



# ***Transitioning Foster Care Youth to Independence***



***Department of Health and  
Human Services***

**Administration for Children and  
Families**

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**&**

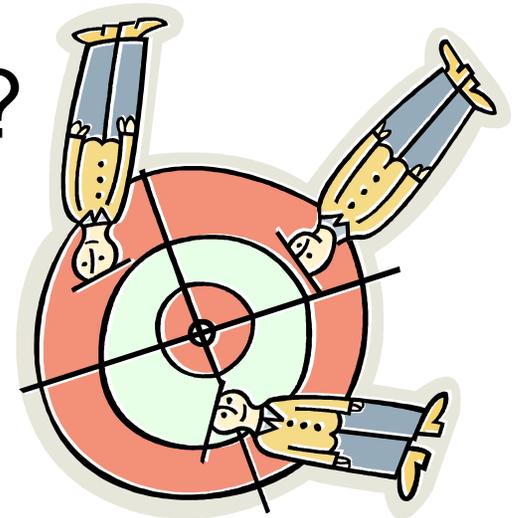
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# Workshop Goals

Defining “transition”  
as it relates to a  
foster care youth?  
Discussing  
Employment  
through holistic  
youth engagement  
Program  
Collaboration





## Sticky notes...take two 😊

- What does it take to employ a transitioning youth successfully?
- What is the biggest obstacle you face in sustaining a youth's employment?



# Fostering Connections

- The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 became Public Law 110-351.
- Main provisions:
  - Promote permanency and improved wellbeing of older youth in foster care by
  - Requiring transition plans for youth aging out of care within 90 days prior to exit
  - Extending eligibility for Independent Living Program services as well as education and training vouchers at age 16

# *Definition of Foster Care Youth Transitioning*

- Age: The youth has attained 18 years of age or older, up to age 21 (as elected by the title IV-E agency)
- AND ...





*Educational or Employment Conditions:* The youth meets at least one of the below listed conditions:

- Completing secondary education or a program leading to an equivalent credential
- Enrolled in an institution which provides post-secondary or vocational education
- Participating in a program or activity designed to promote, or remove barriers to employment
- Employed for at least 80 hours per month
- Is incapable of doing any of the previously described educational or employment activities due to a medical condition.

## How many transition out?

- Every year over 29,000 youth age out of our nations foster care system



# Other transitioning youth that slip through the cracks...

## ■ Runaway and homeless youth

- *The National Alliance to End Homelessness reported in 2010 over 50,000 youth are sleeping on the streets every night in the United States.*
- *According to the Department of Juvenile Justice there are between 1.6 and 2.8 million unaccompanied homeless youth per year*



# Administration for Children and Families program goals for transitioning youth

- Education
- Employment
- Housing



- Do they match your program's focus?



# Questions...Comments



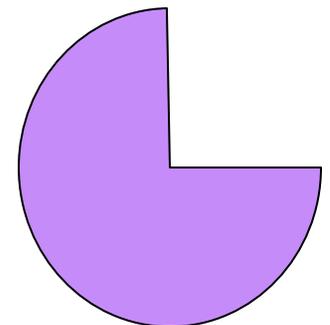
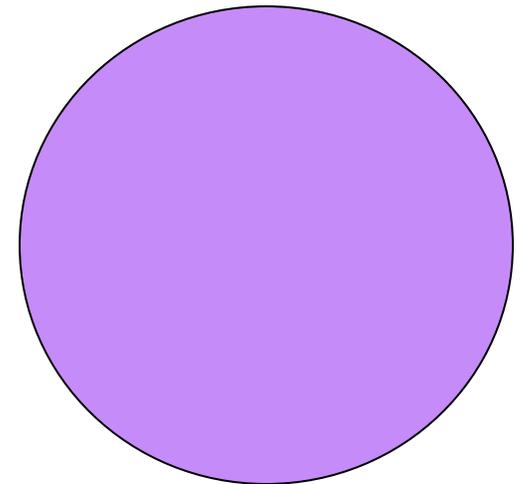
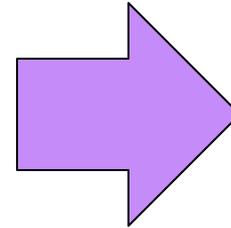
# Youth in transition... what is Holistic engagement?





# What does **holistic** engagement mean?

- Employment
- Housing
- Education
- Life Skills
- Social Supports
- Defining Independence VS Interdependence





# What do you know as program providers?

- What works?
- What doesn't?
- What resources do the youth bring to the program?
- What are community strengths and challenges which influence your work with youth?



# Concrete Supports to obtaining and sustaining employment

- **STABLE** Housing



- Education/Training



# Life Skills



- What are they?

- Communication: Boundaries/Conflict resolution
- Daily Living: Appropriate dress/Money management
- Self care: personal hygiene/health/stress
- Work Life: resume/ interviewing/understanding wage statement



# Social Supports

- What are social supports
- WHY are they so important?
- GOAL: to create meaningful, long-lasting connections for transitioning youth?





## Social Supports cont...

- Mentors
- Life Coaches
- Structured & Unstructured relationships
- Formalized and informal
- Family members, churches, community leaders, volunteer organizations



# Sustaining Employment

- YEA! They have a job!
- Based on the information above what are some key areas to focus on when working with youth on sustaining employment?





# Independence or Interdependence?

- What is the difference?
- What is the goal?
- What do we promote within our own programs?





## Follow-up...

Articles

References

Program Info

Contact info

Making connections



Our challenge to YOU!

Collaboration: Make this  
a beginning NOT an  
END!

