



**2022 California Foster Youth Education Summit**  
**April 24-26, 2022**  
**Hyatt Regency Monterey**

**Student Program**

This year we will have a strong Youth program that includes a Sunday afternoon Student Institute which will help them prepare for a successful time at the Summit. Students will learn about their education rights, engage in activities to develop their public speaking and networking skills, work in small groups to identify what messages they would like to convey to the adults at the conference about how the system could be change to better meet their needs, develop personalized talking points for sharing at the conference (at the youth's discretion), and will receive support in planning their conference sessions including choosing breakout sessions where they can both gather and share important information.

On Monday night—the students will be able to gather in a safe and fun environment for dinner together and a silent dance party. This is a great opportunity for them to unwind and be together as a group. There will be adult supporters there is any students need to process what they learned or felt during the day.

The students are also required to attend a workshop during each of the (5) sessions being held Monday/ Tuesday. Each session has 1-2 workshops that are specifically for students helping them in some way in their lives—whether it be talking to a Judge about how they can represent themselves in court, or how to use art to better express themselves or how to develop a Success Road map.

Sunday, April 24, 2022	2pm to 8:30 pm	Student Institute
Monday April 25, 2022	9am to 3:30 pm	Day 1 of Conference
Monday April 25, 2022	6pm to 9:30 pm	Student Networking Dinner and Silent Dance Party
Tuesday April 26, 2022	9am to 3:30 pm	Day 2 of Conference

Questions about the Student program? Contact Chris Perry at [chris@mwmanagementgroup.com](mailto:chris@mwmanagementgroup.com)

PRE K-12  
AND BEYOND

CALIFORNIA FOSTER YOUTH EDUCATION  
TASK FORCE



## California Foster Youth Education Summit

April 24-26, 2022

Hyatt Regency Monterey

**In order to ensure a successful participation experience  
All Students attending the conference are expected to participate in the  
Youth Academy on Sunday, from 2-8:30 pm.**

This year we will have a strong Youth program that includes a Sunday afternoon **Student Academy** which will help them prepare for a successful time at the Summit. Students will learn about their education rights, engage in activities to develop their public speaking and networking skills, work in small groups to identify what messages they would like to convey to the adults at the conference about how the system could be changed to better meet their needs, develop personalized talking points for sharing at the conference (at the youth's discretion), and will receive support in planning their conference session including choosing breakout sessions where they can both gather and share important information.

Monday night the students will join together with their Chaperones in a dinner and silent dance party! This is a great unwind time for them where they get to meet and hang out with others at the event in a fun, low-key environment.

### **The Student Program includes:**

- Sunday afternoon Student Academy
- Sunday night dinner
- Monday student breakfast
- Monday night Student/Adult Supporter dinner and activity
- Along with the conference program and meals (Monday lunch, Tuesday breakfast and lunch)

### **Students must be:**

- Between 16 and 24 years of age
- If they are still in care, they must have a chaperone who will be attending the Summit and staying at the same hotel they are.

### **Event Activity Timing:**

- Sunday 2pm to 9pm
  - Monday 8am to 9pm
  - Tuesday 8am to 3pm
-





Dear Foster Youth Ed Summit Student Participant:

We are looking forward to having you participate in the upcoming Foster Youth Education Summit. Please review this packet of information. It has lots of details for you about the Conference. It also includes a Code of Conduct that we expect you to review and sign.

### What to bring:

#### **A well rested, balanced body**

The three days of the Summit are full of activities from early morning into the evening, and then you will want to spend time meeting other foster youth from all over the state, and you may want to do some sightseeing, catch up with old friends and then...well... you get the point!

#### **Appropriate attire**

You will be engaging with other people from throughout the state during the conference. We suggest professional clothes (e.g., dresses/skirts of appropriate length, slacks/blouses, avoiding tennis shoes or tank tops) that are comfortable, but in which you look and feel great!

#### **A great attitude and thoughtful mind.**

You will have an opportunity to learn and discuss so many great programs that help foster youth in the education process. Speak up in your workshops, share your stories when appropriate. The other attendees will be interested in what you have to say!

#### **Conference Expectations**

We have developed some expectations to make this event possible, successful, fun, and safe for everyone. The Foster Youth Ed Summit Staff expect the following from you.

