Fostering Promise:
Helping Young People Cultivate Resilience and Step into their Future

Shalita O'Neale
Kimberly Rhyan

Attendees will learn…

1. Participants will learn about the need for educational, vocational, & resiliency pathways.

1. Participants will learn about resources/models that support foster youth success.

1. Participants will learn and practice meaningful self-care techniques which promote resiliency.

First Things First

What does it take to practice a "Brave Space?"

What do you need

in this space to feel safe?

Please share your responses….

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Welcome & Check-in

Today's Challenge:
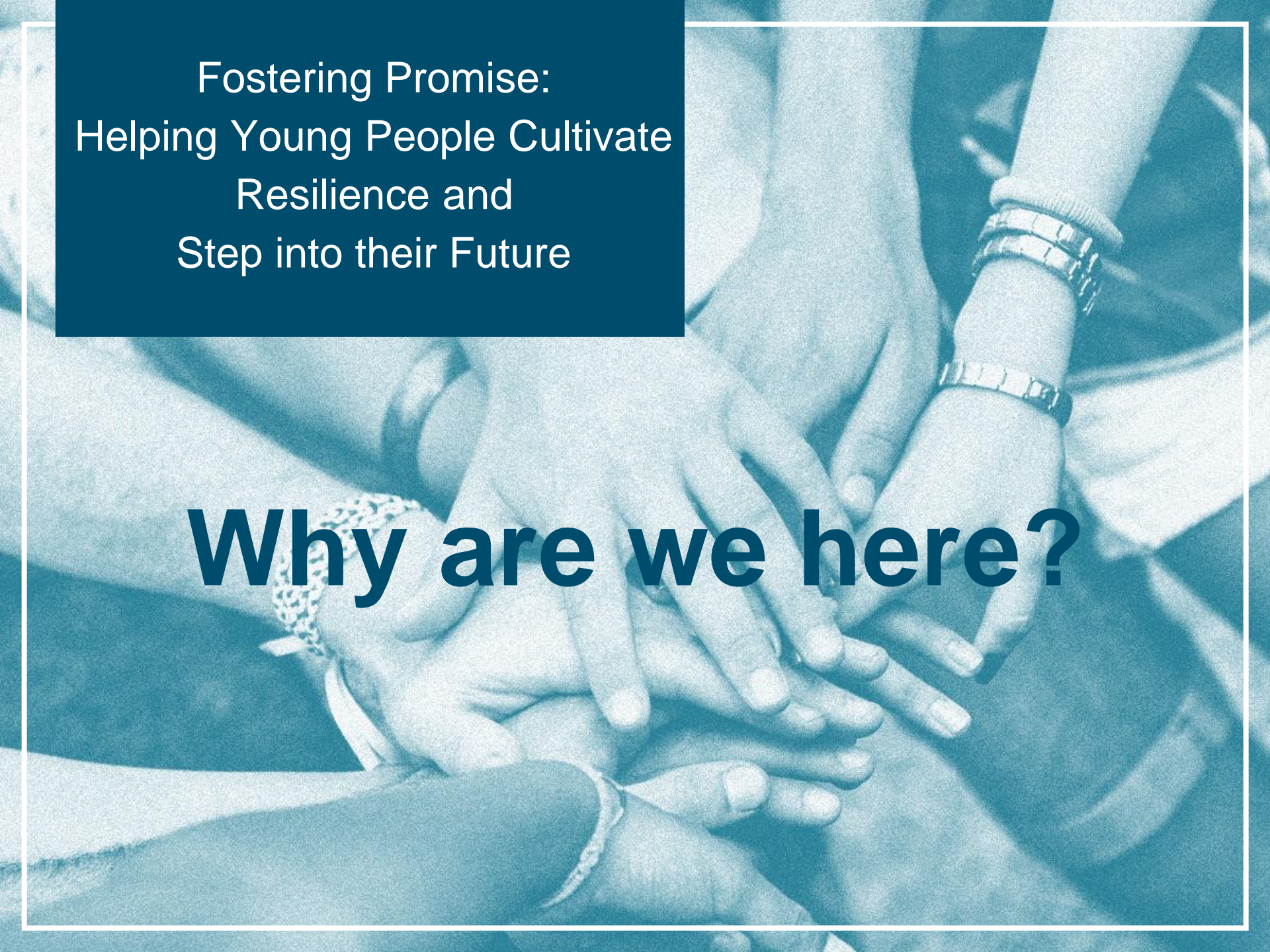
Live with curiosity &

create a 1 to 3 word purpose

statement

Why are you here?

