Pathways from Group Homes to Postsecondary Education

CHALLENGE

- Too few group home providers are aware of the Positive Pathways network and the strong campus programs focused on students from foster care.

- Too few Positive Pathways members know about the challenges faced by students from group homes who want to enroll in education after high school / GED.

- Little effective training available about how to help group home students become ready for education after high school / GED.

GOAL

- To increase awareness among group home provider staff about the Positive Pathways program, campus-based programs, and how to engage foster care liaisons when needed.

- To increase awareness, among Positive Pathways members (campus-based foster care liaisons and independent living staff) about challenges faced by students living in group homes. out of home care.

- Determine how to develop training, based on student insight and aligned with Daniel Memorial, Casey Life Skills and existing requirements for training, to educate residential care providers' staff and students.

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AMF

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SAYS
ST. AUGUSTINE YOUTH SERVICES
"Path to a Brighter Future"

EDUCATE TOMORROW

Proposed Residential Group Care Facility Webinar

Purpose: To begin to create a bridge of awareness, understanding, and collaboration between residential care providers and campus-based student support personnel.
To provide a forum during which resident group care leaders can share best practices and have their questions answered.

POSITIVE PATHWAYS
CONNECT, UNITE, ACT!

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Alan Madden Foundation

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Student Profile: Kie

Kie entered foster care in the 5th grade. She cannot even count the number of placements she experienced. She rattled off the various schools she attended 6th – 8th grade and ended her count by stating "But I only went to three high schools though."

Earned her high school diploma, AFTER aging out.

She moved in with a friend's family while she finished high school.

Received little guidance on how to apply and register for college.

"My advisor was not very advice-ive". She followed up "Once I figured it out, I had it down; figuring out transportation to orientation and all that was crazy".

Kie does not have it "figured out". She only has a 2.1 GPA and has no idea who to contact with school related questions.

"Have patience, be patient. Adults, a lot of the new people coming in do not know how it works so the adults need to be patient with the new youth coming in."

Student Profile: Bill

Bill aged out of foster care without earning a high school diploma. His Extended Foster Care (EFC) placement was in another county. The new district did not allow him to register in school to complete his high school education.

Bill registered in GED classes and figured out the bus route to the GED center. However, that was short lived. Bill stated the teacher was nice but she did not provide enough support and he worked on his own. Bill did not have his Individualized Educational Plan in place to help with needed accommodations. A lack of support in the classroom and the three-hour round trip to the GED center left Bill discouraged and he dropped out of the program. This caused him to lose his EFC placement and become homeless.

After struggling for months and still homeless, Bill decided to reenroll in the GED program. He learned he could split his day between the auto mechanics program and GED classes. He also found a job that would allow him to work only on the weekends so it would not interfere with school.

Bill mistakenly thought that enrollment in an educational program and the opportunity of employment was enough to qualify for reentry into EFC. He was wrong.