#### **Expectations**

- Be on time and prepared for scheduled activities during this conference.
- Attend a workshop in every session in order to receive a stipend
- Have an open mind and desire to learn.
- Put your cell phones away during events – no texting, no calls during sessions.
- Be interactive with youth from other counties during workshops and activities.
- Be well mannered, respecting each other along with their ideas.
- Be willing to share information from workshops with other youth.
- Check in with your Adult Supporter if you have questions.



## CODE OF CONDUCT

You are here as a representative of all other Foster Care Youth in California. As a representative, your behavior reflects not only you as an individual, but any organization that you might be representing, this Summit and the entire foster care system. With this idea in mind, we ask that you read over the following guidelines and abide by them accordingly. You will be signing a form at the conference acknowledging that you have received, read and agreed to this code.

**For any of the following, you will be removed from the conference and proper action will be taken:**

- Any possession or use of alcohol & drugs
- Any vandalism or theft
- Any kind of sexual activity
- Any form of violent behavior

**For any of the following, you will be removed from a conference activity and proper action will be taken:**

- Any kind of obscene/disrespectful remarks
- Any kind of disruptive behavior
- Using cell phone during sessions (no texting, calls, etc.)

**You are required to attend all scheduled activities on the conference agenda, this includes:**

- Workshops on Monday and Tuesday
- Sunday Youth Academy
- Monday night dinner/activity
- and any other scheduled events

The curfew is 10:30 p.m. You are to be in your room with only your assigned roommates.

You are required to follow all the rules at the hotel and in any offsite venues while they are accommodating us. This also means respecting all other individuals who may be guests of the hotel. Please be respectful of property at the hotel.

Finally and most important, you are required to:

**Be outspoken • Learn • Meet new people • Have fun**



## Learning Session "A" - Monday April 25, 2022

### 10:45 am - 12:00 pm



### Student Oriented Workshop

#### A1 From a Foster Youth to Foster Youth, You Are FINE

*Theresa Reed, Pasadena City College, STARS Advisor and FYSI Liaison*



I am a former foster youth and now author, and want to help foster youth find your voice by examining your journey in foster care to create a story and find outlets for sharing it. I want to help students feel that seen, heard, and valued and your journey have a higher purpose of encouraging others. You will explore a new meaning of being F.I.N.E. and challenge the beliefs in your invisible trauma backpack by viewing yourself through a trauma lens to shift the perceptions of your circumstances. You will leave with an action plan you can begin using immediately.

#### A2 Mentoring Youth to Success

*Sara Towner-Arispe & Ilinaoa Suilafu, San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program Specialist Managers*

*Shonie Perry & Daisy Esparza, San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools Homeless Education Program Specialist Managers*

Attendees will learn how to maximize educational outcomes for At-Promise youth using mentorship programs. San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools Children Deserve Success in partnership with five distinct mentoring programs work in collaboration with school districts county wide to provide on campus mentoring support to students. The mentoring programs promote developmental, advocacy, and self-reliance themes to encourage youth and empower them to meet the challenges of being successful students and citizens as they grow through the challenges of being historically underserved or being considered At-Promise. These themes include leadership development, life skills, professional development, mental health and wellness, career exploration and preparation for post-secondary success. You will leave with an understanding of how our collective impact brings agencies together to mentor, re-engage, support, increase attendance, reduce suspensions, and increase overall student engagement.

#### A3 Ensuring School Stability Through School of Origin Transportation

*Alaina Moonves-Leb, Alliance for Children's Rights, Senior Staff Attorney*

*Danielle Wondra, Children Now Senior Policy & Outreach Associate, Child Welfare*

*Deborah Avalos, California Department of Education, Education Programs Consultant, FYSCP*

With an average of 8 school changes, youth lose up to 4 years of learning during their time in care and face the continuing trauma of reestablishing academic and social relationships. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires districts and child welfare to work together to arrange and fund transportation to school of origin (SOO), the vital right needed to ensure school stability. First, learn the basics of SOO law, including the intersections of Federal and California requirements along with the results of a statewide public records act request seeking ESSA plans, SOO practices, data demonstrating trends in implementation, highlighted best practices, and areas where improvement is needed. Then, review a new document from the School Stability Subcommittee that includes best practices and creative solutions to aide in implementation of this right—even as counties struggle with limited budgets, relationships between agencies and responsibilities, and limited transportation options.