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Why are we here?

The Need

- At age 17, **85.5** percent of California's foster youth aspire to complete college (this goes up to **90%** by age 19)

- **54.8** percent of foster youth enroll in college

- Bachelor's degree rate to be **4%** compared to **36%** among the general population. (Midwest Study)

"Most Desirable" Colleges by State

Source: National Center for Education Statistics & College Prowler

CollegeFinder
www.ecollegefinder.org

Barriers to College

- Impacts of abuse, neglect, and trauma
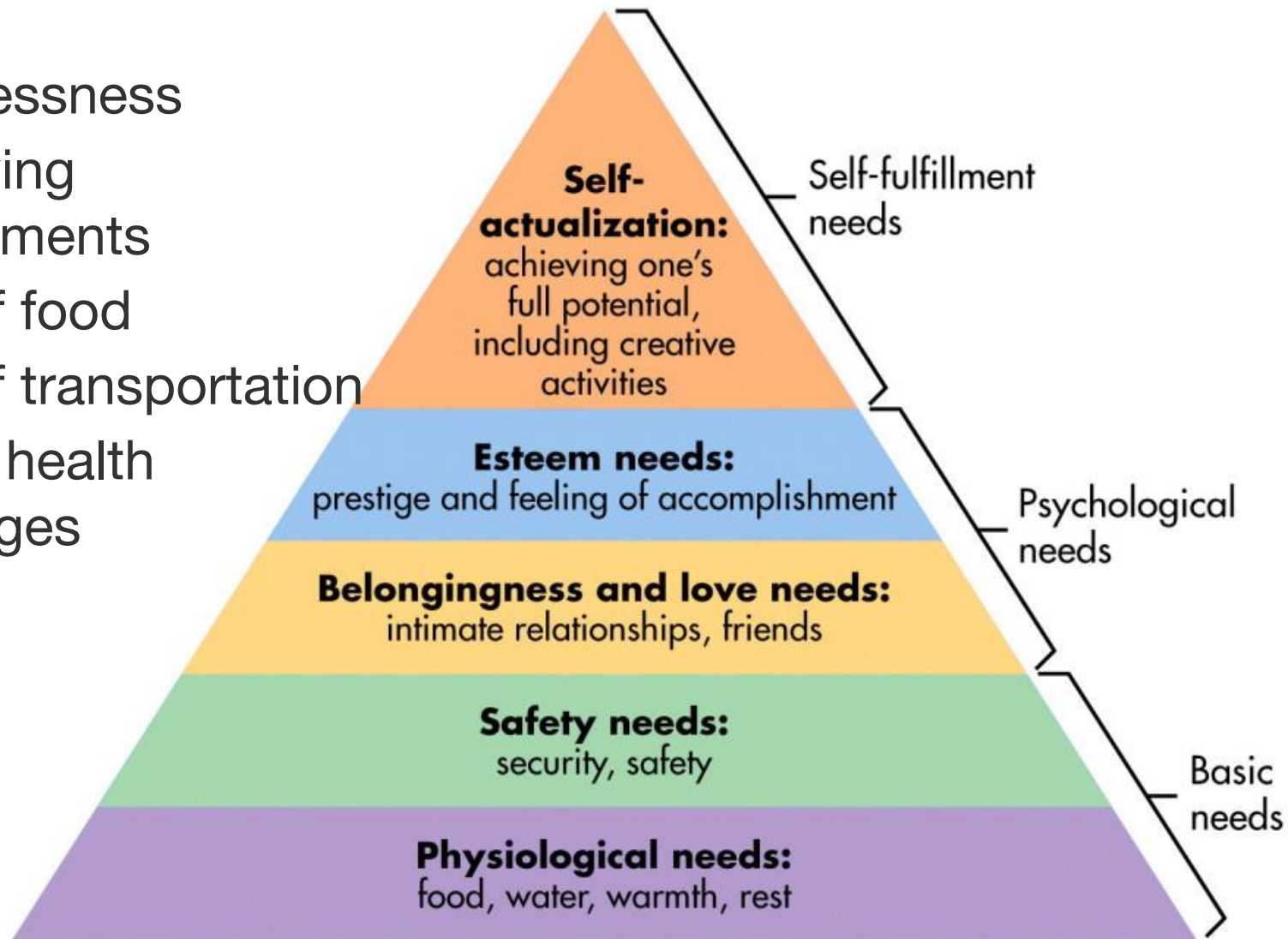- Cost to Attend college
- Navigating the Bureaucracy of College Processes
- Lack of Continuity of High School Education
- Education gaps
- College Preparatory Courses
- Academic Readiness and Preparedness
- Lack of Family Support
- First Generation Students
- Higher Education's Unawareness of Needs
- Students' Unawareness of Support/Resources
- Single Parents providing support to relatives
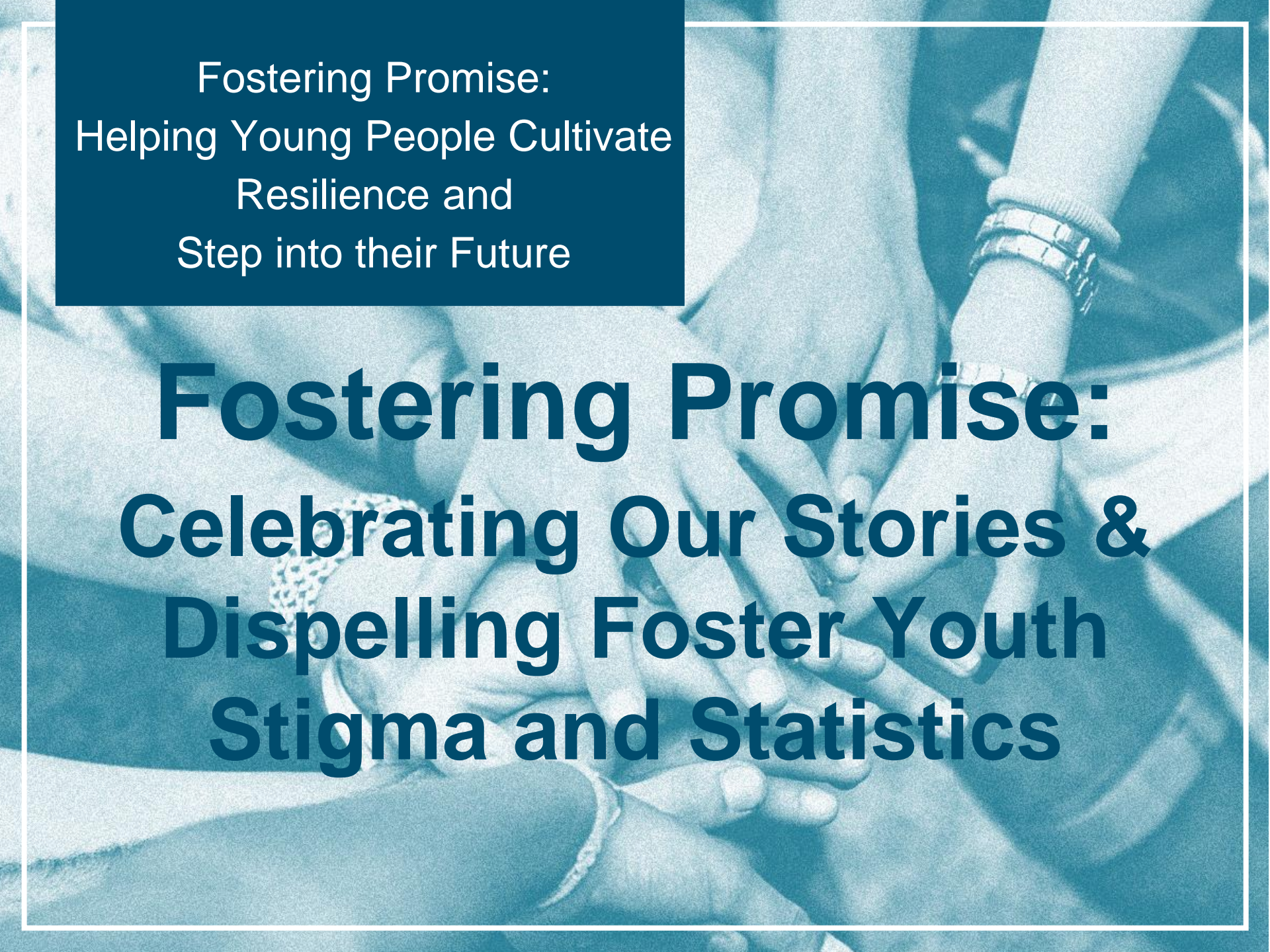
Obstacles