To qualify for reentry into EFC youth must be working toward educational goals or Employed at least 80 hours a month.
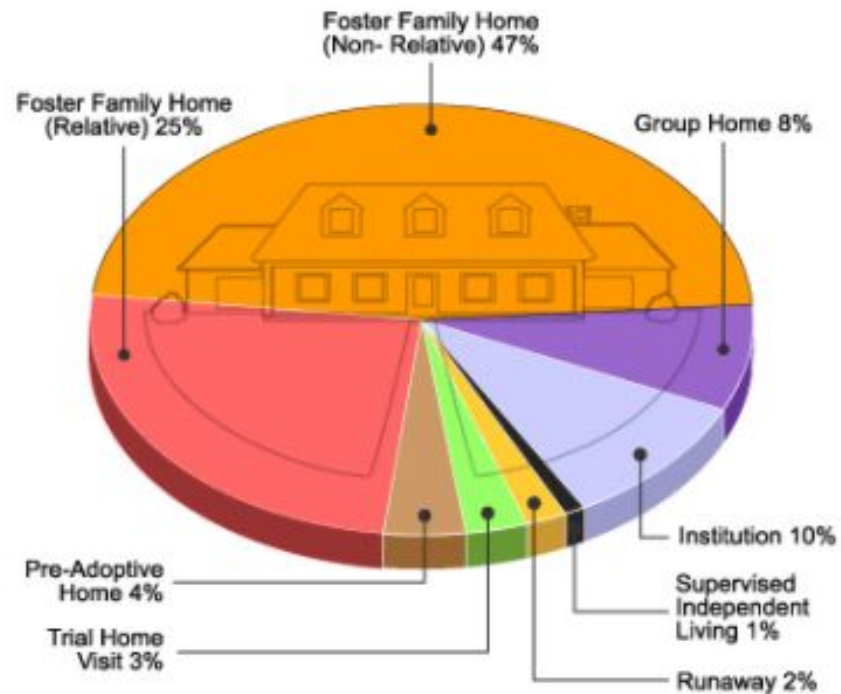
Without stable housing, Bill did not know how he could participate in an educational program and without participation in an educational program; he could not secure stable housing. Furthermore, Bill could not afford the work boots required for school and work. Bill did not realize he could apply for aftercare services to bridge the gap until he could meet the requirements to reenter EFC.

Discussion of Profiles

Understand the barriers.

- Stable housing

- Potentially lack of supportive adults.

- Did not have needed educational accommodations.

- Lack of transportation

- Financial barriers. (Must have a high school diploma to apply for FASFA. Tuition waver does not cover books or supplies).

- Lack of understanding of available services and eligibility.

- Mental and emotional toll.

- Under the circumstances, it is likely Bill struggled to meet other basic needs.

Overview of Placements

Placement Settings of Children in Foster Care
(Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)

Foster Family Home (Non- Relative) 47%

Foster Family Home (Relative) 25%

Group Home 8%

Institution 10%

Supervised Independent Living 1%

Pre-Adoptive Home 4%

Trial Home Visit 3%

Runaway 2%

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Use a graphic that shows where the teenagers live.

- Types of Placements
  - Group foster homes / residential care facilities
  - Children's villages
  - Halfway group homes and boot camps.
  - Foster homes consist of
  - Relative foster homes
  - Nonrelative foster homes

- Most programs are funded by the US Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) and state and local government agencies.
- Government funding is expected to account for more than 65.0% of industry revenue, with the remainder garnered through private donations and fees.
- Over the past five years, federal funding for social services declined at an annualized rate of 2.6%.