#### A4 Creating Hope and Resiliency through Youth Leadership Academy

*Pamela Hancock, Director; Amanda Meeker, Student Services Specialist; Brent Smither, Program Coordinator; Josh Blecha, Program Coordinator*

*Fresno County Superintendent of Schools*



So often foster and homeless students are only seen as victims, having problems, or needing therapy. We want to change this perception. Fresno County Superintendent of Schools Foster & Homeless Education Department, in collaboration with our Safe and Healthy Kids Department, has developed a Leadership Academy for students in foster care and those experiencing homelessness that focuses on utilizing students' strengths to develop leadership skills and giving back to the community through volunteerism. Cohorts of students participate in team building, goal setting, self-reflection, and outdoor education activities as they learn to lead themselves and others and build resiliency and hope so they can overcome their circumstances. Learn about this program and experience the leadership strategies used. Walk away with ideas of how to develop a similar program in your community.

#### A5 Trauma Informed and Resilience Focused Schools

*Jaymee McLaughlin*, Chico Unified School District, Homeless and Foster Liaison

How do you create a Trauma Informed and Resilience-Focused school? Trauma informed and Resilience Focused is asking "What is driving the way this child thinks about themselves and others", and "How does that impact the way they behave?" We will discuss a ten step approach to empowering our youth who have experienced trauma and help them build resiliency. We can help foster the possibility of well-being by restoring and nurturing resilience despite other life diversities. You will leave with materials that can support you taking this program to your schools.

#### A6 Let the Data do the talking: How to use your own data to make program changes

*Jeze Lopez*, Program Director; *Briseida Maciel*, Program Specialist; *Andrea Garcia*, Life Skills Specialist; *Eric Lara*, Associate Dean Student Success and Equity  
Mt. San Antonio College

In this presentation, we will share how the REACH Guardian Scholars program has used a data driven approach to implementing services and securing funding to best support our students. We will explain how the data was analyzed to help staff make informed decisions on best practices for the program. You will learn recommended data parameters to analyze program data and how findings have been utilized by the REACH program to make programmatic changes, implement pilot projects and secure campus funds. You will also receive materials and guides on what the REACH program has done and how you can replicate them.

#### A8 Today's Foster Youth: How to Create a Comprehensive Foster Youth Support Program on Your Campus

*Jenna Mendez*, Corona-Norco Unified School District, TK-12 District Foster Youth Counselor/Liaison

Foster youth are often the invisible underserved population. Come learn how to create a comprehensive academic and social/emotional program serving the needs of today's foster youth. We will discuss academic supports, on-campus programs and mentorships, district and community outreach, career readiness, resources, and how to build meaningful relationships for this at-risk population. Financial limitations and options, and ideas for all grade levels will be also discussed. A link to a participant resources guide will be provided to our attendees.



## Learning Session "B" - Monday April 25, 2022

1:30 pm - 2:45 pm



### Student Oriented Workshop

#### B1 How to Stand Up for Yourself and Get the Most out of Your Juvenile Court Appearances

*Judge Charles Crandall, Second District Court of Appeal, Justice Pro Tempore*



The former SLO County Presiding Juvenile Court Judge invites youth to an interactive discussion about the juvenile protection court process, and effective and non-effective communication. Come speak with the judge about self-advocacy and getting the most out of your court experience. Youth are encouraged to bring up topics that are of interest to them.

#### B2 Resilience Is Everything

*Dee Hankins, Inspirational Speaker, Former Foster Youth*

This session will teach you all about the power and importance of resilience. We'll learn just how important being resilient is through story telling and self reflection. All you will need are open ears, an open heart, and willing spirit.



#### B3 The Cost of Caring

*Christina Navarette & Maria Tello*

LA County Office of Education, Program Activities Specialists

"The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet. Rachel Naomi Remen. Let's talk about the cost of caring. In this workshop we will identify the toll that the cost of caring can take on our daily lives, both personally and professionally. Join us as we develop a toolkit to care for ourselves so we can truly care for others. Let's preserve that gift that is within each one of us.

