Marshalltown Public library on January 25
- Marshalltown AMP youth attended the first annual AMP Conference, “Unplugged and Charging” in April at Indian Hills college in Ottumwa

I personally attended an educational workshop on Drug-endangered children offered jointly by the Marshall County Sheriff’s drug task force and the mental health professionals from Center Associates. I learned a great deal about signs of drug use and in what ways the law enforcement and mental health professionals collaborate to work with youth in town who are in these types of situations including emergency child care.

I also attended a workshop on Burmese refugees, which is a growing population in Marshalltown. I gained insight into what these types of individuals have commonly escaped and the long journey they’ve had to get here. I also was able to learn about their lack of child welfare system and that they may not identify with the American child welfare system.

### **Section 3: MEASURE OF SERVICE CAPACITY**

The Marshalltown AMP expressed that they really appreciated hearing from the Chief of Police in Marshalltown when he attended AMP as a guest speaker but mostly from finding out that he is a community supporter of AMP and has had ties with AMP for years from a previous county. The youth immediately wrote a thank you letter to the Chief of Police after his visit to AMP and they agreed they wanted to give him a small gift in appreciation, however, learned he is not allowed to accept gifts for his speaking engagements.

Likewise, the youth who represented AMP on the local legislative forum expressed that she felt it was very impactful and stated she wanted to stay involved in legislative change and keep in touch with the legislators she spoke with.

The Marshalltown AMP website lists information about our bimonthly council meetings. We were featured in the YSS of Marshall County newsletter which was sent to over 1000 homes in the county area. Central Iowa Today Radio broadcast also had a representative speak about AMP in Marshalltown on May 20, 2016. We were also featured in the daily newspaper the Marshalltown Times-Republican following the speaking engagement at the PM Kiwanis with a photo of the youth. May 2, 2016 the radio program called “Ask the Newsmaker” had coverage of AMP by the YSS of Marshall County director.

The Marshalltown AMP Council only had one transition of a youth who moved from one foster home to another within Marshalltown. This was due to the first foster parent no longer wishing to be a foster parent. The transition was very smooth and the new foster parents were invited to come experience what AMP is all about. We did have one youth who achieved her High School equivalency diploma and a celebration is planned in July for this.

Two new youth who began to attend AMP on a regular basis during this reporting period have had hearings related to parental rights and were able to share with their council their perspectives on why they did or did not wish for their biological parents to continue to have rights and voiced that it was helpful to talk with youth who understood.

Over the next few months, the Marshalltown AMP council plans to create a visual aid (as mentioned previously in the Measure of support section of this report) for them to better follow as legislative agenda items go through the process of becoming signed laws. The youth have developed an idea of using a board with the different steps of legislation approval and includes removable pieces that they can see the progress of the important issues they support.

**Mason City:**

*Submitted by Lisa Pelz*  
Mason City AMP Council  
Mason City, IA  
Facilitator: Lisa Pelz

**Section 1: MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE**

The Mason City Achieving Maximum Potential council was facilitated by Lisa Pelz. Lisa has continued to provide a level of energy that has allowed AMP to more fully connect with the community and the resources available. Tracey Jennings is the Supervisor for the AMP Council.

Volunteers and supporters of this council include employees of Francis Lauer Youth Services: Kat White, Che' Whitner, Shannon Slifka, CJ Madrid, Patrick McLinn, Greg Falls, Christi Hernandez (Zumba), Dakota Torres (team building), Lisa Lansaw, Elvis Bowden Jr., Brittney Thornton, Verna Dirksen, Marcie Wilson, and Tracey Jennings (NHA). Other volunteers are Jackie Krueger, Patrick Harnish (Trauma), Carrie Snow (Job Corp), Chris Hannan (WIOA), Terri Bailey (speaker training), Megan Schneider (TAHT), Kathy Berns (Graduations), Trinity Lutheran Church (donation of space), Roger Berding (food), and Godfathers (donation). These supporters have played an active role in empowering the council to greatness by advocating for the participants and teaching them how to advocate for themselves.

IASN and Transitional Living participants continue to attend AMP and are taking leadership roles in the council. The connection between AMP and IASN is expanding the overall community awareness of AMP and the purpose. Other attendees of the council include youth from Francis Lauer Youth Services (IASN, Boys Day Program, Girls Day Program and Emergency Services Shelter), Four Oaks and the community. A "pocket" of homeless youth has been identified in North Iowa. AMP is reaching out to these youth in an attempt to connect them with the council and give them a voice.

Tracey Jennings, Director of Client Services, attended the AMP Council Meeting on March 15, 2016 and presented on the Nurtured Heart Approach®.

A variety of topics have been covered over the past six (6) months. Meetings identified as favorites include Zumba on February 16th and Teens Against Human Trafficking (TAHT) on March 15<sup>th</sup>. Zumba impacted the youth by keeping them active and engaged. Participants experienced a care-free, relaxed, healthy, and fun-filled activity that allowed them to be kids, without focusing on their struggles or individual circumstances. They

were able to set aside concerns/difficulties and just be them. Teens Against Human Trafficking was a favorite because participants were interested in the topic, focused on asking questions and learning new information. The benefit of this presentation was that youth received information that was relevant to them and their safety. This sparked an awareness and willingness to become involved with TAHT on a more active level, empowering them to spread the word!

This council has struggled with legislative involvement during the six (6) months. AMP was unable to participate in AMP on the Hill and Sharon Steckman (legislator) had to cancel her visit to the council due to inclement weather. This is an area of growth as we go forward. One of the Mason City Council areas of interest included Youth feeling that school officials do not handle bullying in the correct manner. Youth stated that the bullying policies are not upheld all of the time and that most youth are bullied and nobody will do anything about it. Legislative updates regarding this topic, namely House File 2264, allowing for open enrollment of students subjected to bullying was seen by youth as a win. As youth obtained other updates this encouraged feedback from the youth and an opportunity to get involved.

## **Section 2: MEASURE OF COLLABORATION**

Coordination and collaboration occurs with the Department of Human Services, Juvenile Court Services, P4C (Decategorization), Family Connections, North Iowa Homeless Shelters, and the Transition Planning Committee. WIOA Youth Program has been a tremendous collaboration and partnership that connects well with AMP, including employment, HISET, job shadowing, and further connection with community resources. Collaboration with Integrated Health Homes provides an intense involvement and spring board to access services that address individualized participant needs in regard to mental health issues, Supported Community Living Services and Habilitation Housing.

The AMP facilitator regularly attends the Transition Planning Committee meeting. Mary Grouette, IASN Self-Sufficiency Advocate, and Tracey Jennings, Director of Client Services, also attend. Tracey attends the monthly P4C, Decategorization, meeting where community planning occurs. AMP is discussed at these meetings and information is shared. Information is consistently provided to various DHS workers, adult and juvenile probation officers, community partners (Transition Center), and at Transition Planning Committee meetings. Although formal presentations do not occur, information is shared on an on-going, individual basis. The current focus of dissemination of information is to surrounding churches and surrounding school districts, to further spread the AMP word.

- Transition Planning Committee Meeting
- North Iowa Transition Center Supported Community Living (SCL) Services
- North Iowa Homeless Shelter

MANDT- May 24 & 27 2016: The benefit of Mandt training was the review and focus on building healthy relationships while creating a safe place for youth.

National Council for Behavioral Health- Mental Health First Aid – April 6, 2016:

The benefit of Mental Health First Aid is awareness to trauma and appropriate responses. The training provided the framework of connection without re-traumatizing the youth.

DHS- Race: The Power of an Illusion; the House We Live In – March 10, 2016: The benefit of The Power of Illusion was the opportunity to experience racial diversity through stories. This was a reminder of the need to be aware of cultural differences.

DHS Webinar- The Prudent Parent Standard: The benefit of The Prudent Parent Standard was to gain a clear understanding of what it means to be a prudent foster parent, focusing on awareness and connection. After completing this training, there was a higher level of awareness of children in foster placement and identifying their potential struggles.

### **Section 3: MEASURE OF SERVICE CAPACITY**

Youth attending the Mason City Council have commented in several realms of interest. Some youth such as “J” have come to the realization that they are not alone- “J” commented “I like how some of us relate in AMP; I think it’s pretty cool”. Other Youth like “A” have a great appreciation for the food served and the fun and games- “A” commented “they have the bomb food” “and “it’s fun for games”. While other youth have taken AMP a bit more serious and believe “AMP teaches skills” as “J” stated and “A” believes “AMP helps you learn more about people and getting to know others”. “J” has shared that “Amp is one of the greatest things that happened to me”.

There has been no media coverage for the council.