- Homelessness
- Safe living environments
- Lack of food
- Lack of transportation
- Mental health challenges

Self-actualization: achieving one's full potential, including creative activities — Self-fulfillment needs

Esteem needs: prestige and feeling of accomplishment — Psychological needs

Belongingness and love needs: intimate relationships, friends

Safety needs: security, safety — Basic needs

Physiological needs: food, water, warmth, rest

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Fostering Promise: Celebrating Our Stories & Dispelling Foster Youth Stigma and Statistics

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Educational and Vocational Pathways
Supporting Foster Youth & Alumni of Foster Care

Celebrating Alumni Successes.

Dispelling the foster care Stigma.

FCN Foundation will not only prepare alumni to be efficient and credible leaders within business, child welfare and other professional fields through an international lens but, will also highlight the contributions of individuals from foster care, dispelling the foster care stigma.

- FCN Foundation Global Ambassadors
- Program Alumni Powerhouse Networking Conferences
- SOFY Program
- Mentoring Circles
- Mentoring Connections (Mentorloop)

1. Create **transitions** that lead to success in college and career for alumni from foster care ages 18 to 25 years old.
2. Develop support among young people aging out of foster care and alumni of foster care, and create a safe space for growth through **reflection** and mentoring/coaching.
3. Provide **transformational** opportunities to alumni from foster care and their support network to enhance their professional skill set through **educational** pathways.
4. Empower alumni from foster care by integrating experiences from students' past to build opportunities for their future through **action** plans.

Alumni Powerhouse Networking Conference (APNC)

Save the Date: September 19, 2020

FOSTERING CHANGE NETWORK FOUNDATION

https://www.fcnfoundation.org/membership

ALUMNI POWERHOUSE NETWORKING CONFERENCE alumnipowerhouse.net

COLLEGE FOSTER YOUTH | FOSTER CARE ALUMNI | CHILD WELFARE PROFESSIONALS

What we do:

- Fostering Terp Success Working Group
- Primary point of contact
- Food, housing, and financial support
- CCMA AmeriCorps VISTA position
- Campus Coaches
- Campus Advocates
- Social networking & fun opportunities for FTS students
- Educational workshops
- Outreach
  - Enrollment Management
  - Basic needs security statement in course syllabi