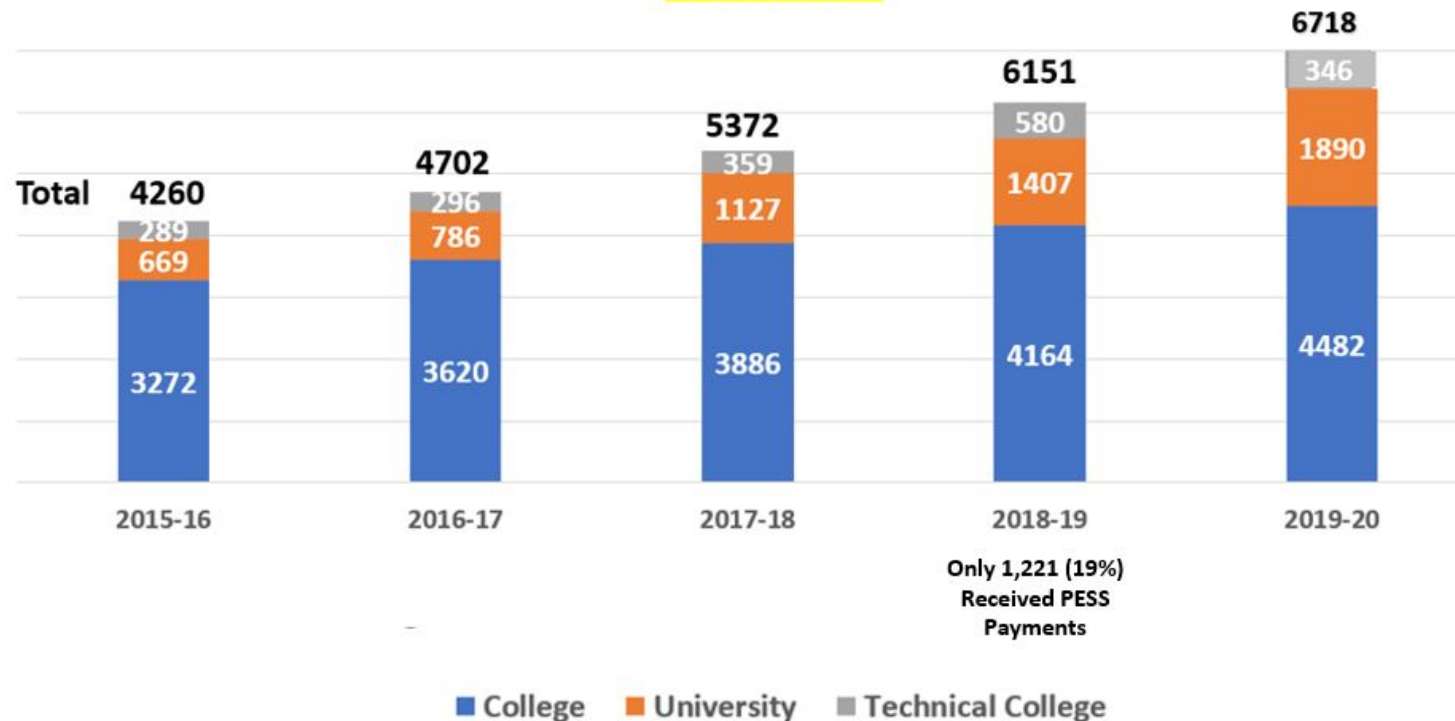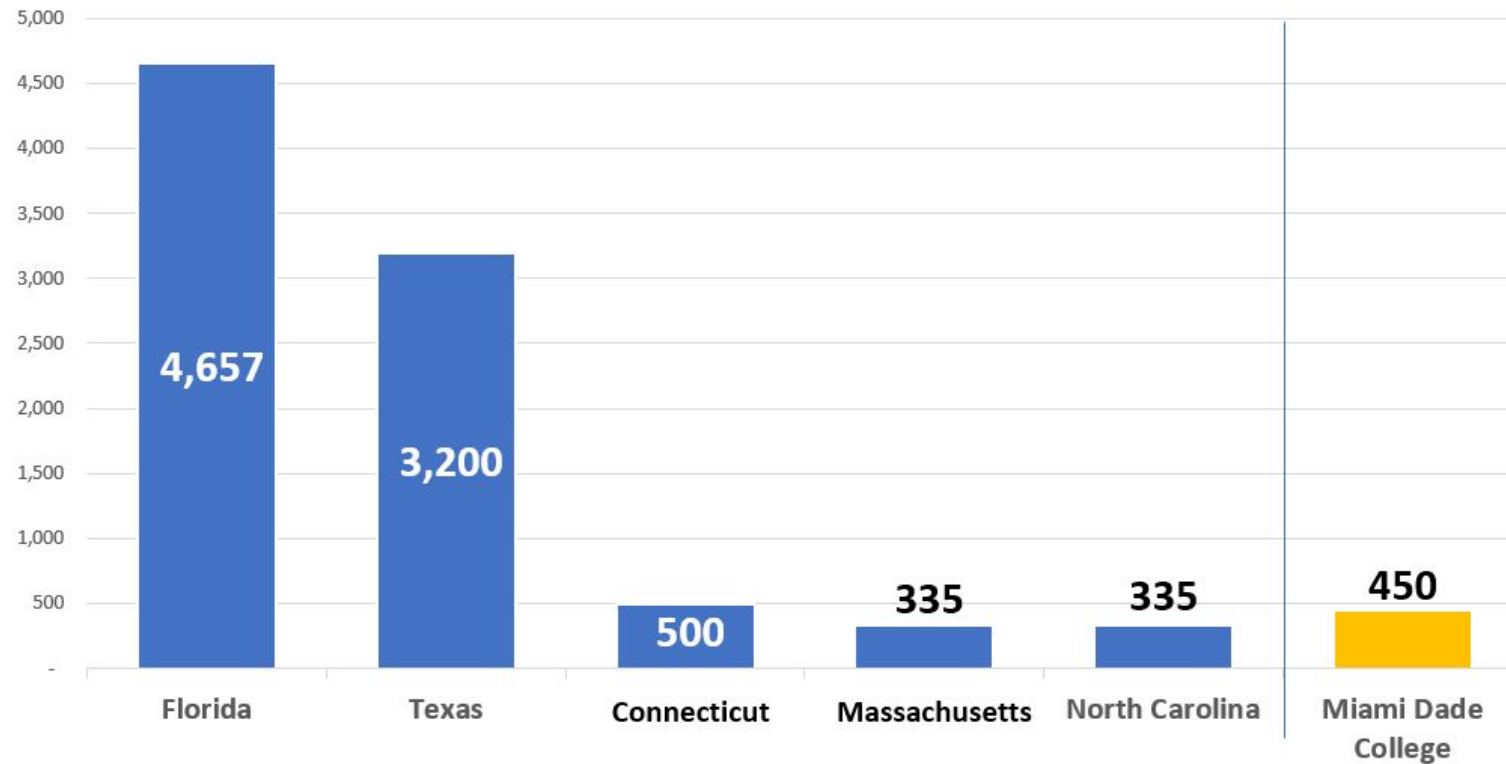# Positive Pathways Program and Network