This participant began TLP on May 29, 2015 and began attending AMP Meetings. She had been diagnosed with both Autism and Asperger’s. Initially she was defiant, verbally abusive and aggressive toward her parents when she became upset and exhibited runaway tendencies as well as making poor choices regarding healthy and safe relationships with non-familial adult individuals. Her parents, in trying to protect her, made many of her choices for her without consideration of her wants. This typically resulted in conflict between child and parents. Often times these situations would turn into instances involving the local police. During the first month of services there were several instances such as the one described and at one point she even went to the police station to ask the officers how she could “divorce her parents”.

An IEP was in place due to her grades dropping, being argumentative with teachers and general defiance. It was also observed that she was often times socially incorrect which offended individuals both at school and in her place of employment leaving her with no real friends her own age. Slowly she began to show improvement in communication and in following rules.

Their relationships have grown to a respectful close family tie since beginning TLP and through socialization activities in AMP. She often times seeks advice from her parents

and has learned to voice her opinions during discussions rather than arguing. She is no longer on an IEP and is achieving excellent grades. She has taken college courses in High School and was awarded several scholarships that will cover the cost of her remaining two years of college. She is tutoring middle school age children and college students. She received her High School Diploma with honors. She has made progress in building healthy relationships, including a boyfriend and friends close to her age, all of which her parents approve. She has used newly learned employment skills to expand her employment opportunities and independently seek and obtain new employment in a better environment with co-workers who are more understanding of her disabilities. Her accomplishments over the past year can also be seen in smaller less visible areas such as winning awards in her bowling, several blue ribbons for her FFA artwork and joining group activities. She is very active in school, band, theater and AMP.

Her parents stated that she has not had any behavioral/argumentative situations for months now outside of one “deciding on which prom dress she wanted at a price the parents can afford”; a memory she stated she would never forget- a very happy time for the entire family, as the proud parents snapped lots of photos.

Looking forward, she will be attending Waldorf University in the fall, working at Hy-Vee grocery store in Mason City potentially and plans to live in the dorms at Waldorf University.

This young lady benefitted from participation in AMP meetings by experiencing opportunities to practice and become comfortable with social interactions, gaining a voice and speaking up for herself supporting “Nothing About Us Without Us.”

Explore what is needed to continue the momentum of growing AMP in North Iowa and the surrounding area. This includes the development of a volunteer pool, community service projects, informing the public of what and who AMP is, through brochures, speaking with organizations, businesses and individuals.

**Mobile Facilitator:**

*Submitted by Evelyn Garrison Robertson*

Mobile AMP Council

Des Moines, IA

Facilitator: Evelyn Garrison Robertson

**Section 1: MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE**

The AMP Mobile Facilitator is a unique position that is able to travel to various sites throughout Des Moines and areas that youth are not able to leave or attend community meetings. The Mobile Facilitator Position is a flexible facilitator to bring AMP in places where youth would otherwise not be able to attend. Some of these programs have a range of activities and skill building with in the program. My job is to understand what the staff and youth would like to have discussed/trained/shared and designed, these sessions based on their needs and request.

One of my favorite meetings is one that I have developed while working on my Education. It is the bases of using the simplest most important thing on earth, Water. I use a range of worldly ideas and thoughts from all over the globe. We start the discussion with the importance of water as individuals and then talked about why it is so important, this goes on to bring the science of water and the frequency properties it carries (another science experiment is shown). I use science based information from the famous Dr. Emoto water freezing experiments, this information shared shows what the water looks like when frozen (i.e. snowflakes) after a few phrases are stated (i.e. I like you or I hate you). Youth are always very astounded to see what the results are, once they have the understanding of power and our words and why we need to be careful of our words use and how we say them, we then return to talking about the water in our bodies and how using Dr. Emoto's frozen water experiments the water may actually look like in our bodies (i.e. snowflakes).It is very had to understand by reading a report but really life changing to see the photos in person. It is beautiful to hear the revelations youth have about the actions of others to them but the understanding of their actions. We end this session with honest, deep conversations on how we can always change the feelings we have and how not to let others feelings effect our mood or our bodies. I always ask, "Will you ever see water the same way again?" I am often told, "No!".

Another one of my favorite meetings was a very easy guided meditation, this meeting was at the request of youth as they had been having a hard time sleeping and being able to relax in their new/different environment. Soft music was played and a paragraph from a book is read to help the youth visualize scenarios. For example, "you are walking along the beach, how does it feel, how does it taste, what do you see, what do you smell, as you start to walk you see someone and as you get closer they say something very important to say to you that will change your life for the better, who is the person, where are they from and what did they say." This reading is the bases with a little more added to set the setting and normally takes 10-15 minutes. For the rest of the session youth talk about their vision and how they felt. The last session I had 26 youth and all of them had wonderful stories. One youth shared that is grandfather whom had passed when he was little told to him on the beach telling him that he was disappointed in his actions, his grandfather asked him to make him proud and gave him a few ideas on how to do it. Another young man stated that his person on the beach was God telling him to love his family and to work hard in life. What made this session so life changing was the youth as a whole, not only did they share their stories but they encouraged each other to stay focused on their programs. I had not tried this type of session with youth before due to the emotional thoughts that can happen but I was really glad I did, when I returned to the next meeting several shared how they had improved their thoughts and how their brothers have reminding them of their stories: one young man said that he often closes his eyes and smells the beach that it helps him response to others when he is upset. Another young man said he often remembers what he was told and has been doing very well with his program. Several of these youth shared they have been able to sleep better and asked if I would be able to do more sessions with a few minutes of relax time. After speaking with the staff I was told they also saw a few difference in the named youth.

Due to the uniqueness of our Mobile AMP, youth that are able to attend join our Des Moines Youth Council Meetings. The successes are shared with the Des Moines Youth Council.

## **Section 2: MEASURE OF COLLABORATION**

The Mobile AMP has had great success with making connections. One of my favorites is the US Postal Services. The US Postal Service often has books that they are not able to deliver so they donate them and we are able to take them to places such as the Woodward Academy and Juvenile Detention Center. Most of these are American Literature have a range of titles and also include How To Do, books.

One guest speaker was a lady that does Garden Art she offered to do a session where the youth would paint positive rock and they would add them to the garden where they reside in. The Class was very excited and made several rock decorations. The reaction was that they really wanted to do another session like this one because they were only three in the class and they wanted to share the experience with the others that normally attend.

Jake is former foster care youth and spent a good amount of this time at the Woodward Academy. Jake often attends the meeting at Woodward and lead the sessions, the response of these youth are that they are often amazed because Jake has been all over the US and shared his experience with others. The young men really enjoy when he returns.

Hakeem is a young man that resided in Annie Whittenmeyer several years ago, and his been very instrumental in leading sessions for Foster care training, Lobbying, Mobile and Des Moines Councils. The youth really enjoy his perspectives as he is only 20, and is currently looking for employment to work with these youth.

St. Mary's assists us with providing snacks for many of our meetings this really helps with keeping the Mobile Food Budget low when possible, as it pulls from the Des Moines budget.

4H has been a new one this year as we have presented at their cultural camps. Due to this connection we are now adding a few of these sessions to our AMP Council sessions rotations.

Currently I am on the Friends of Civil Rights Boards, Mosaic Diversity Conference, Women of Color Network, Iowa Girls Juvenile Initiative.

Interfaith Green Coalition thought me different way to get youth connected to gardening even when they might not have one.

Friends of Civil Rights Board Training thought me how to properly be on the board and the goals of the organization.

Commonbond Communities had a series of several trainings (5) that focused on youth setting goals and working with families in general.

The power of poverty was amazing training on poverty.

Annual Symposium on Civil Rights, various issues on civil right affecting other in today's world.

Regional Foods Networking System gave information on the system that work towards ending the food crisis.

IFA Housing Conference shared information on various barriers of low income housing.

### **Section 3: MEASURE OF SERVICE CAPACITY**

The mobile council has had a total of 3 youth that have been interview by Channel 13, Channel 8, KOWI Radio Station, The Iowa Bystander, The NAACP. These interviews where on law changes that effected the youth personally. One of these youth returned to his treatment facility (for employment)and is awaiting a position working with youth.

Two of our youth that are in a relationship where for some time homeless after being out of placement Mobile Facilitating worked with these youth and on finding employment, housing and connecting with college resources. They have successfully been living in housing for one year now; currently they volunteer with AMP and share their stories.

One Dream that I have to reach out to other youth groups throughout Des Moines and with the hopes of finding more youth that may qualify for our groups in various surrounding areas. I would like these youth to become more involved with their local groups. I would also like to see a mentor ship that allows a greater connection with other youth.