Finances and Employment

Life Skills

Housing

Education

Cultural and Personal Identity

Physical and Mental Health

Supportive Relationships and Community Connections
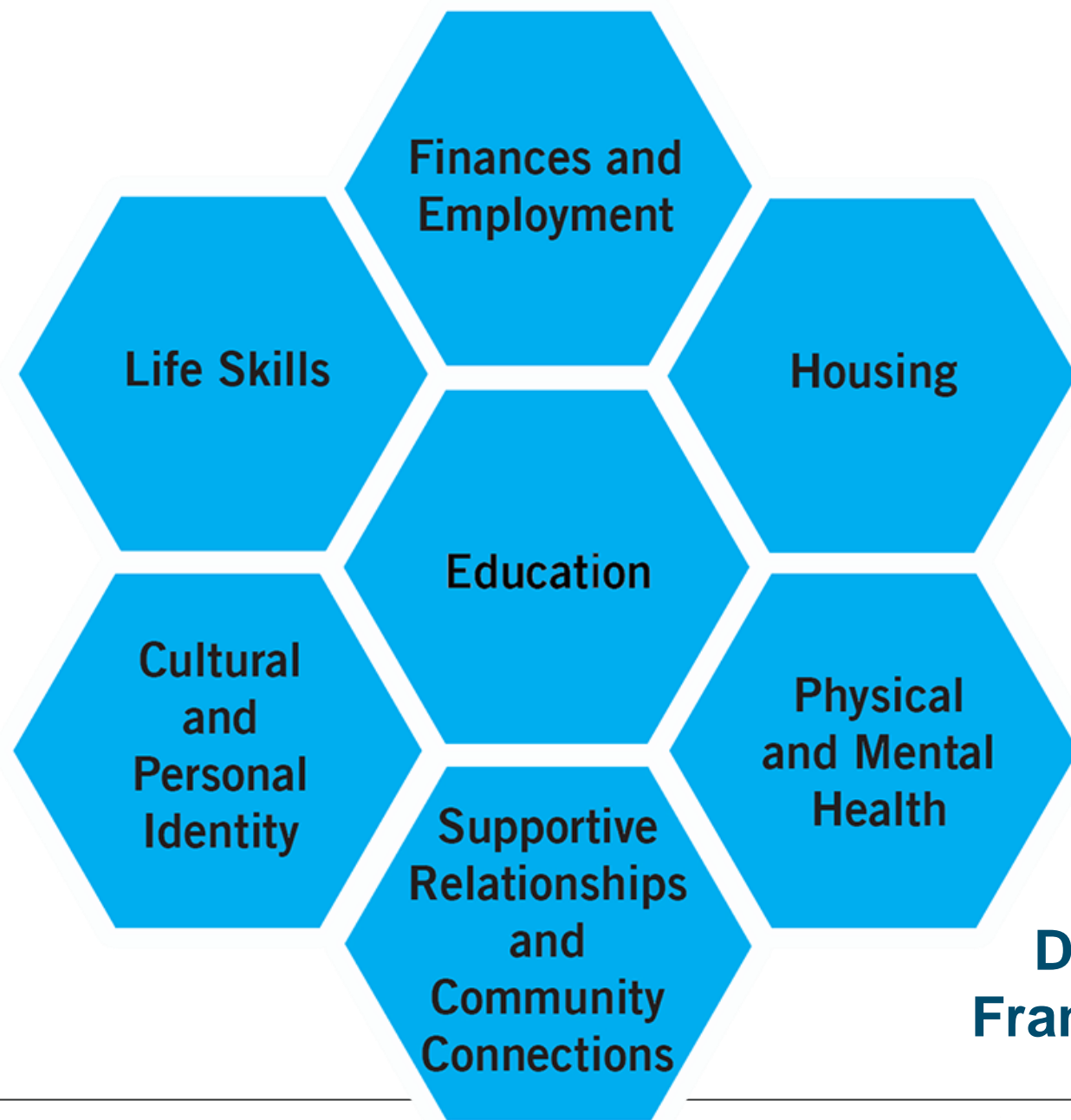
Seven Life Domains Framework

- Pre-College Conference (Autumn and Spring)
- Mentoring/Coaching/Academic Support
  - Performance Report Initiative – Assigned advisor
  - On-campus and Off-campus Mentorship
- Behavioral health support (referrals)
  - On-Campus: Counseling Services and Victim Advocacy
- Career Development and job search assistance
  - Career-Services
  - *Dress for Success*
- Connection with resources such as health insurance
  - Peer-Advocates
- Financial Resources
  - Stipends, bus passes, gas cards, gift cards
- *Lunch and Learn Workshops* and other Engagement Activities
  - Professional Development
- Hands-on housing search assistance