#### B4 Cultural Humility and the Foster Youth Bill of Rights

*Lakisha Green, Staff Services Manager I; Shekinah Peredo, Associate Governmental Program Analyst; and Marissa Soto, Associate Governmental Program Analyst*  
California Department of Social Services

The Office of Foster Care Ombudsperson (OFCO) will provide an interactive and engaging training using videos, discussions, and hands-on activities. The training will focus on the importance of practicing cultural humility when working with youth in foster care. At the end of the training, you will understand cultural humility, how the Foster Youth Bill of Rights protects cultural differences, and how to apply cultural humility when engaging with foster youth. You will also learn the role and duties of the OFCO and how to advocate on behalf of foster youth pertaining to their rights. Each participant will receive a folder of Foster Youth Bill of Rights publication materials.

#### B5 From Law to Practice: Supporting Homeless Youth & Their Education

*Donna Smith, Monterey County Office of Education, Program Coordinator*

*Jill Camron, San Benito COE, Coordinator of Special Projects*

*Erika Cortes, Santa Cruz COE, Homeless Project Coordinator*

Learn how to use the homeless educational legislation to your advantage and how to apply it in your county and LEA's. Our goal is to introduce you to ideas and practices from COE's to school sites and districts about understanding the

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through community partnerships.

**B6 The Family Urgent Response System**

**Colin Williams**, California Department of Social Services, Associate Governmental Program Analyst

**Jennifer Messerschmidt**, California Department of Social Services Associate Governmental Program Analyst

**Danielle Wondra**, Children Now, Senior Policy & Outreach Associate, Child Welfare

**Jessica Haspel**, Associate Director, Child Welfare, Children Now

This presentation will introduce the basics of the Family Urgent Response System (FURS); a program consisting of a statewide hotline and county based in-person mobile response teams that provide immediate support to current and former foster youth and their families to preserve placements and support family relationships and to reduce psychiatric hospitalizations, law enforcement contacts, and placement in congregate care facilities. We will identify how FURS supports placement and educational success. Attendees will explore scenarios in which youth may want to access FURS while in the school environment, how education providers and advocates can support those efforts, and how the role of FURS as a support to students can be expanded. Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions about FURS and provide feedback on the program and will learn how to obtain and distribute outreach materials about FURS to inform youth and caregivers about FURS.

**B7 Improving Education Outcomes of Youth in Foster Care through Systems Change: A Best Practices Guide for Districts**

**Alaina Moonves-Leb**, Alliance for Children's Rights, Senior Staff Attorney

**Mark Rodgers**, Bonita Unified School District, Senior Director, Student Services

How are youth in foster care doing in your district? Does your district issue 100% of the partial credits youth are entitled to? Or ensure that 70, 80, or even 90% of your seniors graduate? How about having 80-90% of your youth remain stable in one school for a full school year? Six school districts spent 5 years collaborating to improve the education outcomes of their youth in foster care. Find out how they did it and how you can too. Learn how to utilize the recently published Best Practices Guide for Developing a District System to Improve Education Outcomes for Youth in Foster Care, including accessing best practices, tools, tips, data and more.





## Learning Session "C" - Monday April 25, 2022

### 3:00 pm - 4:15 pm



#### Student Oriented Workshop

#### C1 Exposing Resiliency and Capturing Covitality: Advancing Well-Being Among Foster Youth for Academic and Career Success

*Stephanie Oquendo, Promises2Kids, Clinical Services Manager*

*Jennica Paz, PhD, San Diego State University, Assistant Professor*

Do you need to "Flip the Script" and find a new approach with your youth? Then please join us for an innovative and refreshing take on how you can connect and communicate with your youth to move towards success. We apply the CoVitality strengths-based framework for assessing psychosocial assets among youth while guiding you through important elements establishing the critical value of positive psychological interventions. We advocate for a holistic approach that examines strengths through knowledge of culturally-affirming pedagogies and celebrate the assets and expertise among diverse People of Color (BIPOC). Lessons learned have vital implications on supports and strategies that need to be considered when working with youth to optimize well-being and advance their resiliency.

