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Final Research Report:

SBIR Phase I

Educational Opportunities for Youth in Foster Care:

On Your Way

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Specific Aims

In Phase I we developed and evaluated the use of a CD-Rom for foster youths, the conceptual framework for a DVD and text (for youths and adults) and a Web-based informational system (for youths and adults). This multimedia package is intended to connect foster and group home residents (youths), foster and group home parents (primary caregivers), other caregivers, and professionals (youth serving adults) with information and resources to make post secondary opportunities more attainable for foster youths. The approach uses an innovative, interactive multimedia format in which viewers hear from foster youths about what can be accomplished educationally after high school. The multimedia program promotes use of a website to develop a personal profile and gather information on educational opportunities that are available after high school and that match a user's profile.

The evaluation study focused on computer technology and the initial piece of media development (CD-Rom) for reaching target groups (foster youths and primary caregivers). This was accomplished by testing feasibility with a range of youths and adults and survey data gathered to determine the ability of these groups to access and use computers, the Internet, and multimedia materials in a range of settings (urban and rural).

Several objectives guided our research activities:

1. Raise awareness among foster care youths and their caregivers regarding the accessibility and affordability of post secondary opportunities.
2. Devise a system for disseminating currently fragmented information regarding admissions, scholarship and loan information available to the target group.
3. Develop and evaluate the feasibility and potential effectiveness of multimedia programming in reaching foster care youths and their caregivers/parents in both rural and urban and family and group settings.
4. Gather data on the number of caregivers and youths who have the ability to access computers, DVD and CD-Rom players, and the Internet.

A challenging objective was to determine the target groups access to equipment and the Internet for use of multimedia materials. Initially, we planned on randomly selecting and surveying adult caregivers and youths by mail. However, as described below, our initial experience with adult caregivers led us to survey youths in a different manner. We surveyed youths at two conferences (one focused on the southeast region of the US and the other on the State of North Carolina) and three foster youth adolescent independent living meetings held at three separate county sites in North Carolina. This survey method gave us greater assurance that youths in the 13-22-age range would be covered and allowed us to save time and resources by running focus groups both during and immediately after these events. In addition, this approach allowed us to add CD-Rom "viewing" sessions as part of the evaluation study. These sessions guaranteed that approximately 130 foster youths in the target age group would view and use the prototype CD-Rom.

Product Development

The project team, which included William Griffin, principal investigator, Nancy Carter, program coordinator, and Melinda Medina, youth coordinator, developed the CD-Rom and website in several stages. To begin the team developed a basic storyboard for the *On Your Way* CD-Rom and website. Originally, we proposed twelve topic areas for presentation in two media forms, a CD-Rom and website. As the topics were reworked by the team and educational consultant a consensus was reached to fold the 12 topics into eight that would eventually become main navigational bars on the CD-Rom and website. The eight topics would become access points to take users into areas that would have multiple subtopics supported by extensive databases (to be developed in Phase II). These eight topic areas were further refined during the feasibility study and focus groups, so that in Phase II there will be seven topics and navigational bars used as portals to information databases. During this process, the topics were reworked numerous times to develop clarity and interest for the user.

The team then worked with media consultants at Horizon Video Production and 3on Media to develop the technical aspects of the programming storyboards. This process produced the *On Your Way* logo, two video scenarios, CD-Rom screens, navigation bars, topic pages with summary statements, and website design and structure.

Videos

The project team outlined and scripted content for each of the two videos through an iterative process. The PI wrote the original script concepts; the PI, program coordinator, and video executive director then developed full scripts for both videos. Next the video producer was asked to review the scripts and assist in determining final scripting for site videotaping. The team also developed cast requirements including minority and gender representation.

The PI met with agencies that had an interest in foster youth and developed a list of foster group and family care home locations that could be used for videotaping. Visits were made to eight locations and in concert with the video producer and a foster care program director chose two group homes in Raleigh, North Carolina under the auspices of Haven House, Inc., for videotaping. Casting calls were held for actors to determine a "fit" with the team's vision of foster youth. Tapes were made of casting calls and actors were picked from these "cuts" for roles.