Steady Growth in Enrollment

Students That Use DCF Tuition and Fee Exemption at Florida's Public Post-Secondary Institutions 2015-16 to 2019-20

58% increase

Only 1,221 (19%) Received PESS Payments

■ College ■ University ■ Technical College

Number of Students Using Tuition Exemption in Selected States

Source: Day & Hernandez, 2019

Campus-based Programs for Youth from Foster Care

Educate Tomorrow at FAU

The Educate Tomorrow at FAU Program is a student support program designed to support FAU students who receive the DCF or homeless tuition waiver. We provide students with wrap around support services from admission to graduation, with a goal of creating a strong foundation of support, academic coaching and advising, and access to services on and off campus in order to increase academic progress and graduation rates. For more information click here.

Tracyann Burton, M.A.
Academic Advisor

Educate Tomorrow at FAU Program

University Advising Services
561-297-2015

| TracyannBurton@fau.edu

MORE INFO

The Unconquered Scholars Program

The Unconquered Scholars Program provides an array of support services promoting overall success to youth who experienced foster care, homelessness, relative care, or ward of the State status. Many Scholars have faced profound hardships during childhood that may increase their risk of leaving academia without a degree. In fact, research indicates former foster youth are far less likely to earn a degree than their non-foster care peers. Florida State University is committed to meeting the unique needs of Unconquered students so they experience the long-term professional and personal benefits associated with educational attainment. For more information click here.

Caitlin Cates

Program Coordinator

Unconquered Scholars Program

Center for Academic Retention and Enhancement (CARE)

(850) 644-3605

cmcates@my.fsu.edu

MORE INFO

The Knight Alliance Network

The Knight Alliance Network provides foster care alumni students with support as they transition to become successful students at the University of Central Florida (UCF). The program demystifies the college experience, assist students navigate through the university landscape, and help to prepare them to succeed UCF and beyond. For more information click here.

Tammy Nadeau, Ed. Specialist
Assistant Director and State of Florida Campus Coach for Foster Care Alumni,

Multicultural Academic & Support Services (MASS)
University of Central Florida
407-823-1832 |
tammie.nadeau@ucf.edu

MORE INFO

Fostering Panther Pride

Florida International University's Fostering Panther Pride (FPP) program offers tailored academic and support services to students identified as formerly in foster care or homeless.