PASSPORT TO SUCCESS

Ohio Reach is building a campus support system at community colleges, four-year colleges, and universities to help these youth overcome the challenges of emancipating from foster care, secure an education, and become employed.
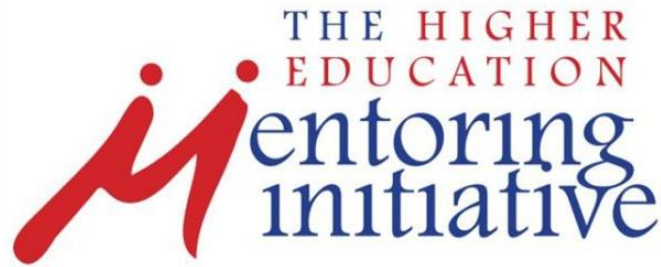
OHIO Reach

Mission:
To improve outcomes for youth in foster care and alumni through leadership, empowerment, advocacy, research and networking (L.E.A.R.N.).

Ohio Models

The Higher Education Mentoring Initiative (HEMI) provides Hamilton County foster youth an academic mentoring relationship that begins in high school and is focused on preparation for and completion of post-secondary education, job training or military service.
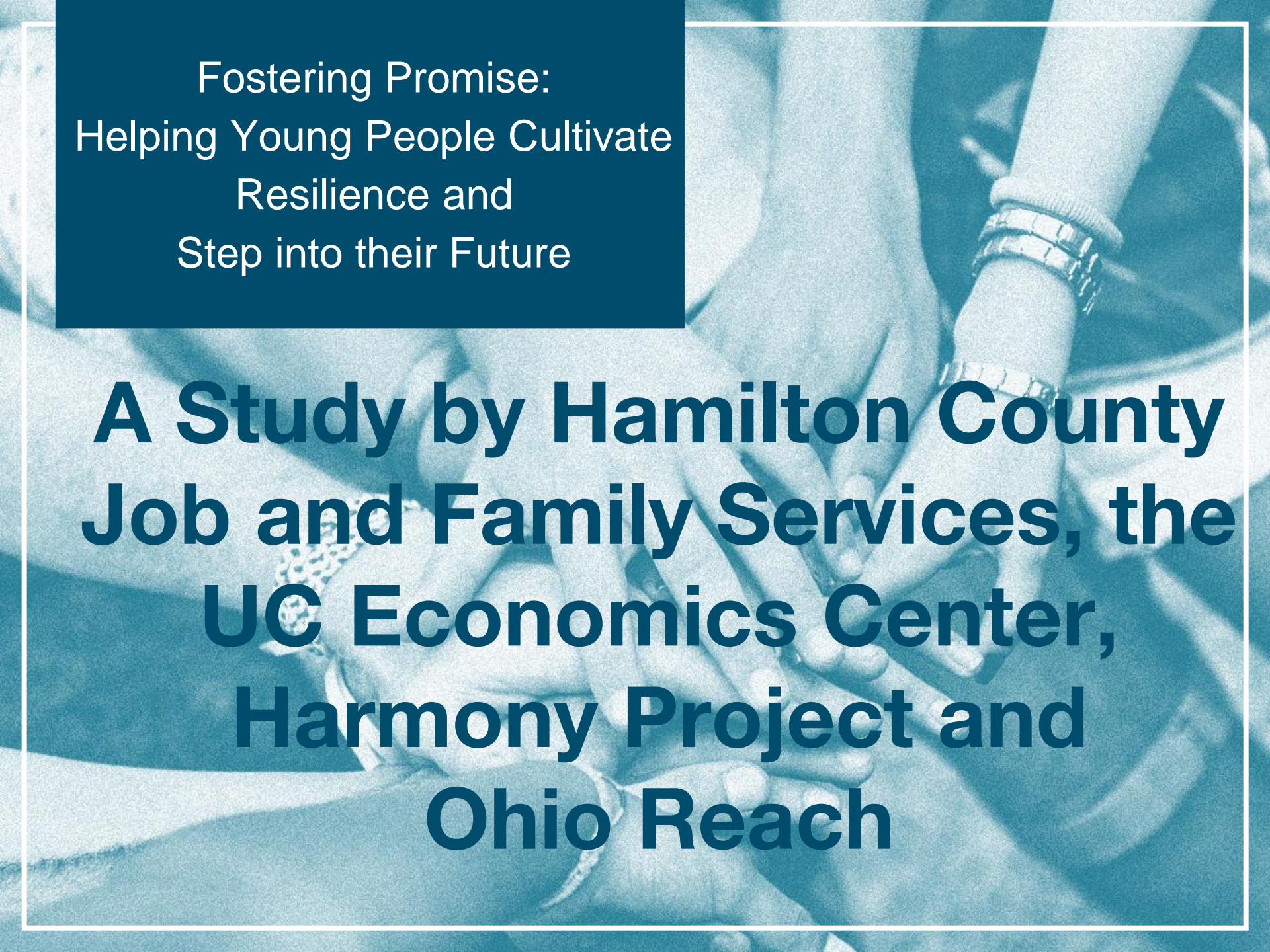
Outcomes for Hamilton County Foster Youth:

