



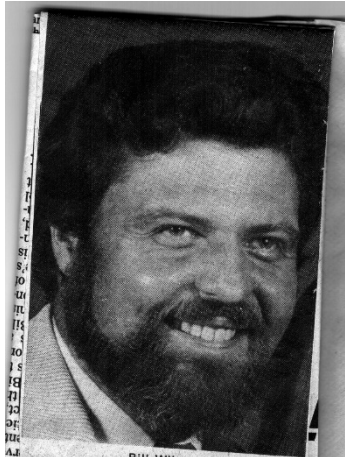
Bill Wilson Center

Essentials of Youth Engagement for Student Success



Bill Wilson Center Overview

- ❖ Founded in 1973
- ❖ Youth Shelter opened in 1977
- ❖ THPP, THP+FC, and THP+AC programs all emphasize post-secondary education



Bill Wilson Center

The family is the nucleus, not the mere recipient and passive beneficiary. It is through the family that a child first learns to interact with other individuals, to accept and to assume love, and to learn the values that will be carried into adulthood. The Bill Wilson Center recognizes the importance of the family in the development of the individual and to the strength of the community. The Bill Wilson Center aids families who successfully find themselves faced with problems that they cannot deal with alone. A highly professional staff offers a hospital way to deal with crisis and medication. The Bill Wilson Center began in 1973 as Wilson Center and was renamed in 1977 in honor of its founder for his tremendous contributions towards the Center's beginning and its growth. Since then, it has expanded from a staff of three to over twenty and has incorporated many services as a central program of family therapy. The services that the Center now provides:

Training For Internship

Bill Wilson Center offers Training Programs for graduate students in marriage, family and child counseling. The Center has a training contract with the University of Santa Clara and also contracts to receive from other universities. Internship enrollment is limited to ensure a high quality of instruction and close supervision. The staff of the Bill Wilson Center researches new approaches to family counseling and presents evidence-based research. The Center offers an ongoing professional seminar series as well as periodic workshops. Interested persons should contact the Center for information regarding the training program, seminars, and workshops.

Helping the Family To Grow Together

Problems can occur in any family, and can show up in a number of ways. A child's behavior, an adolescent's mood or how to get into the school and community to meet the needs of those who might not otherwise come for help. The counselors also provide training to other professionals who work with youth.

How You Know When You Need Us

Problems can occur in any family, and can show up in a number of ways. A child's behavior, an adolescent's mood or how to get into the school and community to meet the needs of those who might not otherwise come for help. The counselors also provide training to other professionals who work with youth.

Can Help Us . . .

The Bill Wilson Center is a non-profit health services dedicated to the family unit. Funding is provided by the City of Santa Clara, University of Santa Clara, and Santa Clara County. Client fees are on a sliding scale based on the percentage of the actual financial resources available to the family. It is helping the family.

Bill Wilson A non-profit community mental health center



Family Therapy Program

The goal of the Family Therapy Program is to support and strengthen the family's ability to help the family deal more effectively with life problems. Counseling is provided to families who are experiencing parenting, relationship, child development or other family-related problems. The staff in the Family Therapy Program also extends its services to professionals in other institutions in the community such as the judicial department, social services, and juvenile justice as they often to promote a further understanding of family systems, their development, and their relationship to the individual and society. The emphasis on development of the family unit is a professional, yet personal manner is a key ingredient to the success of the Family Therapy Program. Through the program the individuals within the family learn about themselves and those closest to them and are able to grow together in that knowledge.



Residential Center For Adolescents

The Bill Wilson Center provides a short-term residential care for Santa Clara Valley youth who are experiencing crisis in their families. The goal of the program is to provide education and support for youth and their parents which will result in reuniting the family. The residential center is staffed by trained personnel who are experienced in dealing with families in crisis. The adolescents live at the House for up to three weeks. During this time the residents receive individual and group counseling, recreation and self-esteem building, and participate with their parents in alternative family counseling. The staff also responds to calls for crisis intervention and information and referrals. Although there is currently no cost for residential care, the center is open to make every financial contribution.



Outreach To Youth

Bill Wilson Center counselors reach out for youth in the schools and community to meet the needs of those who might not otherwise come for help. The counselors also provide training to other professionals who work with youth. Outreach services include student groups, parent education classes, ongoing individual counseling, and crisis response. The outreach program is a statement of the Center's commitment to prevention as well as treatment.



Family Therapy

DEFINING



- ▶ Involving young people in the creation of their own destinies
- ▶ How would you define youth engagement in your work setting? How do you know a young person is engaged? What does that look like?

A Question for Reflection

What gets in the way of youth engaging with a service provider?

What are the barriers or obstacles that come between a young person accessing services or seeking the help they need to be successful in school?



Engagement 101



- ▶ Be Your Authentic Self
- ▶ It's OK to not have all the answers
- ▶ Demonstrate genuine interest and curiosity
- ▶ Don't make assumptions about what one knows how to do
- ▶ Let your client teach YOU something
- ▶ Prove early on that you do what you say you will do. Prove you are worthy of their trust
- ▶ Provide concrete tangible support in the first meeting.

