

Partnering with Youth for Successful Transitions

AN OVERVIEW OF MARYLAND'S YOUTH TRANSITION
PLANNING PROCESS: CASA WEBINAR SERIES

OCTOBER 4, 2022

What We Will Cover Today:

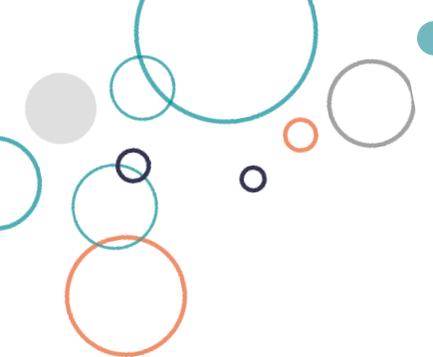
Overview of Maryland Youth Transition Planning Process Updates

Youth Led Planning

Teaming and Partnering with Youth in Transition Planning

CASA's Role in Transition Planning

Connection of Maryland's Integrated Practice Model (IPM) to Youth Transition Planning



About Us

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What words come to mind when you hear....

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“Aging Out...”

“Exiting Care...”

“Transition Planning...”

Helpful Definitions

Youth Driven

- **The** process and planning is driven by the priorities and perspectives of youth. **Workers use** the skills and practices **to drawing** out what is meaningful and motivating to youth.

Authentic Partnerships

- **A positive** youth development and engagement strategy; treats young people as equal partners, cultivates trust, enables young people to build self-esteem, and supports the development of problem-solving and leadership skills they will need in adulthood.

Youth Engagement

- **Engaging with** youth in a way that builds a connection and creates a space where youth feel comfortable exploring their hopes, dreams, and goals for their future.

Helpful Definitions

Strengths Based

- **Practices** that draw upon the strengths of youth, **building on what they do well and where their interests lie.**

Youth Friendly and Inclusive Language

- Use of intentional language to signify shared power, acknowledge autonomy and agency among youth, and invite youth into experiential learning for skill **development**
- **Creates a dynamic for young people to be treated as** equal partners, cultivates trust, enables young people to build self-esteem, and supports the development of problem-solving and leadership skills they will need in adulthood.

A hand holding a blue puzzle piece and another hand holding an orange puzzle piece, with the text "Maryland's Youth Transition Planning Process" overlaid.

Maryland's Youth Transition Planning Process

Improvements to Maryland Youth Transition Planning Process

- Alignment with Maryland's IPM
- Revised Ready By 21 (RB21) Benchmarks
- My Youth Transition Plan & Meeting Summary (aka "the YTP")
- Youth Transition Planning Process Policy
- Increased prioritization and focus on youth-driven and strengths-based practices