#### **Ottumwa:**

*Submitted by Holly Dommer*  
Ottumwa AMP Council  
Ottumwa, IA  
Facilitator: Holly Dommer

### **Section 1: MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE**

The Ottumwa AMP Council meets at two locations; American Home Finding Association's main office, and the Ottumwa High School. The High School AMP meets on the High School early out Wednesday in the middle of the month. Both groups are called the Ottumwa AMP Council. Holly Dommer continues to oversee the program. Joe Schulz is the co-facilitator of both groups and has been involved for about 1 ½ years. Joe serves as a great male role model for the youth.

Holly would like to recognize several people who continue to volunteer and provide consistent support to the Ottumwa AMP Council. Troy Seeley –JCO Supervisor attends AMP meetings when time allows and is a great role model for the youth and Kami Millikin, the Welcome Center Coordinator at Ottumwa High School. Diana Price, who over sees the Teen Health Center at the Ottumwa High School, attends the High School meetings and has a good connection with the youth which we serve.

Our organization has also been lucky enough to partner with a local women’s’ group in our community. They have been generous enough to provide meals for our AMP meetings, as well as, other needed items as they arise.

The most exciting meeting the Ottumwa Chapter had in the last six months was when we got to travel to Day on the Hill, at the Capitol in Des Moines. Our representative Mary Gaskill took the time to meet with our group and talk to the youth individually. The youth learned an incredible amount of history regarding the Capital, as well as, how the government process works, which many of them admitted they had not learned previously. They felt like they were heard while they were at the Capitol!

The second most impactful meeting was when Joe led the session on “how to get out of a bad situation”. This led to some very interesting discussion on some of the decisions the youth had made initially, that had gotten them into difficult situations. Youth were able to work together to come up with workable ways to get out of hypothetical future bad situations. This meeting was insightful to see what youth think are “bad” situations and how they were at problem solving.

## **Section 2: MEASURE OF COLLABORATION**

The partnering agency is American Home Finding Association. Meetings are held at both American Home Finding as well as Ottumwa High School, and the CEO works closely with the facilitators to make sure that the programing is going to be successful in the community.

Both Joe and I, along with a small AMP facilitator’s committee, were able to partner with Indian Hills Community College to create a Spring AMP Conference, “Plugged in and Charging”. Youth from the other AMP statewide councils were able to come to the college to immerse themselves into the college experience, as well as, work with many facilitators to learn about becoming successful adults. Many partnering organizations were part of this day including, IASN, Iowa Financial Aid, JCS, and DHS. Youth also received the opportunity to meet the college professors in the different fields offered at the college.

This AMP facilitator continues to meet with local new JCO’s to educate them about the AMP Program. Several of them then have attended or presented to the AMP groups in the past. The JCO supervisor, Troy Seeley, continues to be a supportive partner to AMP and attends the meetings on a regular basis.

This facilitator continues to spend time at the local High School, educating staff including teachers, counselors and administration regarding the AMP program. The High School is allowing the Ottumwa AMP group to meet at the High School once a month. This facilitator meets one on one with new OHS students that fit the criteria for AMP and personally invites them to attend meetings and shares what the program is about.

This facilitator also continues to educate the local DHS staff, as well as, local shelter staff regarding the AMP program and meeting times and dates. Emails are sent out informing JCS, DHS, OHS and Shelter staff of meeting times and dates.

Current Partnering Agency CEO, Tracey Boxx-Vass, continues to have conversations with the DHS SWA's regarding how to encourage foster care youth to attend monthly meetings. Getting the local DHS workers on board with the program continues to be challenging.

This facilitator serves on the Transition Committee, out of the Cedar Rapids Service Area, once a month. This facilitator serves as an Aftercare Advocate and attends the monthly conference calls, Provider Panel and quarterly meetings. When this worker attends Pre-PAL meetings, as well as, Dream Teams for youth, information regarding AMP meetings, dates, locations and times are shared with youth as well as, for others attending the meetings. This facilitator also attends high school student staffings, as needed, or when requested.

Holly attended "The Power of Illusion" Diversity training in March of this year. Both Holly and Joe are planning to complete additional training hours needed in the fall.

### **Section 3: MEASURE OF SERVICE CAPACITY**

Since the majority of the council's youth don't have internet access, due to being at the shelter, there have not been many comments regarding the website. One of the continued goals is to get more involvement with the website. This facilitator finds the website hard to update and make changes to. To this point we have not seen a lot of feedback on our specific page regarding our Council.

Chapter facilitators are working on a way to stay connected to the youth in the Chapters. Conversations have been had with the youth regarding communication and they continue to work towards a solution.

The 2016 "Plugged in and Charging" Conference was picked up locally by our local TV station, KTVO. They worked hard to share with the community the event that took place and the youth's reaction to the event. It was well received by the community from the feedback that this facilitator received.

Holly Dommer is the AMP facilitator. Her other position with the Agency is IASN Self – Sufficiency Advocate. Holly communicates with the youth that attend AMP and makes sure they have a transition team in place and that their plan is being updated and monitored. Holly also works with Amy Hamilton, the APLA worker from the area, and attends the youth's transition meetings. In this area, in the last several months, The

Dream Team approach is starting to be more utilized. Over the last six months, this facilitator has been attending more Dream Teams for local and surrounding youth.

Since our Council is always evolving, our top priority is community awareness. We want to make sure DHS is aware that we have a council in Ottumwa and that DHS workers are promoting AMP to their youth in care.

This facilitator is working with a group of Aftercare youth in Chariton and is working with Optime to bring this group of young adults to the monthly AMP meeting. These youth were involved with AMP before they turned 18 and would like to remain active with AMP. In the last six months they have been able to attend a couple of times. This facilitator will continue to work to make it become a reality that they can come once a month.

Facilitators also plan to educate the local community on what AMP is about and the important role it can serve in the lives of young people. Our goal is to continue finding community partners who will provide donations such as snacks and meals for the AMP meetings.

The second goal is to grow our next year's conference so that youth will get to have the full college experience and spend an overnight in the college dorms as well as, have some interaction with the college ambassadors to gain knowledge about a student's college experience.

### **Sioux City:**

*Submitted by Mary Elks*

Sioux City AMP Council

Sioux City, IA

Facilitators: Jen Schaper

Community Support Worker: Shanice Schroeder

Volunteer: Toni Williams (Foster Parent)

### **Section 1: MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE**

Jen Schaper is the Facilitator for the Sioux City Council. Shanice Schroeder is the Community Support Worker. She has been working with our council since November of 2014. Recently, our council has been contacted to meet with several community organizations in our area. We continue to work toward developing new partnerships with local organizations and businesses in the community.

Over the past six months, we have covered a diverse selection of topics. Our council has tackled sex trafficking and drug addiction. In February, we watched, *A Path Appears*. Many of our youth are familiar with sex trafficking and know of friends, family members, or acquaintances who have been trafficked. Bringing a greater level of awareness to this issue provides a better understanding of how to prevent youth from being trafficked. We have one youth in the program who felt comfortable sharing her experience with her own molestation. AMP was able to link her to the resources she needs to heal. Another significant meeting was on developing job skills. Many of our

youth have recently aged out of foster care will be aging out of care in the near future. These youth need to learn how to complete applications and interview successfully. Our Council has been working with youth to improve communication skills, build resumes, and practice interviewing skills. As a result, six of our youth have secured employment and two are currently in the process of applying.

To date, the agency CEO has not attended a meeting. We hope to see her in Sioux City soon.

### **Section 2: MEASURE OF COORDINATION / COLLABORATION**

The Sioux City Council continues to have a strong partnership with the Aftercare and Supervised Living Program. The majority of our youth who attend the meetings are participants of both programs. We continue to collaborate with Iowa Kids Net to increase the number of youth currently in foster care. In April, a youth spoke at the Mini Transitions Conference. She provided information about the AMP program and education foster parents in the area about who we are and what we do. In May, we attended the Foster Care Appreciation Luncheon. A couple of our youth spoke about our council. The audience appeared engaged as youth shared their experiences and stories. We continue to attend SHIP meetings with the Community Family Team. Several local agencies, such as the Hopes Program, Crittenton Center, and Boost Program, attend the meetings. Our council continues to strengthen partnerships with the organizations. Our youth are scheduled to speak at PS MAPP trainings this summer. They will share their personal stories with potential foster parents and provide constructive feedback to foster parents during the training class.

We are currently working with the following groups: PS MAPP, SHIP, IFAPA, Aftercare, Supervised Apartment Living, Iowa Kids Net, Crittenton Shelter.