Two scenarios were shot on location, one involving six young men and a counselor playing basketball. The second involved three young women and a foster mother talking in a bedroom while doing each other's "hair." The basketball scene and script had extensive dialog between the young men and counselor. The dialog was centered on one young man's brother who was going off to "school" after high school and existing confusion about his source of finances. The dialog was used to provide information about a federal program that is available to foster youth called "ETV" or Educational Training Voucher Program and to make connections to the *OnYourWay.org* website – by use of the CD-Rom. In the second video, a similar attempt is made by making connections between one young lady's boyfriend going off to school and her (and the other

girls) trying to figure out how he "got money to go to school." The foster mother assists by telling them about other foster youths and scholarships they received and showing them a brochure about the *OnYourWay.org* website. The foster mother concludes the video by scheduling an online session with them for later that evening after they finish (pizza) dinner. The eleven actors used in both videos were four Caucasians, two Hispanics, one Asian, and four African Americans. Seven were male (boys video) and four were female (girls video).

Website/CD-Rom Screens

Once the team had agreed on video concepts a website specialist was brought onboard from Horizon Studios (3on Media). We were determined to create a look and depth of materials that were engaging and state-of-the-art for foster youths. Our approach was to move from initially raising awareness and providing general information to providing users with detailed personalized information for making plans to extend their educational experience after high school. Once this vision was established, the team began structural development of the media elements connecting the CD-Rom and website. First, the *On You Way* logo was developed. This logo will be used as the opening screen on all media materials and as the major identifier of the program.


On Your Way - CD-Rom Version 1.0 – Opening Screen

The CD is intended to develop viewer interest in the *OnYourWay.org* website. After inserting the CD (self-starting) and viewing the *On Your Way* opening screen, the logo fades into a second screen and the viewer is given a message to "please select a video to continue." Stills from *Video One* – Boys Basketball (2:47) and *Video Two*-Girls Discussion (2:04) are displayed on the screen. Viewers click on one still shot and both videos automatically play in sequence. After the videos are completed viewers are led to a Welcome screen. The viewer can also choose to skip the videos and go directly to the Welcome screen. This aspect is for repeat users of the CD-Rom when the program is fully operational.

Welcome Screen

The welcome screen has a rendering of an educational campus (image below) with navigation bars. The bars can be used to gain access to information on a topic. The *"Take the Survey ($$$)"* navigation bar was to be used in our original plan to mail youths surveys and CD's (see complete explanation under *Youth Surveys* below). We have retained this section to use in Phase II research. In Phase II the survey navigation bar will take adult and youth participants to post website use surveys and evaluations. CD Version 1.0 contains general bulleted statements about *On Your Way*. In Phase II, narration, video vignettes, and additional text will be added.
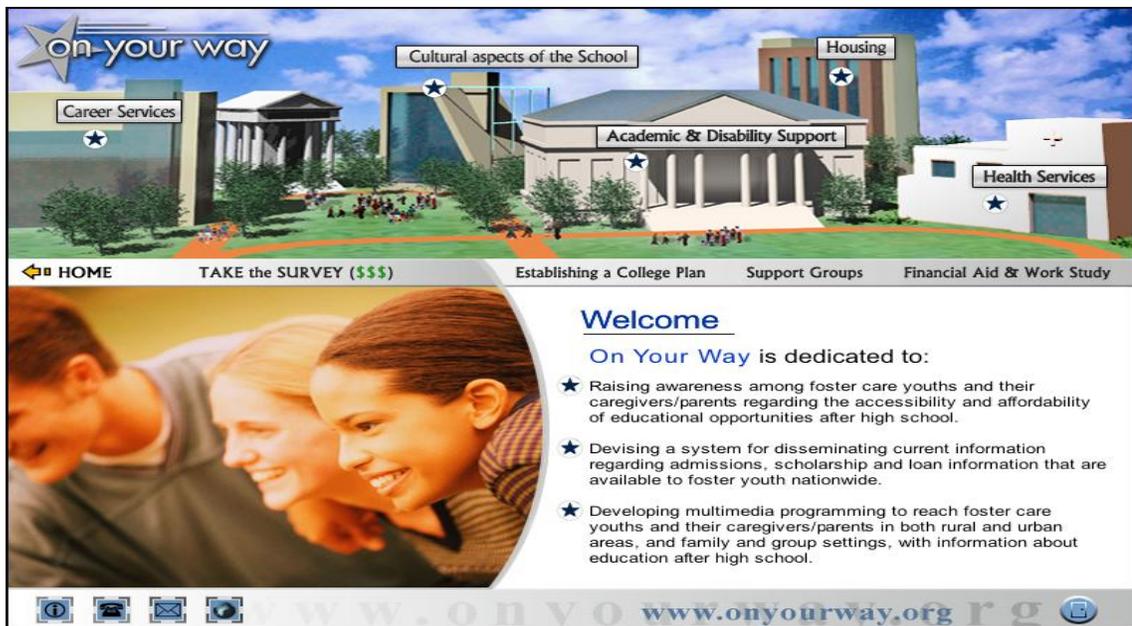
After clicking on a navigational bar, viewers are led to topic specific screens. For Version 1.0 there was general information on each topic and each screen ended with a "Click here to learn more," link to the website o*nyourway.org.* In Phase II, these links will be activated to connect users to the operational website.