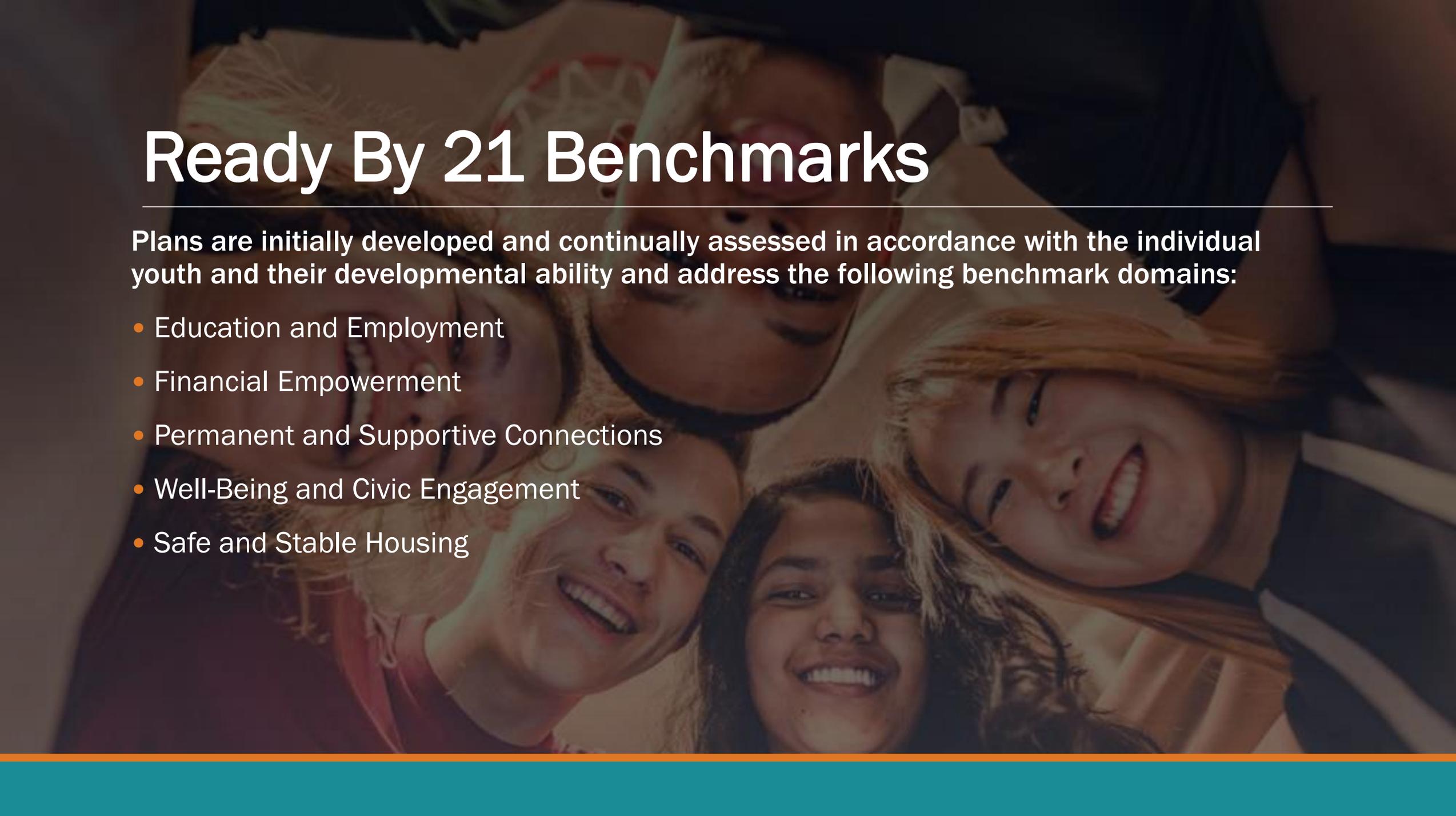




Alignment with IPM

Increased prioritization and focus on youth-driven and strengths-based practices

- Intentional Transition Planning begins at 13.5 years old
- More frequent contact between youth and worker
 - Supports workers in building strong relationships with youth
- Transition Planning Meetings occur every 6 months at a minimum
- Youth driven transition planning meetings
 - Agenda for meeting set by youth with support of worker
 - Meeting location should be in places where youth feel comfortable and safe
- Youth choose their teams with guidance from workers



Ready By 21 Benchmarks

Plans are initially developed and continually assessed in accordance with the individual youth and their developmental ability and address the following benchmark domains:

- Education and Employment
- Financial Empowerment
- Permanent and Supportive Connections
- Well-Being and Civic Engagement
- Safe and Stable Housing

Revised Ready by 21 Benchmarks

Universal, minimum expectations for all youth ages 14 to their 21st birthday

Creates the expectation that all youth will have individualized, strengths-based transition plans

Skills, knowledge, and plans will be assessed in accordance with the youth's developmental ability

Supports youth led transition planning

Support creating normative experiences for youth in foster care

Better align with Maryland's Integrated Practice Model and have been included in the revised Youth Transition Planning Template

My Youth Transition Plan & Meeting Summary

Revisions to the YTP include....