I have completed training for “Planning for Successful Transition to Permanency”.

### **Section 3: MEASURE OF SERVICE CAPACITY**

Our webpage is up to date and is user-friendly. We have received a few referrals from our website but hope to increase that number this year.

Recently, our AMP Council took a field trip to the Sioux City Art Museum to view the exhibit, Art of the Brick. It was an exhibition featuring large-scale sculptures created from Lego bricks. Youth appreciated the time and energy the artist spent constructing the artwork. Briar Cliff University also had student artwork on display. Youth were able to meet with the student artists and speak with them about their art pieces.

Many of our youth are living independently or preparing to age out of foster care. Our council is working to build independent life skills. During the past few months, youth have learned cooking and budgeting skills, and youth have learned to complete job applications. Our council will continue teaching skills to youth to promote a successful transition out of foster care.

The Sioux City AMP Council continues to prosper. We have a solid base of attendees who participate at each meeting. Our goal is to build on this base and increase our numbers. We will continue to work with Iowa Kids Net, Crittenton Shelter, SAL and Aftercare Services. We will continue to reach out to foster parents by speaking at PS MAPP trainings and representing AMP at community functions. The Sioux City Council will also develop a stronger presence with our local legislatures in order to advocate for youth issues. Sioux City AMP will build on the work we have accomplished to grow our

relationships with community and promote our council in an effort to serve our area youth effectively.

**Waterloo:**

*Submitted by Jessica Christman*

Waterloo AMP Council

Waterloo, IA

Facilitator: Jessie Christman

**Section 1: MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE**

The Waterloo AMP Council has met twice monthly over the last quarter (with the exception of our second January meeting that was cancelled due to the weather). We meet at a central location that is easily accessible and accommodating to our needs. Grace Lutheran Church also hosts the Iowa Foster and Adoptive Parents Association (IFAPA) meetings once per month at the same time as AMP's first meeting of every month (during the school year). The schedule was intentionally coordinated in order to encourage parents and guardians attending the IFAPA meeting to bring their age-appropriate youth to attend our meetings.

Throughout this last quarter, our meetings have averaged 10 youth per meeting; with a range of 2 to 16 and a median of 11 participants. Our members continue to consist of youth from local residential facilities. The residents of the Exodus pre-independent living program on the Lutheran Services of Iowa Bremwood campus consistently participate, as well as the residents of the Supervised Apartment Living program at Quakerdale. Unfortunately, Quakerdale recently announced the closing of the SAL program due to funding concerns. These residents were integral members of the Waterloo council and will be dearly missed. My efforts to recruit community members from family foster homes and other guardian/ relative/ adoptive placements have been met with little success. I attended many events in conjunction with Iowa KidsNet (see below) and accepted many opportunities to educate the community regarding AMP. While several foster youth and families expressed interest and even RSVP'd to meetings, they were unable to actually attend. I will continue these efforts and brainstorm creative recruitment techniques with my AMP members, as well as fellow AMP facilitators from across the state.

We had many impactful and successful topics and speakers during this reporting period, however two of my favorite AMP meetings were when a group called Art Can Help visited us in May and when we addressed the topic of dating and domestic violence in June. Art Can Help is a relatively new group consisting of University of Northern Iowa students and faculty and led by Professor Alex Dooley. Their mission is to educate the community on the therapeutic properties of art. They hope to accomplish this by leading small groups through an art exercise that involves elements of meditation, non-verbal communication, team work, and creative expression. This is one of my favorite meetings, not only because the art project was neat but because of the youths' response. They were all very engaged and acknowledged that art could be a successful means of coping and processing feelings. The professor and her students

also benefitted from the experience. They shared what they had learned regarding foster care, and the challenges and accomplishments experienced by this population.

My second most noteworthy meeting of the reporting session was when we hosted two speakers to present on dating and domestic violence. Suasha Petroske is a longtime friend of our AMP council. She is a foster care alumna, formerly worked as a Resident Councilor at Quakerdale, was an intern for the Aftercare program, and substituted for myself as the AMP facilitator when I was on Maternity leave in the spring of 2015. After she earned her master's degree in Social Work, Sausha earned a position with Amani Community Services. Amani Community Services is a culturally specific domestic violence and sexual assault agency that specializes in serving African Americans in Black Hawk and Linn Counties though they also provide counseling, outreach, and advocacy services to any population seeking assistance in the education, prevention, and intervention of dating and domestic violence in their service area. Sausha presented on the statistics of dating and domestic violence, how to recognize it, how to assist others if they suspect they are in need of help, and how to recognize our own relationships as healthy versus unhealthy. There was a lot of discussion that followed with many questions. I observed many covert glances which led me to believe that some of the AMP members in attendance were learning new things about their relationships and those of friends/ family. After Suasha presented the facts, Brittany Murphy, an intern with the Department of Human Services and a Senior at the University of Northern Iowa, spoke about her personal experience with sexual abuse as a minor, and then as the victim of a very abusive relationship as a young adult. The youth were hanging on her every word! She was incredibly brave in sharing her experiences and amazingly insightful in being able to recognize her continued struggles while presenting practical coping skills and ways she is working towards healing.

The Four Oaks CEO, Anne Gruenewald did not attend an AMP meeting during this reporting period.

Waterloo AMP's legislative involvement during the 2016 session was very successful! When comparing to year's past, we were both able to travel to Des Moines for the AMP Day on the Hill, as well as speak to all of our local representatives while there! Two years ago, we were unable to travel to the Capital due to the weather. Last year, we made the trip but found that none of our representatives were present or available to speak. This year, myself, two staff members, and five youth were able to introduce ourselves, AMP, and the 2016 AMP Legislative Agenda to all of our local representatives (Rep. Rogers, Rep. Kressig, Rep. Berry, Rep. Brown-Powers, Senator Danielson, and Senator Dotzler). Each appeared to be very impressed with our youth and AMP's efforts, and each also spoke favorably of our legislative items. Our trip was followed up by letters to thank them for their time, as well as to invite them to attend an AMP meeting when they were in town. We received e-mails back from most and a letter from Representative Berry.

Regarding legislative endeavors, one of our AMP members, Laticia Aossey earned the opportunity to shadow Congressman Rod Blum in Washington D.C. for a week through

her involvement with FosterClub All-Stars. Laticia was able to learn lobbying skills and of the inner-workings of government while also educating Representative Blum on the struggles and plight of youth in care. Laticia is travelling for the summer but will share her experience with the rest of the Waterloo AMP members when she returns in the Fall.

## **Section 2: MEASURE OF COLLABORATION**

AMP has collaborated with Iowa KidsNet in an effort to recruit local foster families and encourage them to consider hosting teenagers. I serve on a task force sponsored by Iowa KidsNet and lead by Bambi Schrader. In this role, I represent the needs of AMP and coordinate AMP member attendance at outreach events. During this reporting period, AMP attended the Waverly Family Fun Fest in April and the My Waterloo Days festival in June in collaboration with Iowa KidsNet.

AMP continues to hold their meetings on the same schedule as the Waterloo IFAPA chapter in an effort to encourage foster parents to bring their teens to the AMP meetings. I also submit monthly AMP updates to be included in the local IFAPA newsletter. The local IFAPA liaison, Gwen Timmerman is very receptive to AMP and open to collaborating. In fact, through her exposure to AMP, she was encouraged to accept a foster teen and long-time AMP member into her home! In June, I presented at an IFAPA Transition Mini Conference on AMP and transitioning out of care. Four AMP members were in attendance. We recruited three local foster families to bring their teens to future AMP meetings.

Waterloo AMP council members did not have many opportunities for speaking events during this reporting period. We were invited to a PS Mapp Class in May. I spoke on behalf of AMP as unfortunately, none of the AMP members were available to attend with me. The class attendees had many questions regarding welcoming teens into their homes. They appeared to be very interested in our accomplishments. At the IFAPA Transition Mini Conference, there were four AMP members in attendance. After my presentation, I invited them to answer questions or share any input. The youth declined to participate. The audience again, seemed very interested in what we have accomplished and in our mission. Three youth and their foster families approached me after to get more information on attending our meetings. They seemed very enthusiastic!

I participate in the following boards as a representative of AMP:

- Black Hawk County Transition Advisory Board (meets once per month)
- Iowa KidsNet Foster Recruitment Task Force (meets quarterly)
- House of Hope (in the near future)- committee to create foster alumni housing.

