Creating a Foster Youth Ally Training

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What to expect today

Go through steps and thought process created for Ally Training at UC Davis and CSU Fullerton

Opportunity to discuss and possibly recreate or provide ideas to develop own Ally Training throughout each step

IMPORTANT

These steps were not fully completed in order. You will find ourself going back and forth to each area to edit, redefine, reimagine, and clarify.

Steps:

1. Finding Purpose
2. Creating support network
3. Develop Framework, Content
4. Add student voice
5. Next Steps for Allies

Finding Purpose

Questions:

- What kind of difference will an ally training make?

- How will it impact the students?

- Who will it target? Why?

UC Davis - Purpose

The Foster Youth Ally Training is intended to promote an inclusive and welcoming space for students, staff, and faculty who have experienced one or more days in foster care. The training will help to reduce stereotype threats, imposter syndrome and bring awareness about the foster care community and resources to support current/former foster youth attending UC Davis.
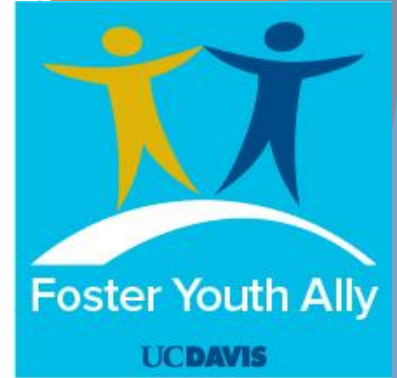
CSU Fullerton- Purpose

The Foster Friendly Ally Training aims to educate faculty, staff, students and community partners on how to create a welcoming, supportive, and inclusive environment for foster youth.

The training consists of discussions about the foster care system, impact trauma has on behavior and learning, family privilege, resources available through the Guardian Scholars program, and the role of an ally.

Participants are invited to be a part of the Foster Friendly Ally Network that serves as a resources for current and prospective students and professionals /advocates.

Creating a support network

Questions:

- Who can provide critical information? Support?

- Who can be involved in developing it? Implementing it?

- What is needed to implement? Who can support it?

UC Davis - Creating a support network

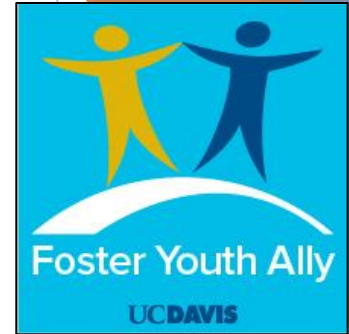ACEs - Gail Kennedy, Community Lead; Mercedes Piedra, UC Davis Health

GSP students

Child Welfare

UC Davis Counseling Services, CAN Counselor

Retention Specialists

Other Program Coordinators/Directors

CSU Fullerton- Creating a support network

Foster Friendly Ally Committee

- Guardian Scholars

- Center for Scholars staff

- CSUF Faculty

- Counseling & Psychological Services Liaison

- Los Angeles County Department of Education

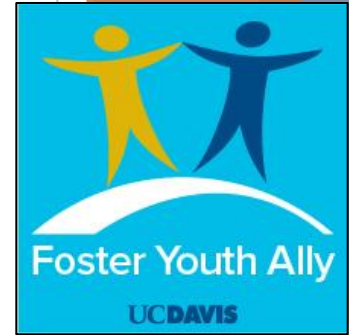- Human Resources Diversity Inclusion

- Ashley Beecham, Foster Youth Alumni

Develop Framework/Content

- What do they want to know?

- What do they need to know?

- What background information is important?

UC Davis - Develop Framework/Content

Ally Training Agenda

- About Foster Care

- About the Guardian Scholars Program

- Becoming Trauma-Informed
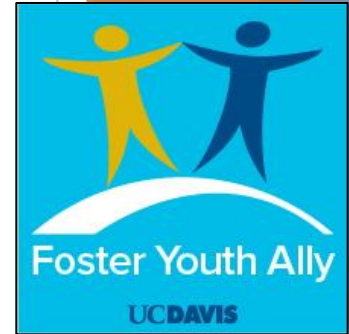
- Becoming an Ally

Defining Foster Care

- Opening activity

- Journey of foster care system
- Foster care by the numbers
- Cross Cultural/Identity Awareness
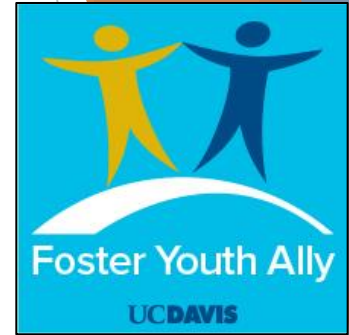- Critical legislation

About the Guardian Scholars Program

- Mission
- Eligibility
- Program Services
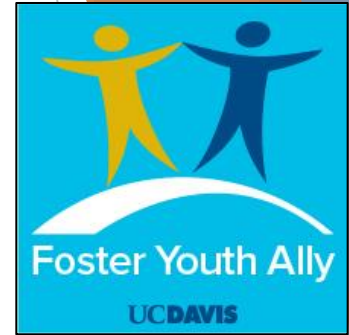
Becoming Trauma-Informed

- Defining Trauma
- Three Es of Trauma: Events, Experiences, Effect
- ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences)
- Impact of Trauma

