

HST.921 Project Proposal

Company Name	TBD
Primary Contact	Joanna Brownstein Student MIT Sloan
Specialty area of interest	Mental health, Public health, Prevention
Project title/proposal	Electronic "Life Book" for Children in Foster Care
Brief description of project	Children in foster care are often moved repeatedly from home to home with very little notice, It is not uncommon for medical records to get lost or separated from the child. At best, this results in a lack of continuity of care for these children, and at worst the a child might go untreated for a serious health problem. I would like to develop a PHR-like central repository of health data for children in foster care that can be accessed and updated by physicians, case workers, and foster care providers. I believe that such a system would improve the physical health of this underserved population.
Rationale/significance	According to the Administration for Children and Families there were 513,000 children in foster care in the US at the end of FY2005. Even though they are covered by Medicaid, many of these children receive inconsistent access to healthcare. Studies have shown that the more placements a child has had, the more likely they are to use the ED as their PCP. One example of how this puts children at risk is basic vaccinations, Many do not receive recommended vaccinations, or they are vaccinated more than once for the same disease since there is no accessible documentation of their medical history. A more extreme example is a child who goes untreated for a congenital heart defect because nobody told the foster parents about it. Inadequate access to medical information places the child at risk, and places an added economic burden on society. Increasing access to a child's medical history as s/he moves from placement to placement should improve health outcomes.
Target Audience	
Goals/Objectives	The objective of this project is to explore the feasibility of implementing this system and to come up with a business plan.
Comments or suggestion for the proposed method of implementation	TBD
Other	We hope that some of you have an interest in working with

us! Please come talk with me after class if you have any questions. - David Darst, HBS 2007