During this reporting period, I attended several trainings that have and will inform my interactions with AMP youth. I attended “Race: The Power of an Illusion” training on March 10<sup>th</sup> through the Iowa Aftercare Services Network. The training made me more aware and conscious of the additional hurdles that minority youth face when trying to

navigate through life. This is information that I can use to inform my efforts to educate AMP youth on goals pertaining to housing and employment. I learned we need to acknowledge that racism may play a part in what opportunities are available or withheld. On April 16<sup>th</sup>, I attended the AMP “Plugged In and Charging” conference with one of my council members, Laticia Aossey. I learned more about community college degree options and the admissions procedure. I was also able to take what I learned at the “What’s your color?” workshop and adapt it for an AMP meeting where we all took the color personality test. I attended the Kinect Multimodal training presented by the Child Welfare Provider Training Academy on May 13<sup>th</sup>. This was a very helpful training that introduced a modal for small group activities designed to explore a youth’s view of what is meant by physical safety; social safety; safety in flight; fight, and freeze; and how one’s self begins with safety. I can replicate some of these activities with the Waterloo AMP council. As mentioned previously, I attended and presented at the IFAPA Transition Mini Conference on June 4<sup>th</sup>. At this conference, I had an opportunity to meet several other social service professionals from different agencies and discover how they could benefit AMP youth. As noted before, I also met some area families and educated them on the benefits of having their youth participate in AMP.

### **Section 3: MEASURE OF SERVICE CAPACITY**

We have not had any comments via the website from Waterloo council that I am aware of as yet. We have had a few inquiries from those interested in attending meetings or sharing their skills by presenting or donating. For example, we have group reach out who wanted to donate hand-made quilts to our members; the Piece Makers (a group of women from a local church). At meetings, I often ask the youth for feedback or input at the close of our meetings. The youth appeared to be particularly moved to provide input after two notable meetings; the one mentioned above dedicated to dating and domestic violence, as well as a meeting where we were joined by Deputy Joe Stafford; the Black Hawk County Sheriff Department Community Service Coordinator. After the meeting where Sausha and Brittany presented on dating and domestic violence, the youth thanked them for their time and information, and also shared personal accounts. After the meeting with Deputy Stafford, the youth were very vocal about instances of perceived injustice and police abuse of power. It was my intent that having the Deputy present would help the youth to gain a different, more positive perspective when it came to law enforcement. While I do think some progress was made in that the Deputy learned about foster care from the youth perspective and the youth learned that officers are people too; with families and feelings, ultimately the youth still appeared to hang on to negative personal confrontations, as well as anecdotal and nationally recognized stories.

I had the opportunity to be on the local news, KWWL with one of the AMP youth on May 25<sup>th</sup>. McKenzie and I were interviewed by reporter Ally Crutcher regarding the Graduation Open House set to take place the following evening. We talked about how youth in foster care and out of home placement who had either earned their high school diplomas or the equivalent were honored at the Graduation Open House, planned by the Transition Advisory Board (where I serve as an active member). McKenzie spoke briefly on her personal experience achieving her education goals and her future plans. I

wore my AMP polo and spoke about the additional and unique challenges faced by youth in care when attempted to pursue their education. The segment aired at the end of a noon broadcast for a little over two minutes. I am not sure how many people saw it!

A successful youth transition of note pertains to a young adult alumni who frequents our meetings. Jackie is a young woman who was adopted at a young age. She has been a part of AMP since it started as elevate. Unknown to myself or the others in AMP, Jackie was pregnant. She thought she had decided to put the baby up for adoption but ultimately chose to keep the baby. When I discovered she now had a son, I was able to gather resources to assist her in caring for her son and herself. I personally gave her some of my own items and shopped for needed supplies. Jackie was very appreciative. I was pleased to witness how nonjudgmental, open, and warm the other AMP members reacted when Jackie first came to a meeting with her newborn son.

Other successful moments experienced in our council was when two of our active AMP members were honored at the previously mentioned Graduation Open House. Many of the other AMP members were able to attend the event to congratulate their peers but also in hopes they would be motivated to stay on task toward achieving their education goals. I am still in contact with the two youth who graduated and plan to transport them to future meetings.

A council dream I would like to reach in the next few months would be to participate in more community outreach, community services, and education events where the youth are able to share their journeys in an effort to educate the public. We have not had a lot of experience with public speaking so I would love to have someone with some expertise in that field come and provide tips to the youth. I also look forward to participating in a collaborative effort between AMP, Aftercare, and House of Hope to provide more housing options to youth who age-out of foster care in the Waterloo area.

**This concludes the individual AMP Council reports.**

- 2. Conduct an agency-approved youth survey to measure council participants' satisfaction of overall council operation annually and submit to the agency within thirty days of the end of each annual contract year. The survey will measure participant satisfaction with the council and effectiveness of council projects and activities, including training received.**

**SEE ATTACHMENT: AMP YOUTH SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS**  
**SEE ATTACHMENT: PAAT SUMMARY REPORT SPRING 2016**

Youth & Shelter Services, Inc. Quality Assurance staff has compiled this survey. This survey was completed in May. Additionally, AMP has the PAAT completed by Iowa State University – RISE. It also shares youth voice and input in AMP programming and outcomes. Both surveys are attached to this report.

**3. Develop a procedure for participants to formally offer suggestions and/or register written complaints. Also inform all participants of their right to do so.**

In addition to the open reflection time given at AMP meetings, AMP has a form with instructions posted on our website for easy access. It covers both options for feedback and provides easy instructions to give feedback or make concerns known. In this timeframe, there have been no feedback or concerns received. The forms remain available on the website. The statewide coordinator handles all the incoming comments from the website.

As you can see from the individual council reports, some councils' have installed the feedback and complaint boxes within their meeting site. To date, none of the messages have made it to the statewide coordinator from the council feedback boxes.

Facebook feedback loop (AMP has presented questions through this medium): we gather ideas from the youth with Facebook access to see what they suggest. We ask all participants for suggestions/complaints feedback and then incorporate those suggestions into future procedures. To date, no negative feedback has been received from this option.

**1.3.1.6 Quality Assurance and Program Improvement Activities**

**1. Develop and implement an internal continuous quality assurance process using data analysis, process and practice modification, supervision, and other methods.**

**SEE ATTACHMENT: AMP YOUTH SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS**  
**SEE ATTACHMENT: PAAT SUMMARY REPORT SPRING 2016**

As noted above, Youth & Shelter Services has a Quality Assurance Team that meets quarterly and oversees every program's operation and the outcomes of each program's goal. AMP is overseen by this team and our Special Projects Staff is a team member. The satisfaction survey was developed and approved by the team and administered by YSS, without involving AMP staff to keep results as clean as possible. Once results are compiled, the team is also tasked with giving suggestions for better scoring and all other aspects of quality assurance modifications. This is an on-going team and task. It is part of our YSS CARF certification.

Added to the Satisfaction Survey is the PAAT completed off-site by Iowa State University Staff. The PAAT is completely on-line and is time-consuming for all that take it. Each council is asked to have a minimum of six people to answer the PAAT. The facilitator and one support person equals two responses. At least two outside community people answer and at least two youth voices per council are required. More voices are accepted and appreciated. The ISU staff compiles the results and submits a detailed report to AMP, which is shared with all interested parties. See details below this answer.

**2. Develop and implement a Quality Improvement System which involves input from participants, staff, and collaborating partners.**

**SEE ATTACHMENT: PAAT SUMMARY REPORT SPRING 2016– for the FULL Analysis**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Research Institute for Studies in Education (RISE) was hired by Youth & Shelter Services, Inc. (YSS) to conduct an assessment of the Achieving Maximum Potential (AMP) program. The results of this assessment will be used in reporting to YSS sponsors and/or partners.

**METHODS**

**Instrument**

The Program and Activity Assessment Tool (PAAT) is designed to measure how much and how well a program provides its members a learning experience that promotes positive youth development. The 41 items comprise ten constructs categorized as either opportunities or supports as follows:

**Opportunities**

- Exploration and Reflection
- Expression and Creativity
- Contribution and Service
- Part-Time Employment
- Group Membership

**Supports**

- Nurturance and Friendship
- Emotional Safety
- High Expectations
- Standards and Boundaries
- Strategic Support through Transitions

**After discussions with the YSS staff, the existing instrument was modified in three ways for this study:**

- It was formatted for on-line completion.
- An item related to part-time employment that was not applicable to AMP was eliminated.
- A new construct called Working for Change was created with three items related to development of advocacy skills and involvement.

The final instrument consisted of 43 items within 11 constructs. Participants responded to each item using a six-point agree-disagree Lickert-type scale.

**Participants**

The link to the on-line survey was distributed by YSS staff to the AMP Coordinator in each of the councils in Iowa. Each coordinator was asked to recruit six respondents from their council: two AMP youth, two facilitator or support persons, and two volunteers or community members. RISE provided weekly updates to YSS regarding the number, location, and role within AMP of respondents to date.