#### C2 Program Design for Educational Case Coordination for Foster Youth in Santa Clara County

*Joann Vaars, Ed.D., Santa Clara Office of Education, Administrator, Educational Services for Foster & Homeless Youth*

*McKenna Cole, MA, Foster America, Santa Clara County Office of Education, Data and Design Strategist*

A new educational case coordination program was launched in Santa Clara County in July of 2021. A collaborative partnership between the Santa Clara County Office of Education and the Department of Family and Children's Services, the Education Management Program seeks to improve educational outcomes for foster youth across our county. This session will explore how the county approached the program design, the development of tools for both data integration and case coordination, and the ways in which the county will be monitoring and evaluating educational outcomes for foster youth moving forward. All of these elements will be discussed through a human centered design and data equity lens.

#### C3 It Takes a Village, A Look at San Mateo County's ILP Village

*Edward Manio, Program Manager; Glenda Chicas, Independent Living Skills Coach and MaryDyenne Rodriguez, Career Advisor*

CLC Partnership

It Takes a Village to raise a child. No one person can do it alone. Your community wants to help. Give them an opportunity to do so! The San Mateo County ILP (Independent Living Program) Village is comprised of community partners throughout San Mateo County who come together with one goal in mind, to ensure foster youth in our community have access to essential life skill resources that will help them as they grow and become independent. Becoming a young adult can be tough. Constantly moving from home to home, switching schools, figuring out what to do after graduation, making a resume, finding a job, opening a bank account, finding housing, learning how to drive, etc. can be overwhelming for a young teen. Helping a young child navigate through life is also overwhelming for one single person. The ILP Village was formed to help youth with these issues. It never hurts to ask your community. You'll be surprised at what you can receive. Learn how we grew our village and how you can too.

#### C4 Beyond Graduation: How to Set-Up Foster Youth for Success in Higher Education



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Timing out the transition and applying to college is just the first step. Many students enroll in college but experience a myriad of challenges that prevent them from attending. This workshop will equip you with the necessary information to support foster youth during the transition to postsecondary education. We will provide strategies to prevent summer melt and present information on campus-based resources to increase college access and persistence. You will also learn the latest research on the disparate impact of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) on students of color and strategies to support students in maintaining their financial aid once in college.

### C5 The Basic Education Rights of Youth in Foster Care and How to Implement Them

*Alaina Moonves-Leb*, Senior Staff Attorney and *Amanda Burckhardt*, Advocate and Trainer  
Alliance for Children's Rights

Youth in foster care and those on probation have vital education rights including school stability, immediate enrollment, partial credits, and AB 167/216 graduation. Utilizing the Foster Youth Education Toolkit and the Court Companion to the Toolkit attendees will learn the basics of these rights and leave the presentation with the building blocks upon which school districts can construct a comprehensive program to increase achievement of their foster youth. Each topic is covered by a factsheet outlining relevant laws, best practice implementation steps, and flexible tools including sample letters and forms.

### C6 Creative Wellbeing: Healing-Informed Arts Engagement for Youth in Foster Care and their Providers

*Stefanie Gluckman*, Office of Child Protection, LA County, LA County Office of Child Protection, Director, Education Coordinating Council

*Elizabeth Salazar*, LA County Office of Child Protection, Senior Staff Analyst

*Elisabeth Nails*, Department of Arts and Culture Arts Education and Youth Development

*Barbara Fant*, Arts for Healing and Justice Network, Director of Trainings and Replication

Creative Wellbeing is a joint mental health / arts-based approach for fostering communities of wellness, especially for systems-impacted youth, those at-risk of becoming systems-impacted, and the adults who support them. This approach to mental health promotion has been developed collaboratively by the LA County Department of Arts and Culture (Arts and Culture), Department of Mental Health (DMH), Office of Child Protection (OCP), and the Arts for Healing and Justice Network (AHJN) to promote mental health and wellness through the arts for youth impacted by foster care. The method provides culturally relevant, healing-centered, arts-based workshops for youth and professional development/coaching for the adults who support them – educators, service providers, and community-based organizations. Session participants will receive a presentation (and presentation slides) to learn about the Creative Wellbeing partnership and how the approach was created/implemented, participate in a healing informed arts activity (materials will be provided), and provide feedback on the current model through an interactive audience feedback form.

