

WELCOME TO TODAY'S TRAINING!

STRATEGIES FOR
INCREASING CAREER
PATHWAY MOTIVATION
IN FOSTER YOUTH!

PRESENTED BY
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WHAT THIS WORKSHOP IS ABOUT

- 1. We will work to develop a greater appreciation and understanding of the things that can create hidden motivational barriers that can make it challenging for some foster youth to decide to start to pursue career pathways.**
- 2. We will learn strategies that will help foster youth overcome these barriers to starting career pathways so they can be as successful as possible in the world of work.**
- 3. We will work collectively to come up with new ideas to help foster youth increase their motivation to pursue career pathways.**

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF VOCATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY ON CAREER PATHWAY MOTIVATION

- 1. According to psychologist Albert Bandura, self-efficacy is "the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations."**

Self-efficacy is a person's belief in their ability to succeed in a particular situation.

- 2. A very important powerful force that will determine whether foster youth feel motivated to pursue career pathways is what they believe about their ability to be successful in the pathway.**

We call this thinking their vocational self-efficacy. Vocational self-efficacy is the inner voice and belief system that shapes how foster youth feel about whether they will succeed or fail in a career pathway.

WHAT IMPACT DOES BEING A FOSTER YOUTH HAVE ON VOCATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY?

- 1. Many foster youth report that ending up in the foster system made them feel like they are a failure in life. This can have a strong negative impact on vocational self-efficacy.**
- 2. Multiple placements in the foster system can disrupt the process of building self-esteem and confidence which are some of the building blocks of vocational self-efficacy.**
- 3. The trauma of being a foster youth lowers vocational self-efficacy in a number of ways. For example, trauma often means living in the crisis of the present and this can make it difficult for some foster youth to think about their future and career pathways.**

These are just a few of the ways that being a foster youth can make it difficult to have the level of vocational self-efficacy required to believe in a future in a career pathway.

**WHAT OTHER THINGS CAN
INFLUENCE VOCATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY
IN FOSTER YOUTH?**

- 1. The class the foster youth is born into**
- 2. The vocational self-efficacy in the family and community**
- 3. The impact of discrimination and oppression on their lives**
- 4. The availability of role models and mentors**
- 5. The lack of access to a good education**
- 6.**
- 7.**
- 8.**
- 9.**
- 10.**

THE TYPES OF VOCATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY

1. NO VOCATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY

A foster youth without any vocational self-efficacy does not believe that they have a place in the world of work in any way.

2. MARGINAL VOCATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY

Foster youth with marginal vocational self-efficacy believe they can access the fringes of the labor market doing odd jobs and other things to earn money but not having a job.

3. FIXED VOCATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY

Foster youth with fixed vocational self-efficacy see themselves as being able to get entry level jobs, but not being able to advance in the world of work in career pathways.

4. GROWING VOCATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY

Foster youth with growing vocational self-efficacy believe they can succeed in career pathways and advance and move up in the world of work.

VOCATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY IN MY LIFE

What are some examples of things in your life that either helped you to develop growing vocational self-efficacy or things that hurt your vocational self-efficacy?

This helped me develop growing vocational self-efficacy	This hurt my vocational self-efficacy

GROWING SELF-EFFICACY AND OPPORTUNITY

- 1. While career pathway opportunities are important, whether or not a foster youth pursues the pathway is not about opportunity, it is about their vocational self-efficacy.**
- 2. If foster youth do not have growing vocational self-efficacy they will not pursue the pathway or they may drop out of it. This is one of the root causes of imposter syndrome.**

- 3. Some people say, “Seeing is believing.”**
If you understand vocational self-efficacy you say, “If foster youth first believe it, then they can see it.” When foster youth have growing vocational self-efficacy and believe in their career pathway potential, they are much more likely to pursue it.

We have to provide foster youth with the services and support that will help them transform their vocational self-efficacy so they can truly believe they will be successful in career pathways.

WHAT CAN YOUR PROGRAM DO TO HELP IMPROVE VOCATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY?

- 1. Give foster youth career pathway role models. Bring in your career pathway program alumni and/or video them on your phone talking about their journey to careers. Ask them questions about the challenges they faced in deciding to start a career pathway and how they overcame them. Make your program role model and not just information driven!**
- 2. Arrange for informational interviews and/or campus shadowing with a foster youth who is successful on a career pathway and a current program participant. You may have to get management approval to do this.**
- 3. Put up pictures, show videos and have quotes up from foster youth role models in career pathways.**
- 4. Tell good and interesting stories about foster youth that became successful in career pathways to your current participants.**

**WHAT OTHER IDEAS DO YOU HAVE
FOR HELPING FOSTER YOUTH IMPROVE
THEIR VOCATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY?**

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

THE “CRAB EFFECT” AS A BARRIER TO CAREER PATHWAY MOTIVATION

- 1. When we talk about helping foster youth pursue career pathways the focus is typically on the individual foster youth. This perspective leaves out the influence of their relationships with friends, family members and other people in the social system of the foster youth. This system can either be an asset or a hidden barrier to career pathway motivation.**
- 2. Sometimes some of the people in the social system of a foster youth that is thinking about pursuing a career pathway may not want the foster youth to pursue a career pathway.**
- 3. These people can try and talk the foster youth out of pursuing the pathway, they can undermine their confidence so they won't pursue it and do other things to try and keep the foster youth from going on the pathway.**

This is called the “crab effect.”

**WHY DO YOU THINK SOME PEOPLE
IN THE SOCIAL SYSTEM OF A FOSTER YOUTH
MAY NOT WANT THEM TO
PURSUE A CAREER PATHWAY?**

- 1. A friend may worry that they will lose the foster youth as a friend if they go on the career pathway.**
- 2. Someone may be jealous of the foster youth improving their life.**
- 3. Some people may believe that the foster youth will fail in the career pathway and they want to protect them from having this bad experience.**
- 4.**
- 5.**
- 6.**
- 7.**
- 8.**

HOW DO YOU HELP FOSTER YOUTH OVERCOME THE “CRAB EFFECT”?

- 1. Do a social system assessment. Get to know who is in the life of the foster youth. Talk with the foster youth about how these people will react to them going on a career pathway. Who will see this as a good thing and who may see it as a bad thing? Help the foster youth anticipate the reactions in their social system.**
- 2. Help build the sense of pride in the foster youth that comes from them doing something that not every foster youth can do. Help them think of themselves as a pioneer and as a role model for other foster youth.**
- 3. Work to create a support group of foster youth that are on career pathways so they can share strategies about how they are dealing with the “crab effect” in their lives.**

**WHAT OTHER STRATEGIES CAN YOU
THINK OF TO HELP FOSTER YOUTH
DEAL WITH THE “CRAB EFFECT”?**

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

THINGS I WANT TO REMEMBER
FROM THIS WORKSHOP