### **Procedures**

The study employs a pre-post design using Qualtrics® survey software. The survey was opened to respondents for three weeks. The second administration was completed in April, also allowing for three weeks for respondents to get online. This procedure and process has continued to date.

Please see the attachment for the full report as it is very good. Youth, community support, facilitators, and staff were all respondents and areas of strength, as well as areas of need, have been identified. Staff will be working ideas through with facilitators in our face-to-face meetings.

This tool is in addition to the feedback options mentioned above; the satisfaction surveys; the communication box on Facebook; and the many options listed in the AMP Manual and posted on the website.

### **3. Provide access to monthly clinical supervision for local council facilitators, volunteers, and leadership staff involved with the Youth Council.**

The AMP Statewide Coordinator has a Master's Degree and 30 years in the field of social work. The statewide coordinator is available to staff as requested. Additionally, AMP facilitators and supervisors are requested to participate in a monthly statewide conference call (the second Wednesday of each month) for an hour of reciprocal updates. Additionally, AMP facilitators and supervisors attend a quarterly face-to-face meeting where programming needs are addressed and training may be offered.

Since AMP is subcontracted to partnership agencies, each of the council facilitators and their support staff are directly supervised by staff within the agency. To support the facilitators and the agencies, the statewide coordinator is available for conference calls, meetings, and additional supervision requests, as needed.

Within YSS, the statewide coordinator has regular supervision with Terri Johanson, Division Leader. Terri Bailey, Evelyn Garrison, Jeannette Hamil, Jessica Kropf, Alyson Hicks, Megan Heffernan, Megan Schneider, and the statewide coordinator are invited to this supervision. Any interns with the AMP or Teens Against Human Trafficking (THAT) programs also attend supervision.

Additionally, the statewide coordinator, Terri Bailey, Jeannette Hamil, Jessica Kropf, and our interns meet for program planning at least once a month and we have multiple emails exchanged to facilitate fulfilling all programmatic needs. The statewide coordinator also has email exchanges with each of our collaboration agencies and

consults regularly with our QA Team and Doug (DHS) to make sure AMP is responding to feedback and developing programmatically as needed.

**4. Conduct and maintain records absent of any criminal history or child abuse for all paid staff and volunteers who work directly with children and youth.**

This program requirement is carried out by all subcontractors for the staff and volunteers they have involved in AMP.

YSS has a volunteer coordinator and a Human Resource Department that oversees all the files and safety checks for Youth & Shelter Services. All staff files are checked and cleared before employment or volunteering can begin.

Additionally, all AMP “youth” who have reached the age of 18 have their safety checks run. There is policy and protocol for handling any hits found on youth records. DHS approved this process and YSS Human Resource Staff oversee the outcomes for program fidelity.

**5. Maintain all programmatic and financial records related to the services funded under this Contract in a secure physical location.**

Chastity Schonhorst and Andrew Combs are Financial Specialists working on AMP. All financial records are maintained in the YSS Fiscal Office located at 420 Kellogg Avenue, Ames, Iowa. Tim Carson, CFO for YSS, oversees the AMP contracts and donations.

Records are kept in a locked file in the Fiscal Office. The office is locked when employees are out.

**6. Program evaluation shall be used for all local councils and results will inform quality improvement activities.**

As reported previously, YSS has a QA Team overseeing program evaluation for AMP. To date, AMP has a Fall and Spring Satisfaction Survey administered and analyzed as well as the PAAT administered and analyzed by ISU. Additionally, each agency has their own evaluation tools they may apply to their AMP Councils.

**7. Staff training in cultural competency shall be provided annually. The contractor shall provide documentation that council facilitators and the statewide coordinator attend cultural competency training annually.**

Training on Cultural Competency is attended individually by each council facilitator and the AMP Staff as required by contract. Training certificates supporting attendance are turned into the statewide coordinator.

**8. Participate in an annual all Contractors' meeting.**

In June of 2016, Terri Johanson, Division Leader attended this meeting fulfilling contractual requirement.

### **1.3.1.7 Evidence Based and Promising Practices**

#### **1. Utilize the federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) process and the accompanying child welfare outcomes and indicators.**

Both AMP youth and staff have served on the CFSR review teams and worked in committee to discuss and decide a path for Iowa to take in improving Iowa's child welfare system. From these meetings, the PIP (Program Improvement Plan) was developed. As well, AMP youth and staff are involved on an ongoing basis with each individual outcome benchmark that targets youth/child-welfare, from definitions to a Bill of Rights.

While AMP works to achieve positive outcomes for youth and their families in all areas of the Child Welfare System, the outcomes that are most related to the AMP program are listed here, as well as how AMP works to improve the outcome:

#### **Permanency**

- Youth have permanency and stability in their living situations
  - AMP reviewed and distributed the newly produced Bill and Rights and Responsibilities in councils to assure youth are aware of their rights for which they can advocate, as well as their responsibilities.
  - AMP invites DHS and TPS to each AMP meeting to assist in making connections for youth and TPS, so advice and encouragement have a personal connection. Youth are more comfortable when they know those advocating with them.
  - AMP partners and refers to Aftercare as the youth prepares to age out so stable housing and living arrangements are established.
- The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for families
  - AMP produced a DVD for Guardian Ad Litem to educate and inform them about working with youth to improve family connections and make successful transitions and achieve permanency.
  - AMP advocated for the newly passed law to alert adoptive families if a biological sibling comes into care after that family has adopted one of the children from a family group.
  - AMP proposed and advocated for a sibling visitation law to keep in touch with biological siblings that might be separated in their child welfare placements.

#### **Family and Child Well-Being**

- Children receive appropriate services (and support) to meet their educational needs

- AMP invites the Iowa ETC and All Iowa Grant Specialist to come and visit with youth in all councils to share information and make sure they are signed up for the resources they qualify for.
- AMP partners with I-JAG to connect youth to programs and resources in their local schools. This helps keep them on track for graduation.
- AMP brings in Job Corps to educate and promote their programming.
- AMP partners with DMACC and IHCC in Ottumwa to host support groups for transitioning youth and help them connect to a foster care educated educational advisor.
- AMP hosts graduation events for youth across Iowa and in the Waterloo area; the event draws several hundred organizations and faith-based resources.
- AMP provides a suitcase, filled with needed supplies, for the transition to adulthood/college.
- Children receive adequate services (and supports) to meet their physical and mental health needs
  - AMP provides resources for families and teens to access local resources.
  - AMP hosts outreach events that provide information families and youth need to meet their mental and physical health needs.
  - AMP produced a psychotropic medication video designed to encourage adults to include youth in their health care planning.
  - AMP regularly invites professionals from the community to inform AMP youth related to physical and mental health issues, as well as sexual health issues.
  - AMP is focusing on bullying prevention by sharing information related to how, why, and when bullying occurs and what youth can do to prevent it from happening to themselves and their peers. AMP is working with the Iowa Youth Congress on this.
  - AMP is working to protect our youth from human trafficking by presenting information related to the seriousness and frequency of the problem and how the youth can prevent human trafficking from occurring to themselves and their peers.
  - AMP is advocating and giving a voice to LGBTQ youth in regards to the increased need for safe homes and safe schools.

**2. Align activities with the agency's Model of Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Practice and embrace the Family Interaction strategy.**

AMP works at the statewide level in collaboration with the Children's Justice Initiative about issues and activities related to the Juvenile Court System. As well, many of AMP facilitators participate in Juvenile Justice Committee meetings in their area of the state to identify and address local practice improvements.

In addition to working to improve the outcomes included in the "Iowa Child and Family Service Review" listed above, AMP also works to address the additional "Child Welfare Model of Practice" Child Welfare Outcome:

**Academic Preparation and Skill Development Child and Family Well-Being**

- Children receive appropriate services (and support) to meet their educational needs  
See 1.3.1.7 #1.
  - And so much more – if the youth asks, AMP facilitators and staff seek out the resource.

### **To Support Family Interaction**

- AMP provides education on relationships (what is healthy and what is not) for the youth to self-apply in their own situations as AMP is not a therapy group.
- AMP gladly connects anyone to community resources both in person and on our website
- AMP facilitators have been mediators at times with youth and their foster families as the facilitators are well-trained in foster care issues.
- Through the review of the Rights and Responsibilities Bill, AMP youth are aware of their right to life-long family connections. They are now advocating for themselves if visits with parents and siblings are not occurring, in situations where safety is not the issue.
- AMP has partnered with Parent Partners to advocate for healthy connections.
- AMP provides training (group and individual) to foster/adoptive parents, as requested, on teen and transitioning issues. AMP wants all teens to have access to resources and life-long success so we help by sharing information and making connections.