- Increase high school graduation rates for foster youth.
- Increase the number of foster youth who apply to and pursue post-secondary education.
- Increase the number of foster youth who successfully complete post-secondary education.

We strive for a day when young people are on a path toward sustainable employment and independent living.

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A Study by Hamilton County Job and Family Services, the UC Economics Center, Harmony Project and Ohio Reach

Methodology

The report examined 864 foster youth who emancipated from Hamilton County Job and Family Services from 2008 to 2015 (108 young people per year on average).

The study used comparative regional and national data gathered from such well-known studies as The Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth.

Key Findings

Hamilton County foster youth who age out of the child welfare system cost the local community $17.7 million in social services, costs, and lost productivity every year. Included in that number:

- $8 million in health expenses (mental health and substance abuse treatment, emergency room visits, hospital stays, and uninsured children)

- $2 million in criminal justice expenses (arrests, convictions, and incarcerations)

- $73,000 in homeless expenses

- 7.6 million in lost productivity (unemployment or underemployment)

THE HIGHER EDUCATION Mentoring Initiative

HEMI

The study looked at one intervention – HEMI – and found it to have a positive result on participants.

The Economic enter examined 114 HEMI participants from 2009 – 2015.

The study found HEMI annually costs $283,500 to run, but reduces social cost by $767,800

THE HIGHER EDUCATION
Mentoring initiative

Results

Education	HEMI (18-25)	Emancipated Youth (18-24)	General Population Youth (18-24)
HS Degree/GED	88.1%	71.8%	90.9%
Some College/ Degree Earned	46.9%	30.8%	57.1%
Employment	**HEMI (18-25)**	**Emancipated Youth (18-24)**	**General Population Youth (18-24)**
Employed	70.6%	46.7%	65.9%
Mean Hourly Wage	$12.83	$8.91	$11.96
Females with at least one dependent	**HEMI (18-25)**	**Emancipated Youth (18-24)**	**General Population Youth (18-24)**
	16.9%	51.5%	21.9%

Resiliency Practices:

- **Recovering from Trauma**
- **Fostering a Positive Identity**
- **Implementing Key Resilience Factors**
- **Growth VS. Fixed Mindset**
- **Focusing on Strengths**

Recovering from Trauma

How do we show up in the world when we have been hurt?

Attachment

React- Fight or Flight?

OR Disassociate?

Regulation

We need to feel safe in our bodies or our brains will not think or listen.

Triggers

Memories are alive in my body; they are stored in our central nervous system

Survival Skills

We need to feel safe in our bodies;

How we relate to others matters (Relation, not alienation)

Reaction

Cortisol erases short term memory;

I don't remember my yes.

