HOW TO HELP FOSTER YOUTH TURN THEIR DREAMS INTO DEGREES

OCTOBER 18, 2016
CA COLLEGE PATHWAYS

- Statewide initiative managed by the John Burton Foundation
- Includes CCC, CSU, UCs and Private Campuses
- Goal is to increase college access, retention & graduation for foster youth
- Provides Technical Assistance, Training, Advocacy and Support for Foster Youth Campus Support Programs
- More information at [www.cacollegepathways.org](http://www.cacollegepathways.org)
OVERVIEW OF CHILD WELFARE

Why

Children 0-17 enter foster care due to abuse and/or neglect in the home.

Who

- 65,000 children and youth currently in foster care in CA
- 8,800 youth in care aged 18-20

Then what

Over 15,000 current and former foster youth enrolled in CCC

As the “parent” the State has a unique responsibility for foster youth
REFERRALS, SUBSTANTIATIONS & ENTRIES

- Referrals: 482,383
- Substantiations: 83,981
- Entries: 32,005
WHERE DO FOSTER YOUTH COME FROM

Factors associated with increased likelihood to enter foster care
- Poverty
- Adolescent parenthood
- Drug and Alcohol abuse

Common experiences prior to entering foster care
- Inadequate health care
- Exposure to violence
EXPERIENCES FOSTER YOUTH FACE

- Abuse and/or neglect
- Removal from home
- Separation from siblings
- Instability - multiple placements
- Frequent changes in school
Children and youth in foster care are **four** times more likely to change schools in a given school year than other students.

Nearly one in five youth in foster care has a disability, **twice** the rate of the general population.

15 percent of children and youth in foster care attend the lowest performing 10 percent of schools in California, as compared to just 10 percent of the general population.

**FOSTER YOUTH ACADEMIC CHALLENGES**
IMPACT OF TRAUMA

- Problems with trust, autonomy, initiative
- Difficulty with independence, intimacy, self-care
- Patterns of intense, unstable relationships and interactions
- Interferes with cognitive development
- Difficulty interpreting and identifying emotional responses
- Difficulty regulating emotions
- Developmental tasks, executive functions & self-development
## WHAT HELP LOOKS LIKE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not trauma-informed</th>
<th>Trauma-informed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The &quot;helper&quot; decides what &quot;help&quot; looks like.</td>
<td>Collaboration and shared decision-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships are based solely on problem-solving and resource coordination, not creating meaningful connections.</td>
<td>Authentic relationships are emphasized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common experience is assumed and defined by setting</td>
<td>It is recognized that people rarely have the same experience or make the same meaning out of similar events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s wrong with you?</td>
<td>What happened to you?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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## BY AGE 24…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Foster Youth</th>
<th>Comparison</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ever homeless</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently employed</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women ever pregnant</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median income</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
<td>$18,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men convicted of crime</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women convicted of crime</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received a degree (2 or 4-year)</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BARRIERS TO RETENTION

- Lack financial and emotional support from a caring adult
- Uncertain how to ask for help
- Study skills and other basic know-how not well developed
- Difficulty navigating college system
- Most are first-generation, low-income students
- Housing instability

Despite these barriers foster youth are making their way to college
UNDERSTANDING LOCAL CONTEXT: CALPASS PLUS FOSTER YOUTH DASHBOARD

Explore Data and Collaborate

Pre K-12 Schools  |  Community Colleges  |  Universities  |  Regional Learning Collaboratives

Education-to-Workforce Pipeline

Select Your Economic Region  OR  Select Your County

Select region  OR  Select county

Early Childhood Education  |  Elementary School  |  Middle School  |  High School  |  Community College  |  University  |  Labor Market

School Readiness  |  Elementary Education  |  High School Readiness  |  College Readiness and Access  |  Certificates AA Degrees Transfers  |  Baccalaureate Completion  |  Employment Living Wage Jobs
FOSTER YOUTH DATA DASHBOARD

