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….
Welcome & Check-in

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Today’s Challenge:

Live with curiosity &
create a 1 to 3 word purpose statement

Why are you here?
Why are we here?

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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)
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
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Fostering Promise: Celebrating Our Stories & Dispelling Foster Youth Stigma and Statistics
Shalita O’Neale
Fostering Promise: Helping Young People Cultivate Resilience and Step into their Future

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

https://www.fcnfoundation.org/membership
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
Seven Life Domains Framework

- Finances and Employment
- Housing
- Education
- Physical and Mental Health
- Supportive Relationships and Community Connections
- Cultural and Personal Identity
- Life Skills
• 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
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.

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

WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY

The Pratt Center
Fostering Success and Leadership

COLUMBUS STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Tri-C® Reach SCHOLARS

Central State University 1887

Ohio University 1804

Cuyahoga Community College
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 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.
## Results

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<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS Degree/GED</td>
<td>88.1%</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
<td>90.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College/Degree Earned</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>70.6%</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>65.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Hourly Wage</td>
<td>$12.83</td>
<td>$8.91</td>
<td>$11.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females with at least one dependent</td>
<td>HEMI (18-25)</td>
<td>Emancipated Youth (18-24)</td>
<td>General Population Youth (18-24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>51.5%</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
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Resiliency Practices:

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

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## Recovering from Trauma
How do we show up in the world when we have been hurt?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attachment</th>
<th>Survival Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>React- Fight or Flight?</td>
<td>We need to feel safe in our bodies;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR Disassociate?</td>
<td>How we relate to others matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Relation, not alienation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regulation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reaction</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We need to feel safe in our bodies</td>
<td>Cortisol erases short term memory;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or our brains will not think or</td>
<td>I don’t remember my yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listen.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Triggers</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sensing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memories are alive in my body; they</td>
<td>I’m feeling….(Notice, not Neglect.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are stored in our central nervous</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>system</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
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

**GROWTH MINDSET**

- "Failure is an opportunity to grow"
- "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"

**FIXED MINDSET**

- "Failure is the limit of my abilities"
- "I'm either good at it or I'm not"
- "My abilities are unchanging"
- "I don't like to be challenged"
- "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**
- Research shows that being able to leverage one’s strengths creates a buffer against the negative effects of stress or trauma.

**Are more confident**
- Both strengths awareness and strengths use are positively linked with self-efficacy, self-esteem, self-acceptance, and self-confidence.

**Feel more satisfied at work**
- 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
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deficit-Based Thinking</th>
<th>Strength-Based Thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus on What’s Broken</td>
<td>Focus on What’s Working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcoming Weakness</td>
<td>Emphasizing Possibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
<td>Co Constructing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Externally Driven</td>
<td>Internally Driven</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short-Term Solutions</td>
<td>Sustainable Solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent Relationships</td>
<td>Independent Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliance on Expert Knowledge</td>
<td>Reliance on Personal Strengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform and Transition</td>
<td>Transform and Invent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlight Past Failures</td>
<td>Highlight Past Successes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predict &amp; Control</td>
<td>Discovery &amp; Surprise</td>
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Activities: Resiliency Workbook
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More Resources
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
Questions?

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