

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR YOUTH IN CARE: TRAINING FOR EDUCATORS

### Goals of Training

Participants will:

- Understand the educational needs and challenges of youth in the child welfare system
- Identify ways educators can improve the educational outcomes for students in the child welfare system
- Develop a plan of concrete actions they can take within their schools and school systems to make a difference

**Note to facilitators:** Some groups will be able to develop very concrete and detailed plans for action. Others will be more focused on learning the general concepts and starting the conversation within their schools. Please adjust your questions accordingly - the more concrete, the better.

### Materials Needed

- Projector
- Laptop
- Large butcher paper or chart paper
- Markers
- Copies of Slides
- Deck of playing cards (Optional – see Activity #1)
- Downloaded video content (if no internet access]

### Training Outline

#### Introduction and Review Agenda [ Slides 1-2] [5 MIN]

#### I. Reviewing the Problem [Slides 3-8] [10- 15 MIN]

##### A. Reviewing the Child Welfare System [Slides 3-4]

##### B. Activity #1: Visualizing the Challenge [ Slide 5]

- 1) Have everyone who is able to stand up
- 2) Then have them visualize who they are as a group: “First, Imagine we are all of the youth in foster care – if you know those youth in your school or school district, take a moment and imagine them.”
- 3) Then direct the group to sit down in the following order. After each cut, explain the numbers in relationship to rates of graduation.
  - a) Half of you should sit down – only half of us will graduate from high school
  - b) Of those left standing, half of you should sit down, you are the only ones that will go on to college
  - c) Now have everyone sit down. Only you should remain, because only 2% will graduate from college.

**Optional Modification: “Stacking the Deck”** If your group is large enough, pass out a deck of playing cards, give each participant one playing card. Then ask participants to sit down based on the cards they drew. Have all of the numbered cards sit first (drop out of high school), and then have all of the face cards (go on to college). Finally, you will have only the “aces” left standing representing those who graduate from college. This modification uses the “luck of the draw” to illustrate the educational realities of students in care.

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### **C. Reviewing the Statistics [Slide 6-8]**

- 1) (Optional) Before reviewing each slide, ask the audience to make predictions about what they think the numbers will be.
- 2) Transition to the next activity by acknowledging that while the current statistics are bad, we have solutions that work and will not require extensive amount of staff time or radical reforms in practice☺

### **II. Identifying Solutions and Challenges [Slides 9 - 28] (15 MINUTES)**

#### **Activity #2: Video and Debrief: [Slide 13]**

- 1) Video: [Slide 13] If have limited time, stop video at 2:50- when the speaker discusses information sharing protocols. Restart video at 9:48, when the speaker discusses the positive benefits interventions can have.
  - a) Link for video with open captioning :  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5p44zzlioA&feature=youtu.be&noredirect=1>
  - b) Link for video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5p44zzlioA>]
- 2) Discussion: **[Slides 10-13]**
  - a) Take volunteers to share the answers to the debrief questions.
  - b) List answers on a chart paper divided in half, the left side titled “Challenges”, the right side titled “Solutions”
  - c) The goal of the debrief discussion is to highlight the following issues as places where educators can make a difference:
    - a. Information sharing
    - b. Appropriate educational placement
    - c. Post-secondary preparation and transition
    - d. Integrating into school community / the importance of extra-curricular activities

### **III. Distribute and Review the Tools: [Slides 15- 28][15 -30 MIN]**

- A. Review the tool, covering the organization and major points of the guide.
- B. Highlight areas were the administration guide goes into greater depth

### **IV. Next Steps: Applying the Tool and Steps [Slides 29-35] [MODIFICATIONS FOR DIFFERENT PARTICPANT GROUPS] [30-60 MIN]**

***This section of the training will be different depending on make-up of the participants:***

- **GROUP A:** Participants from Same School: group by grade or subject area
- **GROUP B:** Participants from Different Schools in Same County: group by school if possible, otherwise group by subject area or grade
- **GROUP C:** Participants from Different School Districts: group by school and grade if possible, otherwise group by type of school structure or grade level (i.e. small schools, comprehensive high schools, middle school, etc.)

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**A. Divide into groups of 3-5 people** – Ideally these groups can continue to work together throughout the school year.

**B. Deciding Where to Start: Activity #3 [Slide 30-32]**

1) **GROUP A & B Directions:**

- a) STOP AFTER SLIDE 31 : Have groups verbally share out their answers
- b) Slide 32 : Have small groups discuss questions and record changes they can make for all six tips on chart paper
  - a. List out all of the changes that can be made
  - b. List challenges and potential solutions to changes
  - c. Identify what the potential impact is, and use that information to prioritize the list of changes
- c) Let them know they will share out later and should select a spokesperson
- d) Give groups 20 minutes to discuss
- e) Convene large group and have small groups share out their plans for each of the six tips
- f) Ask groups for feedback and comments on the plans presented
  - a. Identify common ideas
  - b. Share solutions and potential resources
- g) Wrap Up Questions:
  - a. What else do we collectively need? [Facilitator should generate a to do list for the entire group]
    - i. Who do we need to talk to?
    - ii. What resources do we need to gather?
    - iii. What questions do we need answered?
  - b. What is our time frame?
    - i. What is feasible in a week?
    - ii. What is feasible in a month?
  - c. Who can take the lead?
- h) Transition to Slide 33: This is a large plan, but what can we all do individually to make an immediate impact?

2) **GROUP C Directions:**

- a) STOP AFTER SLIDE 31: Have pairs or small groups share out their answers
- b) Slide 32: Lead a short discussion, posing the following questions. Capture the answers on chart paper labeled with the headings: “Changes we can make”, “Impact we will have”, “Challenges to changes”.
- c) Discussion Questions:
  - a. Which do you think would be the easiest?
  - b. Which do you think would be the most difficult?
  - c. What might be some of the barriers?
  - d. [Try to identify places of commonality, and shared experiences across the group. Also attempt to identify some shared interest in a change that the group could do together.
- d) Slide 33 – Wrap up Debrief: what next?

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### **C. Small Commitments = Big Reward**

**GROUP A, B, and C: Activity #4:** [Slide 34] Emphasize how important it is to start with one step, and make small finite changes.

1) Directions:

- a) Take a moment to identify one thing from this list that you can do in the next week.
- b) Now take out your calendar, curriculum planning book, smartphone, tablet, or wherever you do your planning
- c) Write a reminder to yourself for one week from now to check review how it went, and to refer back to this tool guide to consider what further steps can be taken

2) EXTRA CREDIT: SHARE YOUR PLAN WITH ONE OF YOUR PEERS, AND THEN PLAN TO SWAP NOTES IN A WEEK.