- Youth-Friendly and Inclusive Language
- Meets Transition Planning Needs for All Youth
- Alignment with RB21 revisions and IPM practices
- Creates Central Location for all Transition Planning Information, Goals, Tasks, and Progress Monitoring

My Youth Transition Plan & Meeting Summary

Date of Meeting: _____

Youth's Name: _____ Youth's Legal Name: _____

Pronouns: _____ Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Gender Identity: _____

Pregnant? Yes No Unsure Parenting? Yes No

Caseworker: _____ Supervisor: _____

Agenda Items & Topics Discussed

- Agenda Item: _____
- Youth Transition Plan Domain: _____

Strengths & Accomplishments

STRENGTHS IDENTIFIED BY YOUTH

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

ASSETS, ACCOMPLISHMENTS, AND STRENGTHS FROM THE TEAM:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Youth's Dreams/Passions & Goals

EDUCATION: _____

EMPLOYMENT & CAREER: _____

TRANSPORTATION: _____

IDENTITY: _____

FINANCIAL & MONEY MANAGEMENT: _____

SAFE HOUSING: _____

COMMUNITY, CULTURE, & SOCIAL LIFE: _____

SELF-CARE & HEALTH: _____

LEGAL PERMANENCE AND NATURAL SUPPORTS: _____

Transition Goals, Planning, and Action Steps

EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT

Education Goal: _____

My Education Information and Resources

WHAT I HAVE	
Educational History	
Current Educational Status: <input type="checkbox"/> Attending Full Time <input type="checkbox"/> Attending Part Time <input type="checkbox"/> Not Attending <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	Last grade level completed: <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Most Recent School Attended: _____	
On track to earn: <input type="checkbox"/> High School Diploma <input type="checkbox"/> GED <input type="checkbox"/> Non-traditional/Alternative Program (name program): _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	
Anticipated completion date: _____	

Service Learning Hours 75 Hours Required by Maryland Hours Currently Logged: _____	Grades/GPA: Progress for Other: _____
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IEP or 504 Plan Supports: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure ESOL/ ESL <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Best Interest Determination Meeting Date _____	IEP Transition Plan Post-Secondary Goals: _____ Transition Services Identified: _____
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Community Agencies to Aid Transition of Youth with Special Needs:
 DDA DORS Other: _____

Community Contacts to Aid Transition of Youth with Special Needs:

Name	Contact #	Email

Graduation/Completion Date: _____	Education or Career-Based Incentive Payment Date: _____
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Attending More School After High School? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
Attending a Vocational School or Apprenticeship? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure

Youth Transition Planning Policy Highlights



Legal Information and Purpose



Policy and Procedural Guidelines



Ready By 21 Benchmarks



Transition Planning Alignment With Integrated Practice Model



Documentation



An Overview of Maryland's Youth Transition Planning Process

- September 2013 The University of MD and The Department of Human Services was awarded a Children's Bureau Youth at Risk of Homelessness Grant.
 - Goal was to develop an innovative program/model to help reduce the risk of homelessness among youth exiting the foster care system.
 - E-YTP was created
- From September 2013 through June of 2021, we worked with Mid-Shore jurisdictions in implementing E-YTP in their Foster Care Units
- Since July 1, 2022, E-YTP implementation is supported through funding from DHS and continues to be supported by us at The Institute

E-YTP : How Did We Get Here

E-YTP Goes Beyond Federal & State Standards

- The E-YTP model takes the place of and exceeds state mandated transition planning requirements
- Intentional and purposeful transition planning starts at 14
- Foster care workers meet frequently and consistently with youth to build strong partnerships and prepare for upcoming E-YTP meetings
- Transition planning meetings occur at least every 3 months
- Emphasis is placed on teaming and identifying natural supports and supporting those connections
- Development of comprehensive Youth Transition Plans that are assessment informed and trauma responsive