The upper halves of the welcome and topic screens change from day to night and stars come out in the sky before returning to a daytime display (this repeats). The bottom row has buttons that lead viewers to general information, telephone and e-mail contacts, and the web. The www.onyourway.org on this row can be "clicked" to go directly to the website. The icon on the lower right allows viewers to exit. Exiting leads to credit displays for ILR, Horizon Video, 3on Media, and NIH SBIR funding information. In Phase II clicking through on a topic page will lead to the website and information supported by extensive SQL 2000 databases.

Evaluation Tool Development

Originally, it was planned that two educational consultants and a methodologist would assist in the development of the evaluation tools. At the point of funding one educational consultant had move to Texas and the project team felt that restricted the consultant's ability to be involved. It was decided that Dr. John Painter a statistician from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a consultant to ILR on other projects, would substitute. Dr. Painter is an expert in the interpretation of education data and has worked with a wide range of education databases. Dr. Painter in concert with Dr. Raymond Kirk (methodologist) and Kemal Atkins (educational consultant) assisted the PI in development of three surveys. Two surveys (one adult and one youth) were developed to ascertain respondents' access and use of technologies related to Internet use, demographic data, and data that paralleled two national studies – PEW Internet and American Life Project (2001) and Foundation and National Telecommunications and Information Administration (US Department of

Commerce - 2002). A third survey (youth and adults) was developed to determine responses to the prototype CD-Rom (Version 1.0) during alpha testing.

The project PI worked extensively with Drs. Kirk and Painter to develop the instruments described above. The preliminary drafts were presented to the remaining project team members for comment and redesign. Initially, the adult survey was developed and mailed to 560 adult study participants (see Adult Survey Summary Section below). Subsequently, the youth survey was developed. During the development period for the youth survey a decision was made not to mail surveys to youth. It was felt that the mailings would place a unnecessary burden on youth to complete informed consents, have an adult co-sign, and return those before they could receive the CD-Rom for use and then payment for participation. In addition, we realized that the website would be very limited at this time (alpha test) and users could become frustrated by the lack of in depth information.

The project team developed an alternative plan. By utilizing the upcoming youth conferences and meetings we could have all the necessary pieces in one place; youths, adults who could co-sign consent, and payments for youth to participate. In addition, this approach would give us the ability to increase survey response rate, set up computers to show the CD, allow greater intra- and inter-group interaction, and more spontaneous individual and group feedback on the multimedia materials. The PI and Drs. Kirk and Painter then designed a CD-Rom viewer's rating/survey to be administered after youth had viewed and used the CD. Drs Kirk and Painter also designed a data base (using SPSS) collection system for reporting study results. (Appendix B - Copies of all surveys and data sets.)

SAYSO - Strong Able Youth Speaking Out

Project staff met with the SAYSO board of directors (22 youths) during the first week of June 2004 at Sandhills Community College in Pinehurst, North Carolina. (All but five of these youths were in foster care. The five non-residents had resided in foster care before emancipating. All were under 23 years of age.) The SAYSO board had previously agreed to assist the project team in Phase I by getting their members involved in the evaluation research – completing surveys and reviewing the prototype CD-ROM.

During the board meeting the project PI laid out the plan for mailing materials to 280 SAYSO members. After much discussion, a suggestion was made to substitute the mailing by providing surveys to youths at two conferences, co-sponsored by SAYSO, and that were to be held in the next few months (July and August 2004). The board thought we would be able to get a stronger youth response and participation by using conference attendees. In addition, this method would allow us to hold *On Your Way* viewing sessions at the conferences. Board members would assist project staff in setting up a booth or room with computers to allow both individuals and groups to see the CD in action. After much discussion the project team decided to change the evaluation plan and work with SAYSO to accomplish the survey research and add viewing sessions. The SAYSO board also voted to create a subcommittee to specifically

work with the project team on post-secondary educational opportunities for foster youth. This subcommittee would also be responsible for providing support during the two conferences. For the project team this was an unplanned benefit. The SAYSO youths were very enthusiastic about the *On Your Way* concept and the premise of assisting foster youths to plan for education beyond high school. As explained below this was a real plus for Phase I.