Launched in 2013, the primary goal of FPP is to assist former foster care youth and homeless students in their transition to FIU, their retention and graduation, and their pursuit of securing employment or graduate studies upon receiving their bachelor's degree.

Anna Ramos

Program Director, *Fostering Panther Pride,*

Office of Student Access & Success
Florida International University

305-348- 6106 |anramos@fiu.edu

FIU DCF WAIVER

MORE INFO

Key Points about Youth From Care and Postsecondary Education in Florida

- Tuition and Fee Exemption use shows steady long-term growth

- There has been a 58% increase in number of students using tuition and fee exemption since 2015 at all Florida colleges and universities.

- There has been a 183% increase in number of Florida's State University System students using tuition exemption since 2015.

- Most of these students are served by foster care liaisons who are active members of Positive Pathways.

- Each year approximately 1,000 young adults turn 18 while in foster care in Florida. These are the students from which Positive Pathways draws its key target population.

- About 33% of these students are still in HS at age 18.

GRADUATIONS

551

135

2013   2019

ENROLLMENT

6718

1500

2008   2019

Key Issues Among Youth in Out of Home Care

The Specific Learning Difficulties (Sp.L.D.) Umbrella
Average or above cognitive/intellectual abilities

- Behind academically

- Placement instability (schools/homes/case managers)

- Tendency to be "lost in the system"

- Potentially limited educational guidance

- Students must have educational surrogate (volunteers)

- Not having appropriate interventions at secondary schools (tier-system issues)

- Lack of having been properly diagnosed

- Socio-emotional challenges
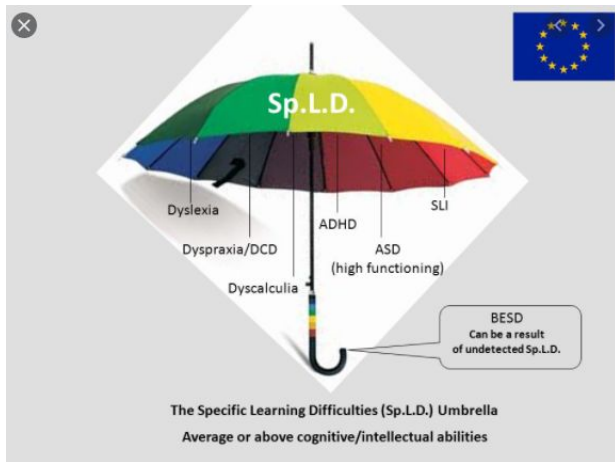
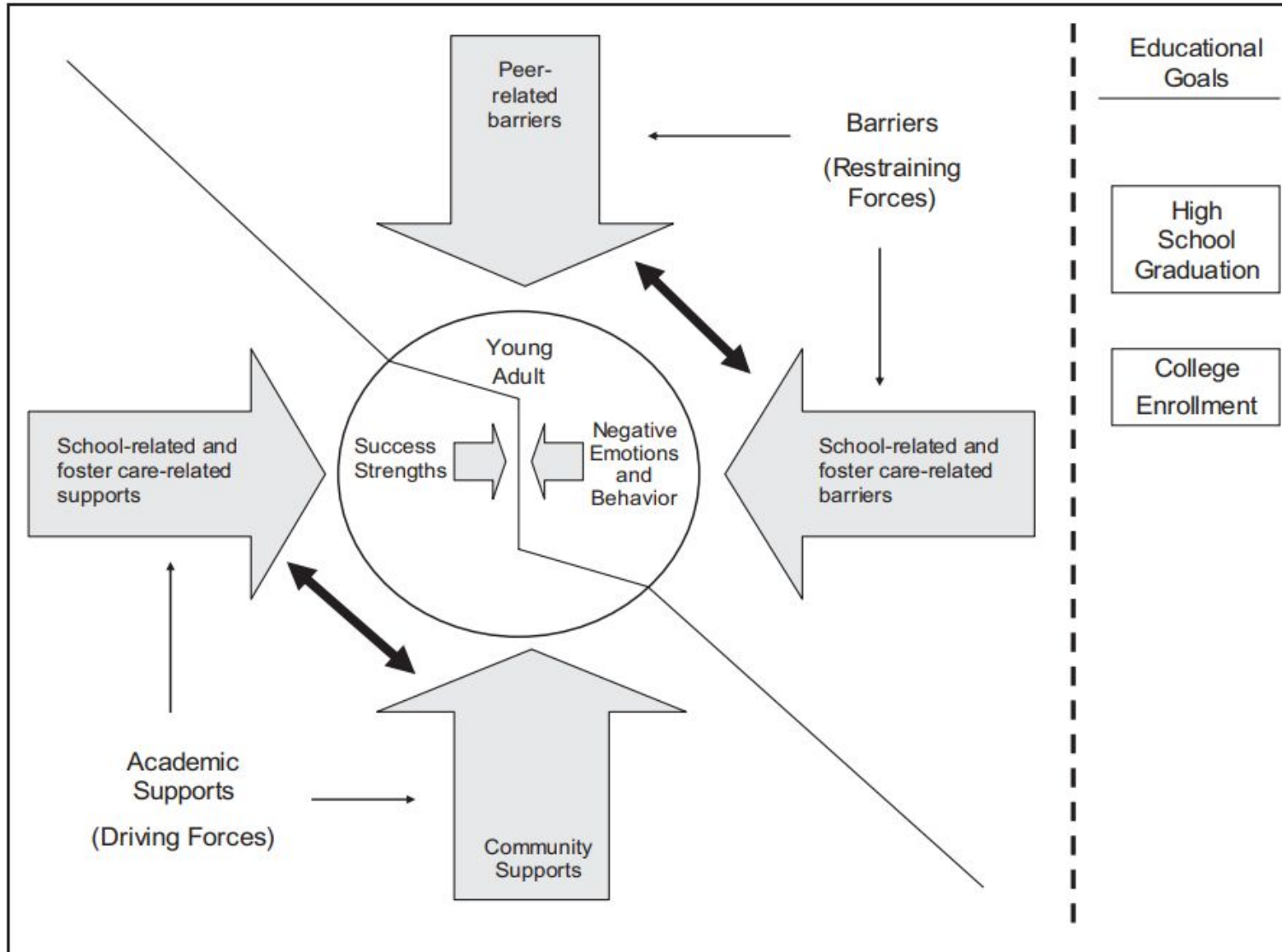# Foster Care Academic Achievement

