

THE POWER OF COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

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Designing School Programs to Connect and Engage Foster Youth



OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION

- Purpose: To Assist School Districts With Developing Foster Youth Programs
- District Wide Programs
 - Identification of Foster Youth
 - Caregiver Engagement
 - Mentor Program
 - Direct Support
 - College and Career Connections
- Breaking Down Barriers
- Pulling It All Together



WHO'S IN THE AUDIENCE?

- Recognize all our partners in supporting foster youth

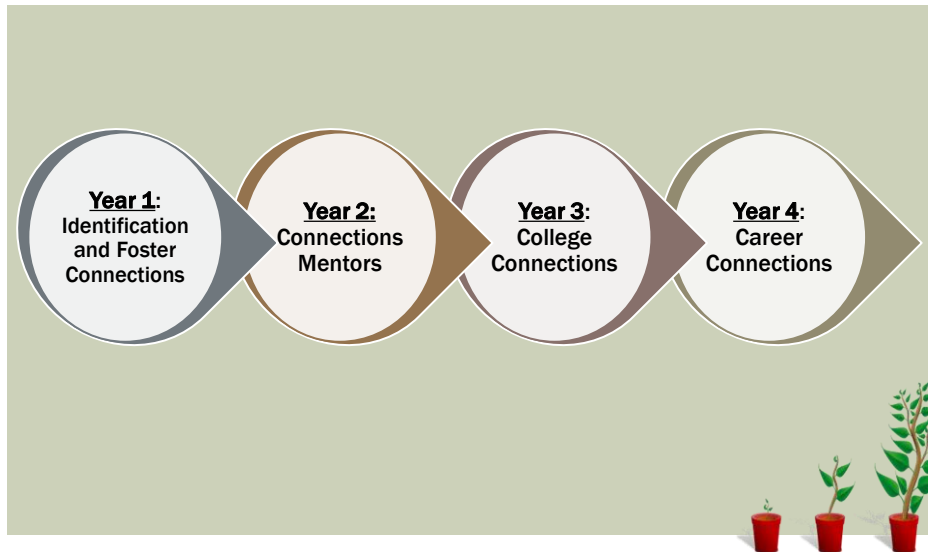


JOURNEY TO PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

- One District's Journey to Provide Foster Youth Opportunities to Connect and Engage with School
 - 2013 Foster Summit
 - Based on Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) priorities

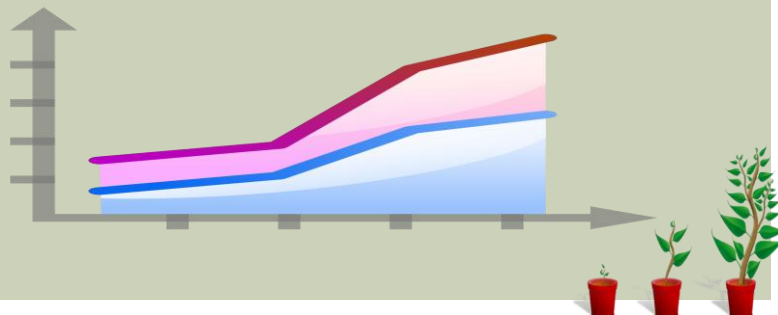


OVERALL TRAJECTORY OF ORANGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (OUSD)



ROAD MAP: WHERE TO BEGIN

- **Budget:** Identify who you need to talk to in the district to determine what your budget is.
- **Identify how to get involved in LCAP planning.**



IDENTIFYING FOSTER YOUTH: COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PERSPECTIVE

- Notification of Youth Entering the Dependency System
 - Orange County Social Services Agency (OC SSA) Petitions
 - Orange County Department of Education, Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program (OCDE FYSCP) emails Foster Youth District Liaison

- Notification of Team Decision Making (TDM) Meetings
 - OC SSA TDM Notifications
 - OCDE FYSCP emails Foster Youth District Liaison



IDENTIFYING FOSTER YOUTH: SCHOOL DISTRICT PERSPECTIVE

- Contact from Multiple Sources
 - Reached out to OCDE and local Group Homes
- Enrollment Process
 - Group Home Process
 - Student and Community Services
 - Interview foster youth
 - Enrollment packet
 - Spirit Gear!
 - Foster Parents
 - Enroll at school, packet given **(example of packet)**
- After the interview, contact Administrator, Counselor, and/or Special Education (SPED) Coordinator at school
- Flag in School Database
- Add information on a spreadsheet



ACTIVITY: IDENTIFICATION

WORKSHEET: MAGNIFYING GLASS



FOSTER CONNECTIONS

- Parent Engagement: LCAP
- Saddleback Foster and Kinship Care Education Program for Caregiver Training Credit
- Monthly Meetings
- Guest Speakers Chosen Based on Needs Assessment



ACTIVITY: CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT

WORKSHEET: CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT



CONNECTIONS MENTORS

- Paid extra earnings
- Trainings
- Experience
- Secondary
- Elementary - counselors
- Clearly defined roles



MENTEE AND MENTOR FEEDBACK

CONNECTIONS MENTOR PROGRAM: SUCCESS STORIES

"I can tell her my feelings and she listens to me. I matter"

Student

"Well, I think my mentor is really great"

Student

"My mentor helped me join the track team. It's cool!"

Student

"I really enjoyed getting to know my kiddos and turning my classroom into a safe place"

Connections Mentor

"I really enjoyed working with the kids in this program. I also enjoyed our fellow mentors"

Connections Mentor

"Was able to get a number of items for a few of my students as well as hooking students up with extra curricular activities"

Connections Mentor

It Takes Just **1**

Adult to Change a Child's Life

powered by

THOUGHTS FROM A MENTOR



BREAKFAST CLUB



STUDENT ACCESS

- 21st Century learning and the integration of technology can be a barrier for foster youth
 - Chromebooks or laptops on campus
 - Scientific calculators



STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Students who attended OUSD more than one year
 - Secondary only
 - Invited to participate in committee
 - Interviewed individually at school

- LCAP survey



ACTIVITY: DIRECT SUPPORT OF FOSTER YOUTH

WORKSHEET: IDEA BALLOONS



COLLEGE AND CAREER CONNECTIONS

- AB 216
- Naviance facilitator with data from assessments
- Collaborate with social worker in the Transitional Planning Services Program
- Community college gear as incentives
- Stakeholder from community college or university present when possible



FOSTER YOUTH COLLEGE AND CAREER FAIR

- Annual College and Career Fair
- Different college campus each year
- Collaborative partnerships between OCDE, SSA, Probation, Host College, Orangewood Foundation, Saddleback Foster and Kinship Care Education, Stuart Foundation
- Invitation to Orange County Foster Youth ages 12+ and their Caregivers
- Consists of college campus tours and resource fair for youth



ACTIVITY: COLLEGE AND CAREER

WORKSHEET: COLLEGE AND CAREER MAP



BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

- School Districts, County Office of Education, Biological Parents (when possible and appropriate), Social Services, Caregivers, Probation, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Mental Health Professionals
 - Additional support team members may include Wrap Around, Mentors, Independent Living Specialists, other service providers
- Communication is Key!
 - Identification of team members
- Inclusivity
 - Provide stakeholders with 'big' picture, student's day to day life
- Common Language
- Consistent Messages



5 YEAR PLAN: MAP IT OUT!

WORKSHEET: ROAD MAP



don't make
change too
complicated -
just begin.



Thank you for attending and participating!

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