Reducing the Risk of Homelessness through Youth Engagement and Teaming Among Youth Exiting Foster Care

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Sara Bowman, LMSW
Transitional Planning Coach & Trainer, Thrive@25

Carrie Gould-Kabler, MSW
Project Director, Thrive@25
Christine Abbatiello, LCSW-C
Foster Care and Adoptions Supervisor, Talbot Co. Department of Social Services

Nikki Strong, LCSW-C
Out-of-Home and Adult Services Supervisor, Kent Co. Department of Social Services
Objectives

1. Participants will understand the importance of purposeful and comprehensive transition planning with youth in foster care.

2. Participants will understand importance of engaging youth and shared decision making in the transition planning process and their role.

3. Participants will understand how traumatic experiences and adolescent brain development can impact their communication and relationships with youth.
Thrive@25 Purpose

Thrive@25 is a YARH Grantee:

• Improving outcomes for youth in out of home care

• Reducing the risk of homelessness among transition age youth exiting foster care
Why?

WE NEEDED TO DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT
Thrive: What was the need?

"You lose everything, you lose your support system and everything all at once when you age out."

Thrive@25: What was the Need?

All youth and young adults deserve a safe, stable home and support to transition successfully into adulthood.

Youth in foster care need help to:

• Find stable and affordable housing
• Make and sustain permanent, supportive relationships and connections
• Develop and achieve educational and employment goals
• Promote social and emotional well-being
Transition Planning

STATE & FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS
Federal & State Requirements

YTP

Policy

FIM

YTP
What We’ve Learned

- Youth have to be engaged in their transition planning process.
- Youth need a team that is actively involved that includes the right people.
- Transition plans need to be comprehensive and individualized with goals owned by the youth.
Dreams

- Emotional/Mental Health
- Career
- Living
- Education
- Recreation & Friendship
Teaming & Engaging

WHAT IT IS & WHY ITS IMPORTANT
Partnering on a team

“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.”
-African proverb

A partnership brings together capabilities and human resources in the form of skills, experiences and ideas to tackle common problems that are often beyond the capacity of a single person or group.
Partnership/Teaming Activity

• Think about a partnership that you have had in your life, what were the key components that made it effective?

• In your small group, identify the top 3 qualities to effective partnerships that stand out within your group discussion.

• Identify 2 actions or inactions you could take for each quality you identify when supporting transitional age youth.
Teaming is NOT….

• MAKING A PHONE CALL
• SITTING AT A TABLE WITH OTHER PEOPLE JUST “WATCHING”
• TELLING PEOPLE WHAT TO DO IN GROUP
• WALKING INTO A ROOM WITH THE DECISION ALREADY MADE
Shared Decision Making
Teaming with Youth

• Can result in helping them successfully identify goals and make plans that truly work for them.

• 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.

• Opportunities emerge for youth to define and explore their communities as they identify the types of people that are not currently in their lives, but with whom they may want connections and relationships.
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 youths 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.
How Can Other Adults Support the Teaming Process?

No Surprises! Make sure the young person knows what is going to be discussed during the transition planning meeting.

Be Inclusive. Make space for the young person’s voice and ideas.

Be accountable. Follow through on the action items you agreed to do.

Trust the process. Engaging young people in team-based planning can take extra effort but it pays off in the long run.

Make connections with the youth in and outside of the meeting or planning process.
Communication
Resources

TO SUPPORT OLDER YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE
Aftercare Services

Available to youth ages 18 to 21 years old who were in foster care and exited care exited care after their 18th birthday.

These services are divided into two types:

• Independent Living After Care Services
• Enhanced After Care Services
Family First Prevention Services Act

- Expansion of CHAFEE Funds
- What does this mean for older youth?
It’s been great!

What is one thing that you can do “Monday morning” to help support youth exiting foster care?
Questions?
Contact Information

Carrie Gould-Kabler, Project Director  
Carrie.gould-Kabler@ssw.umd.edu

Sara Bowman, Coach and Trainer  
sbowman@ssw.umd.edu