NOTE: Due to the nature of the information, check-in with participants

Becoming an Ally

- Pillars of Trauma-Informed Care
- Failure Prevention/Deficit Advising vs Strengths-Based Advising
- Thriving vs Surviving

CSU Fullerton- Develop Framework/Content

Ally Training Agenda
Part 1: Here's My Shoes, Walk With Me
Part 2: Networking Lunch with Guardian Scholars
Part 3: Trauma Informed Practices & Creating Inclusive Environments
Part 4: Guardian Scholars Program and Services
Part 5: Role of a Foster Friendly Ally & Pledge

Foster Care Experience
- Live experience
- Debrief

Networking lunch
- Guardian Scholars and all other scholars
- Staff and faculty
- Stakeholders
- Community partners

Trauma Informed Practices
- Definition of trauma and affects
- Brain response to stress, triggers and behaviors
- Vicarious trauma
- Compassion fatigue
- Practicing self-care

Creating Inclusive Environments

- Define inclusion
- Childhood development exposure gap
- Family privilege
- Trauma sensitive campus
- Brave spaces versus safe spaces
- Guardian Scholars program
- Eligibility
- Mission
- Support Services
- Scholar community

Role of a Ally
- Difference between a coach, mentor, and ally
- Optimal balance of supportive relationships

- **Foster Friendly Ally Pledge**
- A commitment to foster youth (led by scholars)
- Sign a pledge
- Foster Friendly Ally network
- Gratitude and celebration

Impact of Ally Trainings

- 85.9% reported being very knowledgeable about trauma and triggers

- 95.7% understand the challenges foster youth experience

- 100% felt the training would have positive impact in their professional roles and would recommend the training

"I learned about family privilege, how to be more inclusive when planning icebreakers and class assignments that may involve sharing stories of family."

Add Student Voice

- What do the students want allies to know?

- What do allies want to hear from the students?

UC Davis - Add Student Voice

- Challenges of foster youth in higher education

- Aspirations of foster youth in higher education

- Assumptions/Realities (Because I was in foster care, please assume…._____ but in reality, I……..

- I can/I am (Despite foster care I can………; Despite foster care I am……….)

- Student Panel
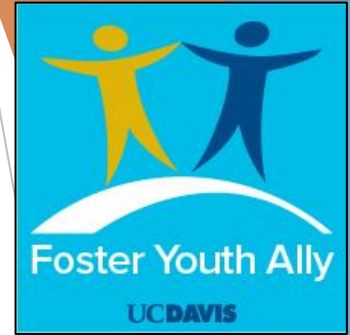
CSU Fullerton- Add Student Voice

Empowerment Retreat
The purpose of the retreat is to educate, empower, and connect Guardian Scholars to their peers, encourage them to step outside of their comfort zone to truly experience healing and provide tools they will need to continue making progress in their healing journey.

- 3 day retreat
- Bonding activities
- Frame their life stories
- Share their stories out loud
- Ongoing mental health support

Students have the option of...
- *Including their stories in trainings*
- *Volunteer to support on the day of trainings*
- *Join the FFA committee*
- *Volunteer to support new scholars attending empowerment retreats*

Next Steps for Allies

Questions:

- What happens to allies after training?

- What role do they play as allies?

- What additional trainings can they be part of?

UC Davis - Next step for Allies

- Become a Friend of the Guardian Scholars Program

- Receive a Foster Youth Ally sticker to use in your space

- Receive newsletters about program and foster care updates

- Be invited to attend additional trainings for mentoring, success coaching, and more!
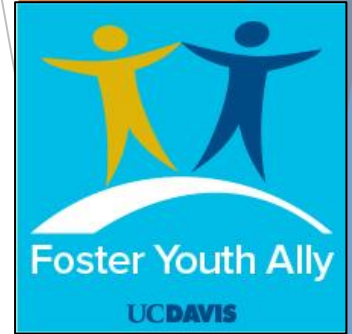
CSU Fullerton- Next step for Allies

- Receive stickers, decals, and framed pledge
- Announcement of new allies is sent to the campus community and Guardian Scholars
- Invitation to special events
- Invited to be part of the Foster Friendly Ally Network and serve as a resource
  - Allies support the Guardian Scholars program activities
  - Resource for foster youth
  - Resource for advocates and professionals who work with foster youth
  - Encourages students to expand their network of support
  - In/outreach
  - New donors

Things to Consider for Ally Trainings

- Know your purpose
- Gain support from the campus community
- Create campaign materials (stickers, decals, pins)
- Include student voice
- Mental health support
- Avoid presenting foster youth from a deficit perspective

Things to Consider for Ally Trainings

- Prepare students and staff prior to training and debrief after training
- Seek partners that can support you
- Measure learning outcomes (pre/post survey) and satisfaction
- Present new allies to students
- Honor the commitment allies made to support foster youth
- Sustainability

Lessons Learned

- Avoid reinventing the wheel
- Facilitators should be emotionally prepared for the vulnerable moments participants will experience
- Self-awareness and self-care (model for students)
- Dedicate enough time to debrief with participants and students
- Ongoing training and resources for allies
- What is within your band width?
- What will the role of the ally be?
- Include interactive activities
- Celebrate and empower students

Panel

- Anastasie Lenoir, UC Davis student
- Darcy Anderson, CSUF Foster Friendly Ally

Questions?