### C7 Supporting Transition to Adulthood for Foster Youth with Disabilities through the IEP Process: Building Self Advocacy and Increasing Post Secondary Success

*Cheryl Theis, MA, (She/her)*, Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF), Education Advocate

This presentation will focus on how foster youth with disabilities can benefit from the special education law, IDEA, to ensure that IEP teams create meaningful, effective on the ground transition support, especially around mental health, self advocacy and transition. This presentation focuses on what meaningful support and education looks like under the law, AND effective tools and strategies for ensuring that these are developed, implemented and delivered to youth in a meaningful way. Attendees will learn the legal requirements, advocacy skills and receive resources that include sample goals, services, and model transition plans focused on needs of foster youth. We will focus on mental health needs related to trauma informed practices, positive behavior support and interventions, and practical considerations for putting effective supports and services into the plan, truly individualized transition support to INDIVIDUAL needs of youth, and tips to ensure meaningful youth engagement in the process.

Pin a paragraph. Click here to add your own text and edit me. It's easy.





## Learning Session "D" - Tuesday April 26, 2022

### 10:30 am - 11:45 am



#### Student Oriented Workshop

#### D1 Know Your Education Rights and Become Your Own Advocate

*Amanda Burckhardt, Alliance for Children's Rights, Education Advocate & Trainer*



As a highly transient student population, foster youth face many unique challenges in the education system resulting in only about 51% graduating from high school and 3% receiving any type of college degree. In order to mitigate the negative effects of school instability and trauma, foster youth have special education protections not afforded to other students. These laws are only meaningful if someone knows about them and advocates for their implementation. In this training, youth will learn what their education rights are and how to effectively advocate for themselves in school through an interactive experience.

#### D2 "I Don't Feel Like Talking." Using Expressive Arts to Support Self-Expression with Foster Youth

*Christine Dennis, Lake Elsinore Unified School District, LCSW, PPSC, District Social Worker - Foster Youth Program*

Expressive arts are a multimodal approach to self-discovery and self-expression that uses music, body movement, creative writing, art, and drama to process our internal emotions and experiences. Join this immersive workshop as attendees are guided through interactive projects to experience the effects of expressive arts firsthand. The arts are a diverse tool that can be used with different populations and cultures. Current research will be presented to explore the impact of using art to process trauma and support mental health. Expressive arts can be a valuable tool for groups, rapport building, classes, mentorships and more! The arts are an internal process that does not require another person; making it a valuable method for foster youth to use independently when they do not have anyone to talk to, or when they don't know how to express and process how they are feeling. Two interactive activities will be facilitated during the workshop. The first activity will allow attendees to experience a creative writing activity and the second activity will be an art-based activity using paints.

#### D3 Integrating Trauma-Informed Healing and Community Care in Foster Youth Services

*Nikita Gupta, Resilience Education and Training, President/Consultant*

The massive uncertainties and shifts of the last two years have catalyzed the need for enhancing the ways in which we make space for deep collective care and community healing. In this session, we will explore the questions of how and where to make space for community care, and what to do in those spaces once we have created them. This session will focus on simple ways to integrate trauma-informed practices into existing services. Participants will practice and learn a restorative practice and will discuss ideas that they can implement for their Foster Youth. Participants will learn a practice for nervous system regulation that will benefit themselves and the Youth they serve.

#### D4 Youth Engagement Project- Incorporating Youth Voice on a Child Welfare/Probation County Level and Statewide Level

*Kelly Hood, Youth Engagement Project, Director*

County Child Welfare Systems and the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) need youth voices at the forefront of decision making. Participants will hear how the Youth Engagement Project (YEP) has been successful in engaging youth on the county and statewide level by current youth with lived experience. Participants will obtain strategies on how to properly have youth voice incorporated by engaging in hands-on activities and a panel of youth and county professionals. Additionally, they

**D5 Diversity, Equity and Inclusive Practices to Re-engage Youth**

**Alexis Villa**, Associate Dean; **Elizabeth Sanchez**, Student Success Specialist and **Xavier Reyna**  
Imperial Valley College

Come learn how to implement Diversity, Equity and Inclusive (DEI) practices that we use to reconnect youth to school in a post-covid environment. We will provide workshop ideas and examples on how to re-engage students. In addition, we will discuss supportive services and leadership opportunities for youth in an educational setting.. Moreover, we will have information on how to give youth a voice and provide follow up materials on how to implement these practices at your school/agency. Attendees will leave this session with knowledge about our holistic approaches and basic needs program model.