Allows campuses to track foster youth outcomes

- Remediation needs
- Financial aid access
- Enrollment
- Campus support participation
- GPA and course completion
- Retention
- CTE participation
- Completion numbers
New users should select “log-in” and complete a request for access. Use your institution e-mail and phone and add the comment “requesting foster youth report.”
DATA: ACCESS

• Financial aid and support access
  • 83% of foster youth receive a BOG fee waiver however only 57% receive a Pell and 10% receive a CalGrant
  • Only 12% of foster youth enroll in EOPS
SUPPORTING ACCESS

- Collaborate with school district and county office of ed foster youth liaisons
- Provide college access trainings for foster care providers
- Host a foster youth college day
- Robustly implement priority registration including outreach to high school seniors
- Sponsor a financial aid night specifically for foster youth in coordination with ILP
- Offer priority access to summer bridge program and target foster youth in outreach efforts
## DATA: COURSE COMPLETION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Foster Youth</th>
<th>All students</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retention</strong></td>
<td>79.05%</td>
<td>85.63%</td>
<td>- 6.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Success</strong></td>
<td>55.12%</td>
<td>69.69%</td>
<td>- 14.57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CREATE A FOSTER YOUTH SUPPORT PROGRAM

Priority access to matriculation services

Outreach to foster youth for EOPS

Offer waiver of full time requirement to access EOPS
DATA: BASIC SKILLS

- First college course ever attempted in the community college system in Math was below transfer level
  - FY: 86%  Non FY: 76%

- First college course ever attempted in the community college system in English or ESL was below transfer level
  - FY: 72%  Non FY: 60%
SUPPORTING BASIC SKILLS

Tutors at foster youth support program

Student Success course for foster youth

Foster youth summer bridge program

Training with faculty involved in basic skills delivery about specialized needs of foster youth
Figure 9: EARN – All students’ GPA in 2013-14

- Earned a 2.0 or higher
  - All Foster Youth: 49%
  - All Non-foster Youth: 71%

- Earned a 3.0 or higher
  - All Foster Youth: 19%
  - All Non-foster Youth: 36%
SUPPORTING COMPLETION

- Adequately staff foster youth support program
- Outreach to foster youth at risk of not making SAP
- Designate an FYSI liaison in financial aid with reduced caseload
- Fund an academic counselor for the foster youth services program
SUPPORTING TRANSFER

Sponsor an annual “Foster Youth Transition Day” to visit local 4-year universities.

Designate staff at Career and Transfer Center as a foster youth point person.

Organize career shadow days and job skills workshops for foster youth.

Prioritize foster youth for available work-study positions.
The single most important factor influencing a positive outcome for children and youth is a lasting relationship with a caring, attuned adult.
HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Connect foster youth to support programs and academic assistance
- Remember that the impact of trauma doesn’t end at the age of 18
- Communicate and demonstrate to foster youth that you care about their success
- Ensure that all eligible foster youth receive priority registration
- Assist students to obtain needed documentation of foster youth status
Make sure foster youth are accessing all available financial aid

Create mechanisms for accountability to incentivize student performance

Identify a point person in each department (financial aid, admissions, disabled students services, etc.) for foster youth.
FOSTER YOUTH BENEFITS

• Priority registration
• Maintaining BOG fee waiver even if on academic probation for 2 terms
• Chafee grants
• FAFSA independent status
• Extended foster care
  • Re-entry available for failed guardianships and/or adoptions
• Priority access to on-campus housing
BELIEVE IN FOSTER YOUTH

“No one rises to low expectations” – Les Brown

- Danger of the self-fulfilling prophecy
- Set high expectations – regardless of past performance
- Consistently express expectation that the youth will graduate from college and go on to a successful career
- Use such phrases as, “When you transfer to a four year university....”
FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit the website for information and to sign up for the CCP e-mail list

www.cacollegepathways.org