Adding the “E” to Youth Transition Planning

- Foster Care Alumni report that having a strong relationship with their foster care worker contributed to positive outcomes and greater self-sufficiency
- Focus on building capacity in child welfare workforce
 - Specialized youth engagement training for foster care worker, supervisor, and meeting facilitators is provided
- Provides youth with meaningful opportunities to develop and practice the skills needed to be self-sufficient
- Shift focus to youth driven relationships and skill building
- Development of comprehensive and collaborative Youth Transition Plans

A close-up photograph of two hands holding two interlocking puzzle pieces. The piece on the left is blue and the piece on the right is orange. The hands are positioned as if they are about to fit the pieces together. The background is a plain, light-colored surface. The text 'Youth Led Planning' is overlaid in the center in a white, bold, sans-serif font.

Youth Led Planning

What is the greatest benefit of supporting youth led transition planning meetings?

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A: Youth can provide input on decisions that impact their lives.

B: Youth are present and more engaged during planning meetings.

C: Youth can learn important life skills, such as communication and negotiation

D: When youth are supported in choosing their own goals, they are more committed to planning for them



LIFE IS A JOURNEY

NOT A DESTINATION



Youth-Driven Transition Planning Meetings

Recognizes youth as experts in planning for their future

Builds on youth's strengths and provides many opportunities to celebrate successes

Provides opportunities for youth to practice skills they will need for a successful transition to adulthood

Occur at least every six months for all youth 14-21 years old, and more frequently if youth requested by youth