CD-ROM Disk

In Phase I a mini-disk (3") was developed and tested with youth (see below and Appendix A). We determined that youth liked the smaller CD size, but the overall compatibility with CD-Rom hardware (computer CD players) limited use of the device (some CD players could not play the mini-disk). For Phase II a regular full-size CD-Rom will be used to solve the player compatibility problems and provide for additional data storage – allowing us to further enhance CD Version 2.0. (Appendix A contains a full size CD so that reviewers will be able to play the program on their existing computer equipment.)

3on Media and ILR staff conducted alpha testing during Phase I. The *On Your Way* CD did not have all its functionality, but it did have the core functions and was able to accept inputs and generate base outputs. Alpha testing was taken into the field and tested with a variety of youths in different settings. Originally, alpha testing with youths and selective adults was to be accomplished through focus groups and mailings of CD Version 1.0. Feedback was to be through surveys and telephone contacts. After a great deal of discussion the project team decided to alter the alpha testing plan. It was felt that altering the plan would ensure that we tested Version 1.0 with a balanced range of youths – ages 13-21. It also ensured that we could guarantee minority and gender participation. In addition, it was felt that by utilizing different settings and groupings we could also add a direct and immediate feedback loop. All of this would save time and costs for the project.

Alpha testing of the prototype was accomplished at two youth conferences and one local county level independent living (IL) youth meeting and with four focus groups (one adult and three youth). This was an increase of one focus group from our Phase I proposal. We also had not proposed, "viewing sessions" for Phase I.

The first conference was a Southeastern US youth advocacy conference (Advocacy In Action) held at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel and Conference Center in Research Triangle Park, NC, in June of 2004. The conference had 170 youths from six states in attendance that ranged in age from 16-23 years of age (NC, SC, KY, SD, FL, and VA). The second was a Link-UP youth conference for younger North Carolina foster youths (13-15) held in Hickory, NC. This conference had 42 youths from seven counties in Central and Western NC in attendance. The local IL meeting was held in Durham County, North Carolina and 11 youths in attendance. Two youth focus groups were held in the evening after the Advocacy In Action had concluded it day's activities and one adult and one youth focus group were held during the Link-Up conference. Each conference youth was paid $5 for completing the survey, informed consent form,

and viewing (and in some cases using) the CD-Rom. Each focus group youth was paid $10 for participating in the meeting. Adults were not paid.

Summary of Youth Survey

The ILR Program Coordinator made a presentation at the beginning of each of the two conferences asking for attendees to complete a survey that was included in the "packets" they received when registering at the conference site. Throughout the two-day Advocacy conference and one-day Link-Up conference, appeals were made to youth to finish their surveys and go the CD display table in the lobby to sign up to view the CD-Rom. Participants were told that they would receive $5 for viewing and completing a short post-viewing survey about the CD and website.

Participants were asked to hand-in their completed surveys at the main registration table or when they came to view the CD-Rom (place them in a designated box). Youth were told the surveys were anonymous, that they did not have to put any identifying information on the sheets.

The project PI coordinated signing up CD viewers, making sure there were collection boxes for surveys, and that each youth had completed a signed consent form. All youths who were under 18 years of age had to be accompanied by an adult who had legal responsibility for them during the conference. This made the task of getting informed consent much easier than through a mailing. Each youth who viewed or used the CD on one of the onsite computers completed a consent form before being allowed to participate. Each was paid $5 after completing the post-viewing survey.

The PI identified two groups of youths at the advocacy conference and one group of youths at the Link-Up meeting to participate in focus groups. The groups were held after the conferences had ended for the day. A boardroom was used for two meetings and a church fellowship hall was used for the third. Each youth was paid $10 for participating in the focus group. Each group meeting lasted approximately one hour. The following is a breakdown of the focus groups makeup:

Group #	**Female**	Caucasian	African American	Hispanic	American Indian	Total
1-Youth	4	1	3			4
2-Youth	6	4	2			6
3-Youth*	5				5	5
4-Adult	5	2	3			5
						20

*This group had two adult female American Indians involved.