Figure 1. Foster youth academic achievement model.

Developing Post-secondary Aspirations

Shay Razaire

- Early Intervention
  - Build an educational advocacy team
  - Request an educational surrogate
  - Built a relationship with the school / school district
  - Gain knowledge about graduation requirements, timelines, resources
  - Begin transition services early

- Youth Engagement
  - Help youth set educational goals
  - Employ motivational interviewing / change talk
  - Understand where the youth is coming from
  - Help youth identify and explore interests

Role of Community Partners

DCF OFFICE OF CHILD WELFARE
Cal Walton, III J.D.
Youth and Young Adult Transition Services Specialist
400 W. Robinson St.
Orlando, FL 32801
Office: (407) 241-4712
Cell: (850) 491-0204
Cal.walton@myflfamilies.com

- Campus Coaches should build relationships with an agency (s) within your community that can provide additional support for homeless and former foster youth (Positive Pathways Program)

- Contact the Independent Living department within your local CBC.

- Contact your local HUD Continuum of Care and find out if they have a contact person for homeless youth services.

- Your school district's Homeless and Foster Care liaisons can help connect you to resources.

District Liaison Contact for Foster Care

ALACHUA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

William Goodman
Supervisor, Student Services
620 East University Avenue
Gainesville, Florida 32601

Phone: 352.955.7671, ext. 264
Emai: goodmawj@sbac.edu

BAKER COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Debra Melvin
Director, Exceptional Student Education
290 Jonathan Street East
Macclenny, Florida 32063

Phone: 904.259.7825
Emai: dmelvin@baker.k12.fl.us

Click HERE for entire list.