Strategies to Promote Partnership and Support the Planning Process



Listen



Encourage them to Break Big Goals Down into Smaller Ones



Utilize Solution Focused Questions



Help Them Create a Clear Road Map

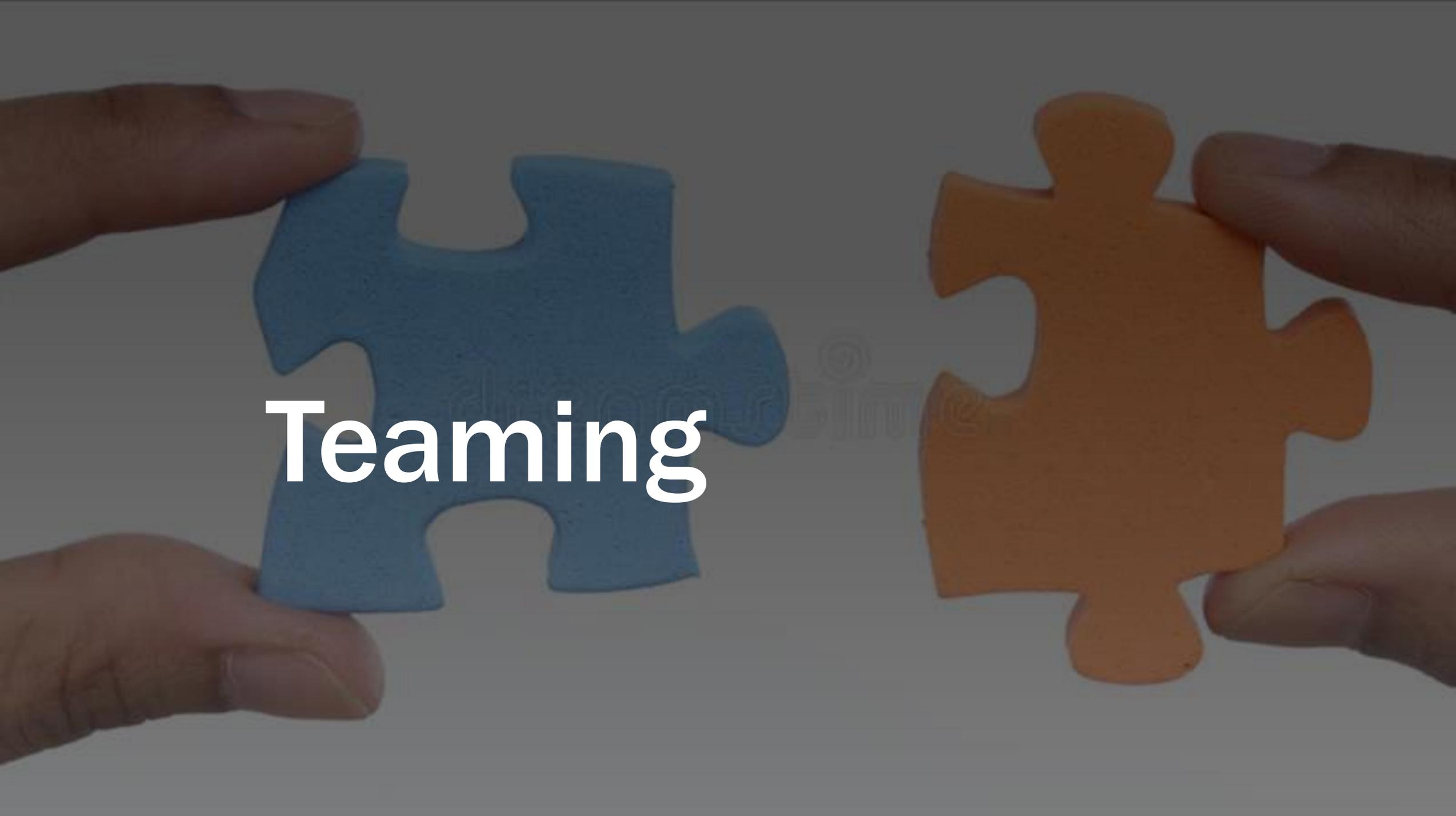


Focus on the Journey Not the Destination

Effective Strategies to Create Youth- Driven Plans

Have I routinely.....

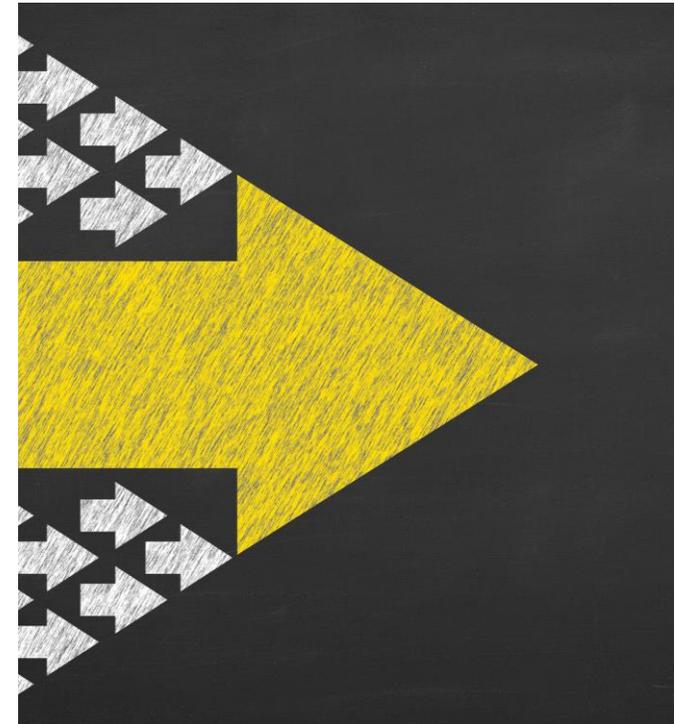
- Met with the youth in a place that the youth feels safe and comfortable to talk?
- Genuinely listened to the youth and included their thoughts in planning and decision making?
- Learned about the interests and dreams of the youth and helped them to identify the needed steps to achieve their goals?
- Advocated for the youth to gain access to needed resources?
- Empowered the youth to embrace their strengths, skills, and potential?
- Role modeled and taught coping and stress management skills?
- Connected the youth with appropriate peer support groups?
- Partnered with the youth in creating a meaningful plan that aligns with their future life goals and dreams?