Group #	**Male**	Caucasian	African American	Hispanic	American Indian	Total
1-Youth	3		2	1		3
2-Youth	2	1	1			2
3-Youth	4				4	4
4-Adult	2	1	1			2
						11

Youth Group #3 was added because the Advocacy Conference had a small contingent of American Indian youths attending from South Dakota. The project team thought it would be beneficial to add a focus group of American Indian youths from the Midwest. Two adult chaperones for this group sat in, but did not participate in the discussion.

Information About Survey Groups*
        In addition to the conference groups three other sites were used to gather surveys.
1. Onslow and Cumberland Counties, North Carolina – The two county independent living coordinators approached the project team and volunteered to use their local youth groups to complete consents and surveys if we thought it could be helpful. We agreed and received approximately 20 surveys from those groups (8 and 12 respectively).
2. Durham County - The coordinator from this county requested that we come and show his youth group the CD and have them complete the follow-up survey. The PI and program coordinator visited this group at an evening session in July. There were 11 youths in attendance. We received both youth and CD post-viewing surveys from this group.
*There were no cash payments for these volunteer groups.

Durham Youth Group **	Male	Caucasian	African American	Hispanic	American Indian	Total
		1	2	1		4
	Female	Caucasian	African American	Hispanic	American Indian	Total
		3	4			7

**Five adults were present for this meeting.

Overall, 153 youths responded to the survey on their experience with computers, using the Internet, and options for disseminating information about post high school educational opportunities. Percentages reported below are based on the number of responses to a specific survey item, which is usually not the total number of surveys (153). If the departure from 153 is more than 15 the N used for the percents is reported. 86 youths viewed the CD-Rom and completed the post-viewing survey. See CD-ROM Summary Section below.

Interest in College and Educational Materials
        The overwhelming majority of Youths responding to this survey believe that continuing their education after high school (Q1) is "Essential" (78.4%), 13.7% agreed that it is important but not essential, 2.7% believe continuing their education is not too important or not important at all, with seven of the one hundred fifty three respondents reporting "Don't Know" (4.6%).
        Most youth report that they plan to continue their education after high school (Q2). Nearly two thirds of the respondents (64.7%) report that they would like to attend a four-year college, 15% a community college, and 13.1% a technical school. One respondent reported no plans to continue his/her education, and 6.5% did not know what their educational plan is after high school. Of those

reporting (Q3A-C) whether someone in their family had attended community college, technical school, or four-year college; most reported community college (54.7% of 117 responses), followed by four-year college (53% of 116 responses), then technical school (45.4% of 97 responses).

Eighty-six percent reported that they would like to receive information about educational opportunities after school (Q4). When ask about useful ways for making this information available 86.6% (of 112 responses) reported via a web site would be useful, 83.8% (of 98 responses) a manual, 79.2% DVD (of 96 responses), 75.5% a CD (of 98 responses), and 68.5% (of 89 responses) report VHS would be useful.

Use of Technology, Computers, and Internet

Most respondents did not answer Q6 "Do you own or have easy access to a computer?" instead many answered 'Yes' to one or more of the subsequent questions. The number of 'No's was calculated by counting only those who answered 'No' to q6 (n=19) plus those who skipped every 'Yes-No' sub-question (n=3). This leads to total 'No computer' N of 22. The percent of those with a computer is 85.6% (131/153), and 14.4% do not own or have easy access to a computer. Subsequent percentages for the sub questions (Q6A-C) are computed using the N of 131.

Of the 85.6% (n=131) who reported owning or having easy access to a computer 50.3% reported having Internet access, 81% reported that the computer has a CD player, and 58% reported that the computer has a DVD player.
In terms of owning or having easy access to a DVD player and TV (Q7), 89.3% reported they own or have easy access to both; 88.6% reported they would rather use a DVD player instead of a VHS player (Q8).

With respect to using a computer at home or school (Q9), 36.3% report using a computer everyday, and a nearly equal percent (31.5%) a couple times a week. Only 5.5% report they never use a computer or that it does not apply (2.6%). Similarly, 29.2% reported using the Internet everyday (Q10), and 27.1% a couple times a week. Again only 10.5% reported never using the Internet and 4.6 % that it does not apply.