**AMP also works to achieve the goals and outcomes included in the “Iowa’s Blueprint for Forever Families 2011” in the following key areas, including how AMP works to improve the outcome:**

### **Family and Youth Engagement**

- AMP works closely with IFAPA in identifying, developing, and offering needed foster parent training to better serve foster care youth. Specifically during the last year, Normalcy training has been the topic of development. Last year it was the LGBTQ training developed by AMP offered to foster parents.
- AMP works collaboratively with IFAPA and Iowa KidsNet.
- Websites are linked for additional resources.
- AMP staff writes articles for their newsletters.
- AMP advertises in their newsletters and Weekly Word.
- AMP facilitators are trainers with IFAPA and we host AMP on the same times/dates, etc., for the convenience of the family.
- AMP added the Iowa KidsNet logo and number at the end of our LGBT video for recruitment.
- AMP offers youth to provide their voice to those who are looking for information on foster care and adoption.
- AMP makes youth available for all agencies to visit with and survey to gather youth voices – IFAPA and Iowa KidsNet use this service well.
- And so much more – if the youth asks, AMP facilitators and staff seek out the resource.

### **Transitioning to Adulthood**

- AMP meetings focus on life skill development and connecting them to their community. The youth identify the skills they do not have and we seek out the people they need to meet to get the knowledge they are missing.
- AMP makes referrals to all kinds of resources like their TPS, PAL, Aftercare, Opportunity Passport, all secondary educational resources.
- AMP works closely with the Aftercare Program to assist youth in a successful transition to adulthood as they age out of foster care. Aftercare advocates are guest speakers in all locations so youth can meet them.
- AMP also encourages and makes referrals for pre-PAL.
- AMP uses the TIP book for job skills and resource building.
- AMP provides a well-filled suitcase to transitioning youth when grant funds allow us to purchase and pack the bags. Over \$300 of needed supplies are put into that suitcase, including an invitation to AMP if they are not currently attending.
- AMP included Aftercare youth as our paid mentors for Variety AMP Camp as they are the voice of success and they have credibility.
- AMP included TLP mentors in Variety AMP Camp as well. Programming was for them and by them in many ways as life-skill building was the focus.
- AMP has guest speakers in to share about safe sex, relationship building, and healthy connections to others.
- AMP connects the youth to furniture, dishes, and other household needs.
- And so much more – if the youth asks, AMP facilitators and staff seek out the resource.

### **3. Develop a program which reflects the racial, cultural, ethnic diversity of youth in Foster Care.**

All AMP Councils reflect the diversity of youth in Foster Care, depending where each council is located in the state. Urban councils are more diverse because their members come from cities where the population consists of multiracial youth and varied cultures depending on the location within the state. AMP is open to any youth who has had system involvement.

AMP continues to expand our website by making pages for specific populations. Each time a youth requests more information, AMP staff advocate for it for the youth.

All AMP Facilitators do attend a minimum of one Cultural Competency Training each year. Some of the facilitators have many hours under this training heading. It is something we are all very aware of and we seriously work to reach out to everyone.

AMP is currently working with an advocate to bring a sweat lodge to the youth at the STS if the program is approved. The provider of this program involved the Ames and Des Moines Councils last year in the Pearl Project uniting the Native cultures with us. This provider also has plans to do reciprocal drawings between a youth and a senior

citizen in order for both to learn appreciation of the other. This programming will begin in August or September 2016.

Also, answered in Section 1.3.1.2, answers 1 and 2.

**4. Develop a program which provides access to youth from all levels of Foster Care.**

AMP is structured using local agencies who are already connected to shelter, residential, treatment, group care, foster/adoptive parents and kinship providers. The employees of the local agencies all work with youth in the placements previously listed so they can refer teens to the AMP program on their caseloads. Several agencies also subcontract for Aftercare and PAL services with YSS and this reaches the youth age 18–21.

Also, answered in Section 1.3.1.2, answers 1 and 2.

**5. Promote significant adult relationships by involving foster parents, biological parents, and other adults as appropriate.**

See response in Section 1.3.1.2, answers 1 and 2.

AMP meetings are open to all adults as long as the adults have completed the necessary paperwork (safety checks) if they will be attending long-term. AMP invites adults to share with and meet youth as we believe that with each meeting comes increased mutual understanding and acceptance. This promotes more adult relationships.

AMP has reached out to both the Iowa Foster and Adoptive Parent Association and Iowa KidsNet Project to educate, offer training, and offer articles/advertisements. AMP has hosted informational tables at their conferences and attended their community based events. AMP has submitted articles to the IFAPA newsletter and those are printed when space allows.

AMP youth developed an educational DVD, LOVE INTERRUPTED, about disrupting adoptions with a goal of decreasing the number of disruptions happening in Iowa. Eleven youth participated as well as four foster parents, three workers and artists aplenty.

AMP completed YOUTH TRANSITIONING TO ADULTHOOD DVD for the DHS transitional planning specialist's training.

MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES DVD was completed to fulfill a component of the CFSR requirement. It is to encourage youth to make healthy choices in the physical and mental health care.

AMP has completed a LGBTQ DVD and the digital videos we made with the NY people from National Resource Center for PS-MAPP. 30 to 40 copies were given to Julie Clark/Quakerdale for PS-MAPP Trainers.

AMP youth developed a PERMANENCY DVD that was purchased by Iowa KidsNet and written into the PS-MAPP Curriculum. AMP staff heard that some trainers use the DVD. AMP continues to offer to personally attend a session of PS-MAPP, if invited and available, to expose incoming foster/adoptive parents to AMP and encourage them to consider accepting teens into their care.

**6. Utilize youth development methods and approaches that nurture in participants a sense of competency, influence, belonging, and value.**

AMP youth come from a wide array of racial, cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. All are encouraged and welcome to join. AMP youth regularly share that they feel accepted in AMP, no matter what their background. For many of our youth, this type of acceptance is new to them. Add to this the AMP clothing and the camaraderie that comes with a shared experience, and the AMP youth have a united sense of belonging.

AMP youth are encouraged to express their individuality in many ways, including art, music, stories, poetry and “Youth Yak” to our council meetings. Youth can volunteer to prepare a Youth Yak segment, which allows them to showcase their talent, interest, hobby, or belief during a portion of the council meeting. This is one form of influence; however, on a more serious note, the youth influence each other and the community in general with their advocacy and their desire to make the child welfare system better for all.

All councils begin each meeting with participants sharing “High’s and Low’s”; high’s being mandatory and low’s being optional. This has proven to be an informative part of all council meetings, with youth frequently sharing experiences that reflect their unique heritage and belief system. Many of the items shared have led to requests from other AMP participants for additional information on the topic, often related to religious or cultural experiences, or lifestyle choices.

All council facilitators have been given information about diversity and group activities that help to recognize and celebrate cultural differences in their participants. Further training on diversity is always offered to youth and facilitators at the annual AMP conference; for the third year, AMP participants may attend the Annual Youth Conference to satisfy this training requirement. This conference is free to AMP youth.

The success of the efforts using youth development methods can be read in our PAAT Report and in the AMP Satisfaction Survey Reports. AMP staff use these and a baseline and then continue to build on the concepts at each meeting.

**7. Engage youth in decision making at all levels, to instill confidence and allow youth to develop leadership experience.**

All youth who have been in out-of-home placement at any time are welcome to attend AMP. AMP is advertised through PS-MAPP classes, when foster parents are first getting trained, and through IFAPA, which provides training and support to all interested foster and adoptive parents. AMP youth and staff train new DHS workers about what AMP can do for youth on their caseload, and are increasingly reaching more Juvenile Court personnel. AMP facilitators maintain large agenda email lists, which advertise local meetings to a wide variety of community and system involved professionals, encouraging them all to bring youth to meetings. This is in addition to the multiple media (radio and newsprint) features completed this report period, as well as all the youth speaking engagements.

AMP has made important strides in reaching out to shelter, residential, and group care facilities throughout our coverage areas, encouraging them to bring youth and/or to allow AMP staff to come in and educate the youth about what AMP can do for them. The continued expansion of the AMP website and Facebook page are expected to increase the base of youth who are able to access our services. Some youth are not able to attend meetings, but may be able to access the internet, allowing them to have a voice in issues regarding Foster Care and to benefit from any information published on the website.

