Transitioning Foster Care Youth to Independence
Department of Health and Human Services

Administration for Children and Families

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Workshop Goals

Defining “transition” as it relates to a foster care youth?

Discussing Employment through holistic youth engagement

Program Collaboration
What does it take to employ a transitioning youth successfully?

What is the biggest obstacle you face in sustaining a youth’s employment?
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 nation's 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!