Of those responding, 53.6% reported that they go online at home (Q11), or school (27.1%). For those with Internet access from their residence (Q12), 61.5% (of 109 responses) use Dial-up as opposed to high speed (38.5%). 77% of Internet users have e-mail (Q13), most (62.7%) do not worry about being contacted by a stranger while online (Q14). However, over 20% worry a lot about seeing or reading things on line that are undesired (Q15). Half of the youths surveyed reported having rules about being online (Q16).

Demographics

Most respondents reported (Q17) living in a Foster home (41.4%), 28.3% live in a Group home, 15.9% in a relatives home, 1.4% in a residential facility, and 13.1% in "other."   Most were female (68.6%), ranging from 12 to 23 years of age (with an average of just over 16. Accordingly, the last grade completed most typically ranged between 8th and 12th, with the average being 9th grade. About half (51%) were black, (26.1% white), with 14.2% Hispanic.

Summary of "On Your Way" Post-Viewing CD Survey

The "On Your Way CD Survey" is a customer satisfaction survey administered to foster youth during two conferences held in Raleigh/Durham and Hickory, North Carolina, and a group meeting in Durham, North Carolina. Eighty-six foster youth were shown the CD and website and then asked to complete a twelve-item survey. No demographic data were collected. Results of this survey indicate that the format of the CD and website were overwhelmingly appealing to these youth.

One hundred percent of the youth surveyed liked how the site looked (Q4), and would use the CD and web site once completed (Q9). Over 94% liked the Title (Q1) and nearly 83% liked the music (Q2). Perhaps most importantly, nearly 98% thought the CD or website would be helpful to them (Q), and an equal percent thought the topics listed on the homepage would be of interest to them (Q). Again, nearly 98% of respondents would tell a friend about the CD (Q0), and over 96% would tell a friend about the web site (Q1). Prior to viewing the CD only slightly over half (53%) of the respondents reported knowing about ETV (Q7), which is a central message of the prototype CD and site.

With regard to specific aspects of the site, about 92% liked the intro video of the girls talking on Friday night (Q5), and 97.7% liked the intro video of the boys playing basketball (Q6). Information presented (50% liked) and layout of the site (57%) where the most appealing aspects of those listed (Q12). Youths who participated in the CD feasibility study were overwhelmingly positive in their response to the materials. Many youth told us that they did not need to be paid for watching the video and that they were totally engaged by CD, videos, and website. Youth were excited about the multimedia package and looked forward to seeing the full package when it is available.

The project team concluded that it was a very positive move to change our approach to include the conferences as forums for viewing the CD and getting feedback directly from youth. We think if the prototype CD had been mailed it would have been frustrating for youth to use the materials on their own with no immediate feedback from project personnel. In Phase II the beta test will provide participants with multimedia materials that have greater levels of functionality. The beta test will allow youth (and adults) to visit the website, develop a profile, and start to generate personal feedback on education opportunities after high school.

Adult Surveys

Adult survey participants (primary caregivers) were drawn from the membership rolls of the North Carolina Foster Parent Association (NCFPA) and the Children and Family Services Association NC (CFSANC). Random numbers charts were used to choose the names from the rolls. A total of 560 participants received a mailing with a respective association cover letter, ILR project letter, consent form, survey, and stamped return envelope addressed to ILR. The return rate was approximately 24.6% (n=138). An initial mailing of 360 was followed by a second for 200. Each respondent was paid $15 by check after they mailed back the signed consent form and survey.

Summary

138 adults responded to a survey about the best way to provide information about educational opportunities for foster youth following high school. Upon analysis, it became apparent that not all respondents were caregivers of foster children. This determination was made on the basis of two questions: (Q1) the **respondent's stated role, and** (Q2) the **number of children in their care**. If on Question 1 an individual listed 'Other' as their place for living or working with foster children and the listed role was something not initiative of someone working directly with foster children (see "Roles dropped from survey" table in statistics section); and the number of children in their care was zero or more than seven then that record was dropped from the survey, resulting in an adjusted N of 120.

Percentages reported below are based on the number of responses to a specific survey item, which is usually not the total number of surveys (120). If the departure from 120 for a single item is more than 12, the N used in the denominator of that item is reported. Most respondents reported that they either live or work with Foster children (Q1) in a Group Home (41.7%), Residential facility (35%), or their own home (25%). Most respondents (55%) reported that they work with seven or more youths between ages of 12-17.