**AMP has incorporated the following youth driven opportunities:**

- At council meetings youth brainstorm ideas, discuss options, justify perspectives, and vote. All youth have the same voting power within the council.
- At AMP-CC meeting, the same process occurs where youth voice is shared, options discussed and challenged, and a vote taken. These youth are their council's representatives and they hold this position for a year before the next set is voted in by the local council attenders. Some of these discussions take place on-line.
- Facebook - questions/answers and voting also available here.
- Website - blogging is available.
- Youth decided name, colors, logo, vision, motto, and mission.
- Youth interview and vote on council facilitators and AMP staff.
- Youth decide what topics and activities they want provided at council meetings.
- Youth decide the Legislative Agenda contents.
- Youth decide talking points for Committee Sheets/Legislative Advocacy.
- Youth oversee the application of the rules/procedures/protocol for AMP.
- Youth decide who represents them at AMP-CC.
- Youth decide who they want to address and how they want the message to be presented.
- Youth decide the strengths and needs of all aspects of the system and if changes are needed.
- Youth decide how to be recognized and they will decide the criteria for recognition
- Youth decide by vote on retreats, locations, foods provided, times of meetings, and almost every part of the scheduling process.

- Youth decide “who” to share “what” with and “when” they want to share it.
- Youth write the ideas and sometimes the scripts for the DVDs. Some DVDs are not scripted.
- Youth brainstorm and then write the training points AMP presents.
- Youth brainstorm how to recruit more youth.
- Youth brainstorm how to retain youth; to keep the meetings interesting enough to attend.
- Youth define their own terms and how they want terms used or not used with them. They then take the responsibility to educate others on their thinking.
- Youth are recommending policy and procedures for the revised manual.
- Youth are writing educational letters to workers, JCOs, educators, foster and adoptive parents, and so many more as we educate others about their wants and needs.
- Youth share their culture and their concerns with each other and with invested adults who attend AMP with them.
- Youth select topics and some of the presenters for Risky Business.
- Youth brainstorm fun ways to educate and expose the general public to the needs of foster youth.
- Youth advocate for Variety funds for Variety AMP Camp. Held annually if funding is secured.
- Youth plan educational sessions and activities for Variety AMP Camp.
- Youth are on Foster Youth in Action calls and they are also given special information gathering assignments for this association. Youth gather youth voice.
- Youth are included on most major state-level planning committees and recently they were even included on a Juvenile Reentry grant application committee. This was truly planning from the ground-up and adult-youth partnership.
- More state-level meetings are scheduled as our Iowa graduation rates are not as high as we would like and youth voice is needed to address this. Youth will be critical to this committee work.

This list could go on for many more pages. The process AMP has in place is to ask youth for any and all decisions youth can make. Staff challenges youth decisions by exposing them to different facets of an issue. In short, the AMP process is to provide as many leadership opportunities as possible for AMP youth. AMP program leaders are to provide as many options as we have youth; to allow each participant to gain confidence through success at what they are good at. AMP believes one success is the foundation for the next one.

### 1.3.2 Performance Measures

**Performance measures and targets are included as part of this contract and will be used to assess the Contractor's performance towards meeting the desired results. The performance measures and targets included are the minimum performance expectations. If the methods or definitions in the performance measures need clarification, the agency and the contractor may determine**

definitions and methods in collaboration, with the agency providing final approval. The performance, as indicated below, shall be monitored by the contractor and performance reported semi-annually in the semi-annual report (scope of Work Section 1.3.1.5) and will drive certain questions on the youth survey (scope of Work Section 1.3.1.5.2). At minimum, the results of this contract are:

**1. Performance Measure 1: Youth will develop an improved support system.**

**At least 80% of participants report the council has informed them about supports and services, as indicated by survey response.**

Answer: Of 170 responses, 139 (82%) of youth surveyed rated AMP on informing them of supports and services available to them from very good to excellent.  
*If we add in the youth who marked the average rating (164 of 170) AMP is at 96%.*

**Goal Achieved.**

Source: **AMP SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS Spring 2016 - ATTACHED**

**At least 80% of participants report the youth council, when surveyed by the contractor, report the council staff understand the Foster Care System.**

Answer: Of 168 responses, 142 (85%) of the youth surveyed rated their facilitator from very good to excellent on understanding the Foster Care system.  
*If we add in the youth who marked the average rating (160 of 168) AMP is at 95%.*

**Goal Achieved.**

Source: **AMP SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS Spring 2016 - ATTACHED**

**2. Performance Measure 2: Youth will contribute to improvements in the Child Welfare System.**

**Youth participation in the council will increase during each contract year by at least five percent:**

During the negotiation process, the agreed upon baseline was: July 2011, 176 youth attending.

- Through June 2012: AMP served 2,809\* youth.
- Through June 2013: AMP served 3,399\* youth (590 youth increase or 17% annual increase)
- Through June 2014: AMP served 3,944\* youth (545 youth increase or 14% annual increase)
- Through June 2015: AMP served 5096\* youth. (1152 youth increase or 22.6% annual increase)
- Through June 2016: AMP served 5729\* youth. (633 youth increase or 11% annual increase)

**Goal Achieved.**

Source: **AMP Participant List**

378 (total MEETINGS held) / 5729 = 15.2 youth attending/meeting which meets contract requirements.

**Goal Achieved.**

Source: **AMP Participant List**

**MEASUREMENT: The Contractor will measure participation using local council meeting sign-in sheets and will utilize previous year average council participation as a baseline.**

Beginning in January 2013, the sign-in sheet noted new youth attending.

In FY 2012-2013, a total of 711 NEW youth attended meetings. 3,399 total youth attended meetings. 275 meetings were held. This makes the average attendance 12.3 youth per meeting.

711 NEW youth/275 meetings = 2.6 NEW youth/meeting (on average).

In FY 2013-2014, a total of 627 NEW youth attended meetings. 3,877 total youth attended meetings. 270 meetings were held.

Average attendance/14.4 youth/meeting.

627 NEW youth/270 meetings = 2.3 NEW youth/meeting.

In FY 2014-2015, a total of 1,239 NEW youth attended AMP. Of the 1,239 new youth, 93 of these attended INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS with an AMP Leader so not counted.

1,239 – 93 = 1,146 NEW YOUTH AT MEETINGS we can count.

5,096 TOTAL YOUTH (see above calculations) participated in AMP meetings.

318 meetings were held.

Average Attendance is 16 youth/meeting.

1,146 NEW youth/318 meetings = 3.6 NEW youth/meeting.

*SIDE NOTE:*

*IF WE ADDED IN THE INDIVIDUAL CONTACTS WITH THE MEETINGS CONTACTS:*

*5,694 total youth / 318 meetings = 17.9 youth attending on average.*

*1,239 NEW youth / 318 meetings = 3.9 New youth/meeting on average.*

In **FY 2015-2016**, a total of 1,040 NEW youth attended AMP. 5,729 total youth attended meetings. 378 meetings were held.

Average attendance / 15.1 youth /meeting.

1,040 NEW youth/378 meetings = 2.8 NEW youth/meeting.

**Goal Achieved.**

Source: **AMP Participant List**

**3. Performance Measure 3: Youth Development**

**More than 50% of youth will experience a leadership role during the contract year, as indicated by a Contractor administered youth survey question, "In the past year, has the council given you at least one experience where you practiced leadership?"**

Answer: Of 168 responses, 127 (76%) of youth surveyed rated AMP very good to excellent when asked about leadership opportunities for youth in AMP.

*If we add in the youth who marked the average rating (159 of 168) AMP is at 95%.*

Please see the additional breakdowns of this analysis in the survey results as length of time in AMP increases these numbers.

**Goal Achieved.**

Source: **AMP SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS Spring 2016 - ATTACHED**

**4. Performance Measure 4: Permanency**

**At least 80% of participants will identify a Significant Adult Relationship during the Contract year.**

"Do you have at least one significant, positive relationship with an adult through AMP?"  
58.5% answered "yes". 12.8% answered "no". 28.7% answered "not sure".

Please see analysis of the data in the attached survey to note that length of time in AMP increased this number significantly. New or first time attenders decreased the percentages as expected. 85% of youth attending AMP for more than 6 months do report this positive relationship with an adult through AMP.

**Goal Achieved.**

Source: **AMP SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS Spring 2016 - ATTACHED**

Respectfully submitted:

Ruth I. E. Buckels, LMSW  
AMP Statewide Coordinator  
Youth & Shelter Services, Inc.  
125 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Ames, IA 50010

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. AMP Statewide Map
2. AMP Participant List
3. Plugged in and Charging 2016 Conference Brochure
4. AMP Satisfaction Survey Spring 2016
5. PAAT Report Spring 2016
6. Top Content
7. Content Summary