



## JFCS' own V.P. of Behavioral Health selected to present for Georgetown University national webinar

**Congratulations to our very own Mary Jo Whitfield, MSW, Vice President of Behavioral Health**, who was selected to participate in a national webinar, *Mental Health Disparities and Young Adults of Transition Age*, hosted by Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development. The webinar was created for mental health professionals and aired this Thursday, June 17.

"In 2003, The President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health identified the elimination of disparities in mental health care as a major goal. This webinar addressed the multiple factors that contribute to mental health disparities in the population of young adults with behavioral health concerns transitioning to adulthood. Several issues were discussed and positive actions to eliminate disparities were also addressed," as stated on Georgetown's [National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health](#) website.

Jewish Family & Children's Service (JFCS), with the direction of Ms. Whitfield and President & CEO, Michael R. Zent, Ph.D., launched the **Youth In Transition to Adulthood** program in Maricopa County in 2008 by successfully adopting the **Dr. Hewitt B. "Rusty" Clark's TIP model**. The *Youth In Transition to Adulthood* program serves ethnically/ racially/gender diverse **16 to 21 year olds as they transition from foster care to independent adulthood**.

The program started with two staff transition facilitators and five teens just two years ago and has grown to **12 transition facilitators and over 150 teens**. Additional staff is currently being hired to accommodate the growth. The program provides each teen with a staff member who is on-call 24/7 to provide guidance and support in dealing with life's problems. The majority of participants in this program live in group homes. When these teens turn 18, they often have no idea what to do when they exit the system on their birthday. JFCS' *Youth in Transition to Adulthood* helps participants learn skills that the rest of us take for granted, like how to buy groceries, find an apartment or enroll in college.

Listed below are the four presenters that were selected for this prestigious national webinar:

**Peter Gamache, Ph.D. candidate, MBA, MLA, MPH, RN**

*Research and Evaluation Specialist*

Division of Policy and Services Research and Evaluations

Department of Child and Family Studies, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, University of South Florida, Tampa, FL

**Mary Jo Whitfield, M.S.W.**

*Vice President of Behavioral Health*

Jewish Family & Children's Service

Phoenix, Arizona

[Powerpoint](#) [Serving Diverse Young Adults of Transition Age at the Practice Level](#)

**Ann Capoccia, M.S.W.**

*Coordinator of Interagency Activities*

Child/Adolescent Division

Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Cultural and Linguistic Competence Action Plan FY'08-09

**Marvin Alexander, L.C.S.W.**

*Board Member,*

*Youth M.O.V.E. Member*

SAMHSA Advisory Council

For more information on how you can support Jewish Family & Children's Service and the *Youth In Transition to Adulthood* program, please call 602-279-7655.