Access to Computer Equipment and the Internet

Access to a computer was prevalent, 87.5% reported owning or having easy access to a computer (Q3). Of those with easy access, 90.8% are connected to the Internet, 80.8% have a CD player, and 51.7% have a DVD player. Most also have easy access (Q4) to a DVD player and a TV (87.5%), and (Q5) many would rather use a DVD player than a VHS player (65.8%). Nearly ninety-four percent (93.9%) reported using a computer everyday or a couple times a week (Q6) and nearly ninety percent (89.4%) reported using the Internet everyday or a couple times a week with 100% reporting they used the Internet at least a couple times a month (Q7).

With respect to where people went online (Q8) most go online from home (75.8%), and 31 of the 46 responding 'other' or 26% of the total sample. Just over 9% report going online at school and 14.2% from a library or community center while no one reported using an Internet café, web TV, or cell phone. Of those with Internet access from their residence (91 respondents answered this item) most use dial-up (60.4%) and the balance use some form of high-speed connection (39.6%).

Most respondents (47.5%) replied 'Does not apply' to the item concerning how often they used the Internet with one of their children, 23.3% reported using the Internet with a child a couple times a month, 21% reported once a week, 21% a couple times a week, and 6.7% everyday (Q10). Almost half (49.2%) reported that their children go online to use email (Q11). Three items addressed the issue of whether these adults felt comfortable letting their children use the Internet. The first item, (Q12) speaks to the child being contacted by someone they do not know, of the eighty-four responses 57.1% report that this worries them some or a lot. Adults seemed more worried that the children will see or read inappropriate material online (Q13), seventy percent of the ninety-four adults responding were

worried some (33%) or a lot (37%). Accordingly, the vast majority (93.9) of homes have rules about when and for how long children can go online (Q14).

Role of College and Dissemination of Information About Educational Opportunities

Most respondents considered continuing the child's education after high school (Q15) essential (75%) or important (20%). When asked whether their foster child plans to continue their education after high school (Q16A-E) most expected their child to attend a community college (53.3%) or four year college (51.7%), and slightly fewer technical school (46.7%); however about twelve percent (11.7%) reported their child had no plans for college and nineteen percent reported they did not know. (Note: respondents could check all that applied for this item).

When ask about useful ways for getting out information about educational opportunities after high school (Q18) all methods were overwhelmingly acceptable to those who responded: manual (92.2%), VHS (85.1), website (83.9%), DVD (81.6%), and CD (73.8%). When ask about their interest in purchasing a low-cost DVD player (Q19) about one third (30%) indicated they would do so.

Demographics

Most respondents were Female (64.2%), ranging in age from 23 to 69 (averaging about 45). Many of them had post-graduate degrees (25.8%) or were college graduates (30%); the remaining had some college (25.8%), vocational education (7.5%) or high school degrees (6.7%). Most respondents were Caucasian (60.8%) or African American (31.7%), only two individuals reported being of Hispanic decent.

Overall Evaluation Summery

In summary, our original research questions were focused on the ability and desire of foster youths and caregivers to access and utilize a Internet based multimedia program on post secondary educational opportunities. We are able to determine from our survey response that a majority of participants do have access to the technology needed to utilize a multimedia program and the desire to learn more about educational opportunities after high school. We also learned that:

1. Most youths and adult caregivers use computers at home and with some regularity (52/75%).
2. The foster youth's desire to go on educationally past high school is as high (78% view it as essential) as the general population (64%). (Yet we know that in reality only 14% of foster youths follow-thru on these desires.)
3. There is a desire for more information on post-secondary education opportunities in all forms, including multimedia.
4. Marketing – only 30% would purchase a bundled package of materials with a DVD player, but that all forms of media used to supply information were acceptable (73-92%).

The one research question that we could not evaluate clearly was behavioral changes through use of the materials and sustaining those over time. We knew

this going into Phase I and as suggested in our initial proposal and by reviewers, we will undertake a research study in Phase II that is strongly focused on this aspect. Our basic conclusions are that both youths and adult caregivers are very interested in post-secondary educational opportunities and any materials they can use to gather more information. The enthusiasm of youths who participated in the Phase I feasibility and evaluation study was overwhelming. The response from 86 youths and 20-30 adults who used and viewed the *On Your Way* CD-ROM was overwhelmingly positive. Not one youth disliked the program, videos, music, etc. The SAYSO youth advocacy board was extremely supportive as were the social workers, foster parents, groups home staffs and two caregiver association representatives we worked.