CLICK HERE FOR LIST OF ALL INDEPENDENT LIVING CONTACTS

POSITIVE PATHWAYS
CONNECT, UNITE, ACT!

Mental Health Issues

- Today's young adults in higher education increasingly need adequate mental health support and services.
- Level of stress and emotional difficulties that come with studying at a post-secondary institution.
- What is mental health?
- What signs are associated with the disorder?
- What are the causes of mental disorder in higher education students?
- What mental health services are available at higher education institutions?

Results of University of Florida Study

- 85% of students feel stressed on a daily basis
- 60% of students at some time have felt stress to the point of not being able to get work done
- 70% of students have never considered talking to a counselor about their stress
- 84% of students reach out to friends to help them with their stress
- 67% of students reach out to parents for help with stress

Values and Skills

Click For More Information

[Importance of Moral Values in Students Life](#)

Examples of skills include:

- Negotiating
- Motivating teams
- Organizing
- Creating presentations
- Building relationships
- Counseling
- Writing
- Managing projects
- Strategizing
- Investigating
- Inspiring
- Analyzing
- Brainstorming
- Troubleshooting
- Researching
- Estimating cost

Examples of Values include:

- Independence
- Teamwork
- Having an easy commute
- Having a flexible schedule
- Helping others
- Developing potential
- Recognition
- Change/Variety
- Learning
- Fun
- Contributing ideas
- Responsibility
- Meaningful work
- Clear direction
- Deadline pressure
- Strategic problem solving

College Coach Perspective: What Students Need

Althea K. Blake, Ed.D.
Coordinator
RISE Program

SPC St. Petersburg College

1. **Address fears and myths**
   a. Extended foster care
   b. PESS
   c. Tuition exemption / waiver
   d. Disability services are only for secondary

2. **Address internal barriers**
   a. Mental health / trauma
   b. Disabilities-related issues
   c. Desire for "freedom" and independence

How to Help Students Overcome the Desire to Just Break Away

- Normalize asking for help.
- It is them being in control as opposed to them being controlled.

3. **Find your path**
   a. Career inventory
   b. Daniel Memorial

4. **Understand the application process**
   c. Open enrollment
   d. Application process

5. **Educational Options at State College**
   e. Certificate programs / stackable credentials
   f. AS / AA
   g. BS / BA at state college
   h. Technical college