Sensing

I'm feeling….(Notice, not Neglect.)

Ten Challenges to Foster a Positive Identity

1. Focus on observing instead of reacting
2. Teach youth to use triggers for growth
3. Dispel stigma and promote strengths
4. Equip youth to utilize a growth mindset (vs. fixed mindset)
5. Build 40 Developmental Assets
6. Develop a sense of purpose
7. Provide leadership opportunities for self-advocacy
8. Encourage self-care
9. Hold up a mirror & show how we can all respond positively to set-backs
10. Equip youth to be rooted in action (Make a plan; goals are building blocks)

Use Triggers for Growth

1. Feel the emotion (as energy to propel you)

2. Practice observation (self-aware)

3. Lock in your progress (track it)

4. Be mindful (of your new relationship to emotions)

5. Release (let go)

Key Resilience Factors

How do we show up in the world when we have been hurt?

Connections/network
Personal Responsibility
Take action
Self-awareness
Reflection
Hope
Realistic Point of View
Look Beyond the Present
Be flexible
Supports
Community Engagement
Self-compassion

Growth vs. Fixed Mindset

"Failure is an opportunity to grow"

GROWTH MINDSET

"I can learn to do anything I want"

"Challenges help me to grow"

"My effort and attitude determine my abilities"

"Feedback is constructive"

"I am inspired by the success of others"

"I like to try new things"

"Failure is the limit of my abilities"

FIXED MINDSET

"I'm either good at it or I'm not"

"My abilities are unchanging"

"I don't like to be challenged"

"I can either do it, or I can't"

"My potential is predetermined"

"When I'm frustrated, I give up"

"Feedback and criticism are personal"

"I stick to what I know"

Focus on Strengths

Those who know and use their strengths-

Experience less stress

o Research shows that being able to leverage one's strengths creates a buffer against the negative effects of stress or trauma.

Are more confident

o Both strengths awareness and strengths use are positively linked with self-efficacy, self-esteem, self-acceptance, and self-confidence.

Feel more satisfied at work

o People that actively use their strengths at work experience higher job satisfaction. Plus, it is easier to find true meaning and pleasure in their work.

Strength-Based Thinking

An idea which discovers the greatest qualities of what we do by combining:

- Personal Strengths
- Positive Experiences
- Individual Initiative
- Personal Responsibility
- Independence
- Capacity to Act

A Comparison Between Deficit & Strength-Based Thinking

Deficit-Based Thinking	Strength-Based Thinking
Focus on What's Broken	Focus on What's Working
Overcoming Weakness	Emphasizing Possibilities
Problem Solving	Co Constructing
Externally Driven	Internally Driven
Short-Term Solutions	Sustainable Solutions
Dependent Relationships	Independent Relationships
Reliance on Expert Knowledge	Reliance on Personal Strengths
Reform and Transition	Transform and Invent
Highlight Past Failures	Highlight Past Successes
Predict & Control	Discovery & Surprise

Activities:
Resiliency Workbook

More Resources

Foster Care Transition Toolkit

The U.S. Department of Education released the **Foster Care Transition Toolkit** to inspire and support current and former foster youth pursuing college and career opportunities. The Toolkit includes tips and resources intended to help foster youth access and navigate social, emotional, educational and skills barriers as they transition into adulthood. While the toolkit is written for foster youth, it's also meant to be a resource for caseworkers, care givers, teachers and mentors to help foster youth. Please access the Foster Care Transition Toolkit here: https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/foster-care/youth-transition-toolkit.pdf

PK-12 Education Resources

A national technical assistance resource and information clearinghouse on legal and policy matters affecting the education of children and youth in foster care. www.fostercareandeducation.org

http://www.casey.org/resources/publications/directory/subject/Education_k12.htm

Postsecondary Education Resources

http://www.cacollegepathways.org/resources-reports/reports/

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Reflection Activity & Check-Out

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Questions?

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