A conceptual image for a presentation slide. Two hands are shown holding two interlocking puzzle pieces. The piece on the left is blue and the piece on the right is orange. The word "Teaming" is written in a large, white, sans-serif font across the center of the image, overlapping both puzzle pieces. The background is a plain, light gray color.

Teaming

Teaming with Youth

- Can result in successful goal identification and plans that youth are excited about
- Under the youth's leadership, the team brings together the wisdom and expertise of his or her informal helping system
- Allows youth to have conversations, talk through decisions they are making, and build those relationships that they want and need with people they know, who care about them.
- youth define and explore their communities as they identify the types of people, they may want connections and relationships.



When Supportive Adults Team, They...

Trust youth to identify their own goals and needs

Use youth-friendly and inclusive language

Remember that each youth is the expert of their own story

Follow through on assigned tasks

Actively Participate in Transition Planning Process (in between meetings)

Participate in brainstorming during Transition Planning Meetings

Are aware of and share their own strengths that will support youth in meeting a task, activity, with success

Give youth choice in all things, including decisions, planning, and what they want to work on

How You Can Help in Transition Planning Process



What skills does the youth want to develop?

- Support youth develop these skills outside of the Youth Transition Planning meeting
- Create normative experiences for youth

How can you partner with youth in preparation for their Youth Transition Planning Meeting?

- Discuss how to address uncomfortable topics, what they feel safe sharing, challenges they can anticipate, how you will support them in feeling safe and confident

Are you prepared to help youth in the moment?

- If youth become upset, coach them to use their preferred coping skills

During a Youth Transition Planning Meeting...

- Suggest that the group take a break or a moment to breathe
- Encourage the youth to move
- Provide tools to fidget with
- Check if youth would like water
- Give them some physical space
- Remember: Moderate your own tone and body language

Teaming Doesn't...

Bring up past negative behaviors or challenges

Bring surprise topic to a transition planning meeting

Jump too quickly to offer fixes or solutions

Give directives or ultimatums

Get angry or defensive during planning meetings

Dismiss youth's goals, ideas, opinions or feelings, even if you disagree

A conceptual image showing two hands holding puzzle pieces. The left hand holds a blue puzzle piece, and the right hand holds an orange puzzle piece. The pieces are positioned as if they are about to be joined together. The background is a light gray with a subtle watermark of a classical building. The text 'Youth Engagement' is overlaid in the center in a white, bold, sans-serif font.

Youth Engagement

- Youth having choice leads to more interest, excitement, confidence, a more positive mood and increased well-being AND they experience better outcomes
- Youth learn to make plans and achieve goals, which is an essential life skill
- Youth acquire necessary self-determination skills
 - Youth who are more self-determined have better transition outcomes
 - People who are more self-determined are more likely to persevere in the face of obstacles and achieve goals
 - People who are more self-determined are more likely to change health habits and sustain them

What's to be Gained?

Activities to Engage Youth

- Help youth prepare for their transition planning meeting
- Ask open-ended questions and follow-up questions
- Help youth identify the right type of support
- Ask questions before offering a suggestion
- Highlight all of the youth's goals, ideas, strengths, and activities that they come up with. Avoid showing preference for the things that you agree with or feel like the youth should be working towards.
- Have discussions with the youth to help the youth think through and describe plan goals most important to him/her.

Share
Information With
Other Volunteers
or Stakeholders

Review
Resources and
Ask Questions

Reach Out to
Foster Care
Workers

My Action Plan

Next Steps

Resources

Youth Transition Plan & Meeting Summary (YTP)

Revised Ready by 21 Benchmarks

IPM/Youth Transition Planning Process Crosswalk

Tip Sheets for Youth Supports

Youth Transition Planning Process Animated Video for Youth

For More Information

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Questions?

