TARGETED EDUCATION CASE MANAGEMENT FOR STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE: MODELS AND IMPACT

July 12, 2023

Hosted by the ABA Center on Children & the Law and the Youth Law Center
AGENDA

- Introductions
- Overview & Framing
- Model: Treehouse
- Model: NYCL
- Questions
ABA CENTER ON CHILDREN AND THE LAW

A nonprofit grant-funded entity within the American Bar Association with a mission to promote access to justice for children and families. Projects support collaboration and coalition building at local, state and national levels to build the capacity of legal practices and systems that serve children and families.

www.americanbar.org/child
LEGAL CENTER FOR FOSTER CARE & EDUCATION


www.fostercareandeducation.org
Supportive Advocates Improve Education Outcomes

Data supports that students in foster care need targeted, 1-on-1, intervention

“Non-parental supportive adult” = higher likelihood of attending college
  • Consistent supportive relationships can those with include parents, kin, foster parents, caseworkers, teachers, children’s attorneys, and others.
  • A study of college admissions showed that for each institutional or supportive adult a youth could identify their odds of enrolling in college increased by 39%
  • Adult supporters provided guidance, emotional support, and stability

Targeted Education Case Management
Targeted attention and advocacy for students in foster care

**Location:**
Specialized child welfare unit  
School-based  
Community partners

**Funding:**
Federal/state funded  
Philanthropic support  
Local investment

**Students served:**
Universal (all students in foster care)  
Intervention by age or grade  
Special education needs  
High school completion  
By referral

**Important elements:**
Youth-centered  
Collaborative  
Data/impact tracking
TREEHOUSE
FOR KIDS
Education Case Management for Students in Foster Care

July 12, 2023
Introductions

Nicole Herron
Senior Director, Programs

Roland Pablo
Regional Manager, Graduation Success
Historical Context

- Founded in 1988
- Launched Educational Advocacy in 2001
- Launched Graduation Success in 2012
- Annually provide 7,000 children & youth with $24 million in education, financial and material supports throughout Washington State
- Advocate for policy and practice changes at intersection of child welfare & education
Educational Advocacy

Education Advocates provide short-term assistance and training for caregivers, school personnel and social workers to remove immediate educational barriers.

Examples:
› School enrollment
› Best interest determination decisions
› Special education
› School disciplinary issues
› Academic progress

Youth Served
› 900 - 1,300 annually

Eligibility
› Pre-kindergarten to grade 12

Funding Source
› OSPI Contract
› Private Funding

Educational Advocacy Team
Graduation Success

Middle and high school youth in foster care are paired with a Treehouse Education Specialist, a trained professional who provides educational support, coordination of services and a connection to resources.

Education Specialists partner with the youth’s existing support system – caregivers, parents, social workers, teachers and school counselors – to create a student-centered plan tailored to their individual needs and goals.

**Youth Served**
› 1,500 annually

**Eligibility**
› Grades 8-12

**Funding Source**
› OSPI Contract
› Private Funding
Funding Strategies

Public/Private Partnership
- HB 1999
- 70:30 Ratio
- Multi-year planning and forecasting is essential
- Diversified private funds with a focus on unrestricted general funding
What We’re Learning

#1 Persistence

#2 Systems Change

#3 Special Populations

#4 Youth Adult Partnerships

#5 Healing Centered Practice

#5 Learning Agenda

[Treehouse logo]
Key Insights for Replication

- Track both persistence (continuing and dropout rates) and graduation (4th - 7th year)
- Secure funding
- Establish DSA & MOU standards
- Serve youth beyond dependency
- Learn how case complexity impacts workloads
- Understand level of support needed for youth vs adults
- Consider needs of special populations
  - Ex: Tribal, dual-system, ICPC, unaccompanied refugee minors etc.
- Secret sauce = educational advocacy + access to financial and material resources
Compassionate Education Systems Overview
Supporting the Educational Journeys of Students in Foster Care
July 12, 2023
A Compassionate Education Experience

Students are equipped and supported to become strong self-advocates

The experience of special education is student-centered and restorative

Students feel welcome & supported by their school community

Young people feel seen, listened to, respected and supported in their educational journeys.
NCYL’s CA Compassionate Ed Framework

Compassionate, Student-Centered Partnership

School Site & District Capacity Building, Coaching & Training

Cross-System Collaboration, Advocacy & System Reform

County & Statewide Advocacy on Practice & Policy
Compassion – the experience of “together with” is the vision of success and the primary intervention – at all levels: youth, family, community and systems.
Demonstration Site Program Model

The Compassionate Ed System’s Initiative model goal centers the needs of students’ specific needs.