**D6 The DOR "Employment, Independence, and Equality" Bridge for Youth with Disabilities In/After Foster Care**

**Nancy Wentling**, Policy Manager; **Brenna Lammerding**, Policy Analyst & **Shanti Ezrine**, Policy Analyst  
CA Department of Rehabilitation

Learn about the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) commitment to help youth and students with disabilities involved in the foster care system to thrive in the world of work as a pathway to independence and equality. DOR Student Services and the vocational rehabilitation program can support youth whether they want to get a job, explore career pathways, or consider a full plan to support their unique goals for employment and independence. Hear about the power of advocacy and self-advocacy in uplifting youth voice and promoting disability inclusion in school and in the workplace. Learn how DOR builds bridges with other state and local programs to ensure vocational goals and youth rights are woven into transition plans to support youth during and after foster care. Lastly, our presentation will cover how to apply for or refer youth with disabilities to DOR programs, and where to go for more information.

**D7 Go Make A Difference**

**Kevon Lee**, National activist for anti-bullying, education, and at-risk youth

Come join me in this interactive presentation that tells the story of a child who experienced homelessness, the foster care system, bullying, and educational barriers. The inspiring and empowering story will light a new flame in every educator that hears it. Educators will learn the importance of being in a child's life, and how it only takes one caring adult to put the child on the right path. They will learn how to win the heart of students to break the barrier between educator and student. Every child needs an educator to be the difference in their lives to lead them to success. Learn how the child is dependent on us in order to be the mentor they desperately need.

**D8 Too Much to Do -Too Few People: Creatively Using the Virtual Platform for Professional Development**

**Denise Lang**, Program Coordinator, Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program, Monterey County Office of Education  
**Daniel Tallent**, The Tallent Pool

Monterey County, like many other counties has been grappling with the idea of how to train and support teachers/counselors/etc. who are working with foster youth, with limited staffing of their own. They developed a series of videos that can help them do just that. Subjects include AB167/216, AB 490, Trauma Informed Care, etc. Come learn how they decided to do the video series, what it took to put them together and how they plan on getting them out to the people who would benefit from the training. Leave with information on how you can replicate this in your area.





## Learning Session "E" - Tuesday April 26, 2022

### 1:15 pm - 2:30 pm



#### Student Oriented Workshop

#### E1 "I Don't Feel Like Talking." Showing Students How They Can Use Expressive Arts to Support Their Self-Expression

*Christine Dennis*, Lake Elsinore Unified School District, LCSW, PPSC, District Social Worker - Foster Youth Program



**Students** - Join this immersive workshop where you will be guided through interactive projects to experience the effects of expressive arts firsthand. The arts are a diverse tool that can be used with different populations and cultures. Current research will be presented to explore the impact of using art to process trauma and support mental health. Expressive arts can be a valuable tool for you! The arts are an internal process that does not require another person; making it a valuable method for you to use independently when you do not have anyone to talk to, or when you don't know how to express and process how you are feeling. Two interactive activities will be facilitated during the workshop. The first activity will allow you to experience a creative writing activity and the second activity will be an art-based activity using paints. This workshop is open to all students and no prior art experience is required.

#### E2 Building Resiliency & Positive Life Outcomes for Our Transitional Age Youth

*Cherie Schroeder*, Child Abuse Prevention Center / Woodland Community College, CA FYI Project Outreach Manager / Independent Living Program Coordinator

*Tabitha Grier*, Child Abuse Prevention Center, CA Foster Youth Initiative Project Manager

*Robin Smith*, Glenn County Office of Education, Foster, Homeless, ILP, & Drop-Out Prevention Coordinator

*Shelby Anderson*, Glenn County Office of Education, Lived Experience/AmeriCorps CA Foster Youth Initiative

CA Foster Youth Initiative (CA FYI) AmeriCorps service members are placed statewide in Offices of Education, Community Colleges, Community Based Organizations, Health & Human Service, Probation, and Foster Family Agencies. Mentors serve young teens and non-minor dependents, foster youth from 12- to 21-years-old. Service may include mentorship with academic engagement, such as providing tutoring, help and encouragement to complete the FAFSA, registering for classes, integrating a youth to campus, encouraging student service and leadership opportunities, along with organizing peer groups to encourage extracurricular activities, and/or providing a space for foster youth to advocate for themselves. Mentors serve to help TAY develop the positive power of their own voice in court and CFT's, working on financial literacy, Ansel Casey life skills, and promoting pathways to higher education, jobs and overall stability. We will hear the voices of lived experience and interact with "cross the line" for building connectivity and understanding.

