

HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE IN
FOSTER CARE CREATE THE
LIFE THEY WANT.

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LESSONS LEARNED FROM 10 YEARS OF ACADEMIC COACHING

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Blueprint Conference

Workshop D5

Tuesday, October 29th, 2019



THE EVOLUTION OF PIVOTAL COACHING – WE STARTED WITH COLLEGE MENTORING

- o Started our college scholarship program in 2000
- o Scholars were required to identify a volunteer mentor
 - o Mentors received 3 hours of training at the start of the year
 - o They were required to submit monthly logs, but sometimes didn't
 - o They were offered on-going support from staff, but sometimes didn't respond to our efforts

Lesson Learned

- o It's hard to keep volunteer mentors accountable
- o It's hard to monitor the relationship and ensure it's supportive

THE EVOLUTION OF PIVOTAL COACHING – MOVED INTO HIGH SCHOOL MENTORING

- o We realized that not many young people from foster care were ready for college or applying for our scholarship
- o We decided to build a pipeline of college-ready high school foster youth students
- o We inaugurated our high school mentoring model in 2008 with a pilot, and brought it back in 2010 with many improvements
 - o Mentors were social work Masters student interns who worked with us 2-3 days per week, with 5-8 students over the course of the year

Lesson Learned

- o We needed to hire staff coaches
 - o Students didn't get support in the summer (no interns)
 - o Interns change each year so relationships get interrupted
 - o Interns have to be trained every year

THE EVOLUTION OF PIVOTAL COACHING – DEVELOPING COLLEGE MENTORING

- Our high school students really appreciated the mentoring they got in high school, and they wanted it to continue in college
- **Piloted** college mentoring with Public Allies AmeriCorps members
 - Fours days per week with agency, one day a week of professional development
 - Co-located on college campus

Lesson Learned

- We needed to hire staff coaches in post-secondary as the Public Allies needed a lot of training to develop their expertise and they only make a 1-year commitment

THE EVOLUTION OF PIVOTAL COACHING – HIRING STAFF COACHES

- Addition of Post-Secondary staff coaches
 - Now we could create longer-term partnerships with key folks on community college campuses to the benefit of students
 - With staff who would be able to spend the time, training, and gain the expertise on their specific community college

Lesson Learned

- Students being able to access their coach on their community college campus was really valuable
- Relationships with community college partners are key

THE EVOLUTION OF PIVOTAL COACHING – HIRING STAFF COACHES

- An intern model meant students received a new coach year after year, so we tried something again
 - **Pilot: StepUp**
 - Cohort model that would run for 3 years of 12th, 13th, 14th graders
 - A way to address students having a new coach year after year so that students didn't have to create a new relationship during a sensitive transition time
 - A way to address students' feedback that they wanted a coach in college (why not keep the same coach to help with the transition!)

Lesson Learned

- We needed to separate high school and post-secondary coaching, the knowledge base for the coach and traveling to multiple community college campuses to meet with all their youth was not realistic
- We needed staff coaches in high school

THE EVOLUTION OF PIVOTAL COACHING – FROM MENTORING TO COACHING

- Along the way we realized we weren't doing mentoring, we were COACHING
 - Emphasis on building trusted relationships stayed but now we added more structure to our coaching activities that were meant to coach a young person to target behavior change

THE EVOLUTION OF PIVOTAL COACHING – HIRING STAFF COACHES

- Addition of high school staff coaches
 - We began to serve federal refugee foster youth as well as former foster youth who no longer had a case open
 - Staff coaches meant there was the possibility of summer support prior to entering college

Lesson Learned

- Students no longer in foster care need our support just as much as those still in care
- Summer support for students matriculating into college has been key

THE EVOLUTION OF PIVOTAL COACHING – EMPLOYMENT AND ACADEMIC COACHING

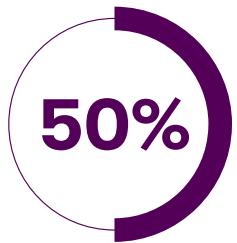
- All of our high school and post-secondary coaches are now Academic and Employment Coaches
 - Success Skills activities across both realms of academics and employment
 - Career exploration
 - Job shadows, paid internships, and exploration for high schoolers
 - Professional networking support and paid internships in a professional setting and sometimes linked to a career area of interest or major for post-secondary

Lesson Learned

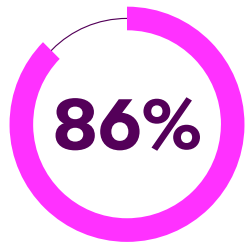
- Some of our students graduated from college but struggled at work; and some of our youth were working but were disconnected from school
- It's hard to hire coaches with all the needed knowledge, so we have to provide a lot of training and reinforce skills and knowledge through regular supervision
- It can be hard for non-coaching staff to understand direct practice work, so *all* of our staff receive initial training

WE HAVE A PROVEN TRACK RECORD

High School Graduation Rate



Foster Youth National Avg.



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Monthly Earning Potential

\$690

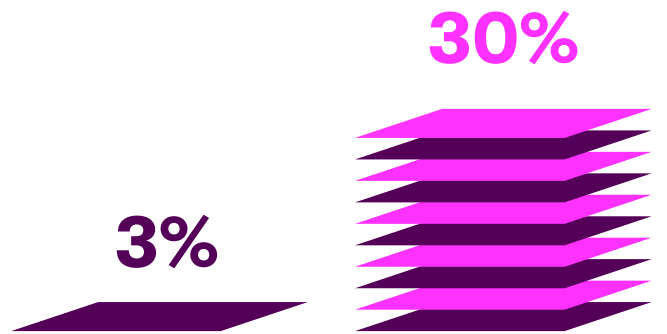
National average earnings for foster youth by age 24

vs

\$1422

Pivotal's high school summer interns average earnings

Earns a Bachelor's Degree



Foster Youth National Avg.

Pivotal

HOW DID WE KNOW WHAT TO CHANGE AND WHEN?

DATA, DATA, DATA

**IF YOU WALK AWAY WITH
ANYTHING....**

**4 ELEMENTS TO A SUCCESSFUL
COACHING PROGRAM**

**SUPERVISION
TRAINING
MANAGING PARTNERSHIPS
MEASURING SUCCESS**

ALL THE ELEMENTS AND HOW THEY WORK ACROSS THE AGENCY

From the perspective of a Coach, Student, Coach Supervisor, & Manager

- o Measuring Success
- o Training
- o Supervision
- o Managing Partnerships



IMAGINE.