Whole-Student Supports
Centering from student voice and their unique needs and assets

Individualized Educational Planning
Student-led, connecting with community and school resources. Team approach.

Career & Post Secondary Planning
Skill assessment and exploration, FAFSA, college/career and application support

Relationship-Centered Engagement
Building compassionate and trusting relationships with students and families
Going Deeper: Understanding Arizona’s Context
Three regions encompassing a service area that reaches 82% students in foster care in Arizona.
Scope & Systems Approach

• At a systems level, we are improving collaboration between multiple public and community agencies.

• Since our statewide expansion in 2017, we have served nearly 2,000 youth across, 88 public school districts and over 140 individual private and charter schools in Arizona.
Engagement Tiers

“Intensive” Education Liaisons provide individualized and long-term (1- to 2-year) intensive supports (weekly) to highest need grade 9–12 students.

“Responsive” Education Liaisons provide short-term (1- to 6-month) youth-level interventions triggered by a pressing education need for grade K–12 students.

Successful implementation of system-level policies and practices ensuring youth are accessing academic and social and emotional interventions intended for all students.
Example of Systems Supports

- IDEA Parent rights and the effect on schooling for youth in care
- Recent Judicial Rule change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What/Who</th>
<th>F.O. Parent w/ Ed Rights*</th>
<th>DCS Case Worker</th>
<th>Foster/ Kinship</th>
<th>Group Home/ Therapeutic</th>
<th>Educational Surrogate</th>
<th>Ed. Liaison, FosterEd</th>
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<tr>
<td>Grades/Attendance</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Behavior</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>504 Plans Info</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Sign as Guardian for 504 Plan</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sign as IDEA Parent for IEP</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>No, unless EdRights are severed, or FO parents are unreachable</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>NO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have Online School Data (i.e. ParentVue)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pick Up Student from School</td>
<td>NO, unless approved by DCS</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak with Student at School</td>
<td>NO, unless approved by DCS</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please connect with DCS first to make sure F.O. Parents retain their Ed Rights and what types of interactions/information is okay. There might be a safety concern with them knowing the students school location. An F.O. Parent without Ed Rights is unable to do any of the above listed things, unless DCS says otherwise.
Partnerships & Collaboration

- Local partnerships allow for an increase in the network of resources available to youth we serve
- Local collaboratives lead to increase in communication and willingness to work together
  - Ex: Regional LEA ESSA POC roundtable in Pima County
- State-wide collaboration and the ripple effects of those efforts
- Statewide Foster Care Education Conference
Learning, Research & Evaluation

**Program Level Data**
Information collected by Education Liaisons on champions, team and education planning work.

**SEL & Student Experiences Academic**
Surveys administered every 6 months to understand SEL and student experiences & with NCYL staff.

**Academic**
State level data linked between Department of Education & Child Welfare.
Learning & Research – Pre-Pandemic

- 11% percentage point increase in probability of graduation
- Increased likelihood of participation in statewide testing.
- Increases in self-efficacy and positive future orientation
- Decrease in out of school time. On average 13 fewer unenrolled days.
- Increase in English achievement by 14 points
Learning & Research – During Pandemic

Figure 1: Still-Continuing Rate and Single-Year Graduation Rate for Grade 12 Students in Foster Care Served by FosterEd, 2018–2019 and 2020–2021 School Years
Learning & Research – During Pandemic

Figure 5: Perceived Impacts of FosterEd on Youth, From Perspective of Adult Team Members (Percentage Distributions)
Parting Thoughts
Questions?

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