Tool Up with Case Management

#### E3 El Dorado County Summer Employment Program

*Sheila Silan*, El Dorado COE, FYSCP Program Coordinator

*Jessica Belcher*, New Morning Youth and Family Services Youth Specialist

*Arturo Salazar*, Fostering Connections, Social Worker

*Lori Hensley*, Golden Sierra Job Training Agency, Business and Employment Specialist

We all know the benefits to youth who have been able to gain employment prior to aging out. Many Foster Youth in our county are not able to find work due to their many court related obligations, the fact that most jobs open to teens are far away from where our youth live, and the fact that there is almost no public transportation. Come learn how a small, rural



of the traditional food service jobs that teens can find, instead we place them into county government and other local businesses. This gives youth an opportunity to feel more a part of the community and explore career paths that they may not have even been aware of previously.

#### E4 School Stability Data and Collaboration

*Austin Preller*, Director of Youth Support Services, Shasta County Office of Education

*Liberty Van Natten*, Education Research & Evaluation Administrator, California Department of Education

*Renzo Bernal*, Educational Programs Consultant, California Department of Education

School stability is vital for youth in foster care. Counties across California are working to keep their youth in foster care in their schools of origin to the greatest extent possible. In this session, learn about the new DataQuest Stability Report and how to use the report to better understand school stability for students across the state, and in counties, districts, and schools. Then, learn from one county how they are utilizing local data to dig deeper and learn even more about the stability of the youth they serve across multiple measures. Finally, learn how you can utilize interagency collaboration that is happening in every county right now through Children and Youth System of Care memorandums of understanding (AB 2083) to support local work around school stability.

#### E5 Champions for Success

*Lisa Rodriguez*, Director of Student Services; *Lavena Najera*, Youth Services Liaison; *Denise Westlund*, Education Learning Advisor; and *Roxanna Solorio*, Education Learning Advisor

Kings County Office of Education

Youth in foster care face significant barriers to educational success due to frequent disruptions in their home and school placements. Join us to learn the step by step process on how Kings County Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program created and implemented "Champions for Success!" Champions for Success is a project that builds connections and strengthens communication between the foster youth, school district liaison, child welfare social worker, school site social worker, school staff as whole, including administration, as well as teachers and the students' resource family. Re-engagement strategies, educational planning, best practices, and professional collaboration are provided to help increase graduation rates, ensure successful transition to post-secondary education, and career and vocational exploration while giving youth a voice at the table!

#### E6 Youth Peer Mentor Program: Expanding Experiences and Access to Substance Use Education

*Joaquin Jordan*, Continuity Consulting, Social Impact Consultant

*Keith Aldrich*, Continuity Consulting, President

Continuity Consulting's Youth Peer Mentor Program (YPMP) addresses California's substance use crisis by providing substance use education to foster, transition age, and justice system-impacted youth across California. In collaboration with local partners, together we are able to provide the youth they serve with multiple, evidence-based services at no cost to them. Programs and services include "Mindfully Exploring Substance Use" – in-person and remote substance use prevention groups, "Natural High Retreats" -- youth adventure intensives for substance use prevention and recovery in Tahoe-Donner, California, as well as professional development -- peer mentor training, and substance use counseling education. In addition, collaborative partners have access to technical assistance, training and workshops on topics such as substance use and the brain science of addiction, trauma, ACEs, toxic stress, risk reduction, and mindfulness-based practices at no cost to their organizations. YPMP is funded by the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) – State Opioid Response Grant (SOR) and designed and administered by Continuity Consulting.

#### E7 Tool Up with Case Management

*Kimberly Thomas*, Norco College, Student Resource Specialist/Part-time Faculty

Join us for a Student & Staff lead workshop to discuss an intrusive case management structure supported by Peer Mentors. The need for Case Management may not be evident at the college level, however, it is a powerful tool for supporting student success. A primary function of case management for the student is the staff's ability to coordinate intervention and support efforts across campus and community systems for our at-risk students facing crises, experiencing life stressors, and encountering barriers that impede academic and personal success. In this workshop, we will share tools