Working with Dependency / IL Case Managers

Fred Baker
Coaches Supervisor
FredB@sayskids.org

Troy
Marcus
Evelyn
Dorian

1. Establish Communication (Who are the team players, Identifying their roles)

2. Identifying what services the youth is eligible for (IE: EFC, IL, Post Adopt)

3. Building the line of communication (Frequent and clear communication)

4. Knowing the constraints of the DCM position (What they can resolve and what they can not resolve)

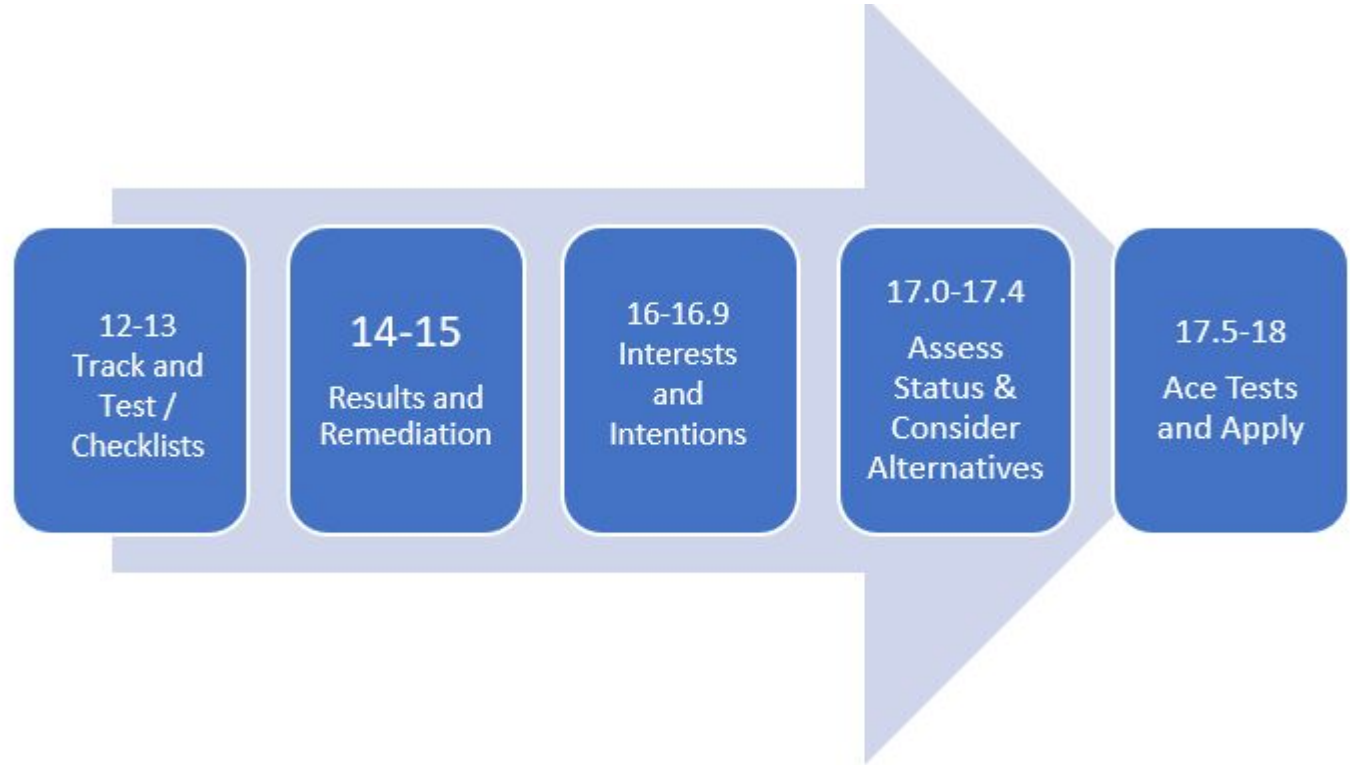5. Provide continuity of services

Timelines

Yvette Moreno

Activity Supervisor
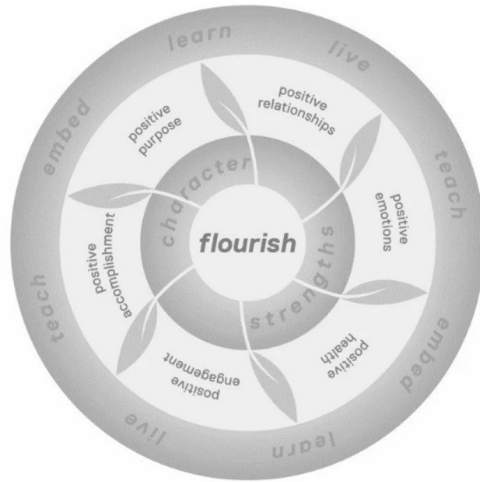
yevette@handsofmercyeverywhere.org

16-16.9
Interests
and
Intentions

12-13 Track and Test / Checklists	14-15 Results and Remediation	16-16.9 Interests and Intentions	17.0-17.4 Assess Status & Consider Alternatives	17.5-18 Ace Tests and Apply

Hands Of Mercy Everywhere

Developing Post-secondary Aspirations

- Adopt and model positive educational attitudes
  - Promote education as key to a better future
  - Create a dedicated study space with a variety of books and resources.
  - Celebrate progress and achievement.
  - Participate in school events.
  - Ask post – secondary institutes to present to your group
  - Participate in open houses offered by Post – secondary institutes.
  - Promote opportunities available after high school.
- Engage your community
  - Encourage business community to engage with youth) (presentations, mentoring, job opportunities
  - Participate in job fairs.
  - Encourage meaningful participation   in community events and volunteer opportunities.

Questions and Answers