The Importance of Authenticity

- ▶ We provide the most assistance when a young person is comfortable enough to share the obstacles they are actually facing. This requires tremendous vulnerability on their part.
- ▶ Sharing personal details within the bounds of professionalism is important in making connections and creating comfort.
- ▶ If You are not YOURSELF, the client will not be theirs either and may tell you what you want to hear or nothing at all.

The Pitfalls of Being *Too* Professional

- ▶ If a client whose life is falling apart sees a service provider who always appears to have “everything together” it creates a barrier to trust.
- ▶ If you are “perfect” at your job, how can a young person relate a struggle they are having?
- ▶ Sharing personal challenges or disabilities invites a student to do the same.



Demonstrate Genuine Interest

- ▶ What kind of music do you like?
- ▶ Are you a Niner fan?
- ▶ How are you liking that art class you're taking?
- ▶ What's a good show to binge-watch on Netflix this weekend?



When you ASSUME....

- ▶ According to [The Literacy Project](#), there are currently 45 million Americans who are functionally illiterate, unable to read above a 5th grade level, and **half of all adults can't read a book at an 8th grade level.**
- ▶ In California, 25 percent of the state's 6 million students are unable to perform basic reading skills.
- ▶ Handing a student a form to complete without consideration of their literacy level could result in frustration and giving up.
- ▶ Students who are struggling academically often do so silently rather than risk feeling "stupid."
- ▶ How can you create an environment where a student feels completely safe and comfortable to let you know they're "stuck" or don't understand something?



The Student is the Expert of Their Own Life

- ▶ Listen MORE, Talk LESS
- ▶ Opportunities where the student is the expert on something bring a sense of equity which expands a student's comfort level in receiving aid or support
- ▶ Consider yourself a partner equally invested in the student's success rather than their rescuer.
- ▶ Build on existing strengths and past successes to build motivation



Building Trust is Essential

- ▶ If you make a promise to do something and fail to follow through, you've lost that student.
- ▶ Only make promises you know you can keep.
- ▶ Find something tangible you can do for that student early on to demonstrate you will come through for them.
- ▶ Bill Wilson clients consistently say that once a service provider did something concrete for them, they knew they actually cared.
- ▶ Trauma survivors need predictable consistency from service providers



Trauma Informed Care: Attending to Basic Needs

- ▶ Have snacks, water, and hygiene items available for students in your office or work setting.
- ▶ Is there a place a student can obtain clothing, take a shower, do laundry, or other basic necessities on campus or near your work setting?
- ▶ Offer school supplies, backpacks, a place to charge a phone, and any other student items you are able to.



Peer to Peer Interaction is POWERFUL

- ▶ Look for ways peer mentors or youth advocates can be incorporated into the program at every level.
- ▶ Involve service recipients in leadership decisions wherever possible
- ▶ Consider creating a student advisory board specific to your program.

Results from a BWC Focus Group

Reflecting on someone who genuinely helped you at some point in your education, what allowed you to trust or know that you could open up to them?

- ▶ “Someone helping pinpoint the problem that prevents someone from learning.”
- ▶ “Checking-in, making sure everything is okay.”
- ▶ Someone with a past experience similar to their experience, 9 (14) youth stated this
- ▶ Someone straight forward
- ▶ Empathetic
- ▶ Someone reliable with follow-through

Results from a BWC Focus Group

Why do you think young adults in college don't always utilize the help or resources available to be successful in school?

- ▶ They don't know about the resources.
- ▶ There are requirements that aren't applicable to youth.
- ▶ Lack of self-interest/self-motivation to seek resources.

Results from a BWC Focus Group

What do you wish service providers would know or do differently when trying to help students be successful?

- ▶ Factor in short-term and long-term considerations.
- ▶ Not every student knows their resources or things about the school.
- ▶ Have lists of information.
- ▶ Know how to approach situations.
- ▶ Asking individual what they need in order to succeed
- ▶ Show interest in the person
- ▶ Need follow up

Results from a BWC Focus Group

If you could design the ideal service provider to help foster youth in college, what would they be like? How would they act around students and what would they do to ensure everyone they worked with experienced success?

- ▶ Have a fairy Godmother
- ▶ Stay committed
- ▶ Help knowing how to navigate barriers: having car, needing gas (Help with daily life)
- ▶ Rules and Regulations
- ▶ Know the rules and regulations of the county they live in
- ▶ Someone who is considerate and knowledgeable about foster youth and homeless youth
- ▶ Someone who has experience working with youth
- ▶ Utilize Positive Reinforcement
- ▶ Positive person
- ▶ Encouraging
- ▶ Reliable
- ▶ Ensure success by saying what they're going to do and follow through with it – “not sugar coat”.



Youth Homelessness in Santa Clara County

www.acouchisnotahome.org



Thank you!

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www.billwilsoncenter.org