



**Children and Family Services**  
**Placement Resources Division**

# **Where Does Education Fit In Effective Child Welfare Practices: San Bernardino County CFS Educational Program**

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Welcome Activity



## Children and Family Services Placement Resources Division

### Group Agreements:

#### Be Responsible

- Make yourself comfortable and take care of your need

#### Be Respectful

- Turn cell phones “off” or to “vibrate”
- One person speaks at a time

#### Participate

- Ask questions
- Take notes



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### Objectives:

- Recognize the academic challenges that foster youth encounter
- Understand the roles of the focused position of Educational Liaison as a member of the Children and Family Services workforce
- Learn the components of a successful educational support program developed by San Bernardino County Children and Family Services
- Identify the outcomes of the program for foster youth education and its impact on collaborative work and the community.



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Invisible



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### FOSTER YOUTH EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES:

- Transfer schools an average of 6 times in foster care, losing 4-6 months of learning each time\*
- 80% repeat a grade by the third grade\*
- Only 20% of foster youth are proficient in English by 11<sup>th</sup> grade, 10% in Math\*
- Only 40% of foster youth graduate high school\*
- Less than 3% obtain a higher education degree \*

\*The Invisible Gap-report by Stuart Foundation 2013



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What are the educational barriers and obstacles facing foster youth?

1.Placement change = educational enrollment change

a.What happens when a child suddenly moves from their school?

2.Loss of seat time and educational stability

a.“Where are my books?” “Where is my homework?” “Will I fail my classes?”

b. “What about the work I’ve done?” “Will I have to start over?”

3.Disconnect from community

a.“I miss my friends”

b.“Where are my siblings?”

c.“I don’t know anyone at this new school”



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### Instability

- Impedes their educational progress
- Poor school performance
- Failing grades
- Behavior problems
- Decreased likelihood of High School completion
- Lower overall academic performance
- Loss of important social and academic connections





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### Why is stability important?

- Assist in establishing self-determination
- Educational success holds the key to successful adult life
- Realization of their full potential
- Establishing life long connections
- Assist with maintaining a healthy self-esteem
- Promotes a feeling of self-accomplishment



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### Lack of basic academic skills

- The youth has a difficult time progressing educationally
- Failing grades
- Behavior problems
- Decreased likelihood of High School completion
- Lower overall academic performance
- Decreased self-esteem
- Has acquired a sense unworthiness
- Settles for what s/he has accomplished
- Will have difficulties acquiring /keeping employment



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### Why are basic academic skills important?

- Instant confident builder
- Knowledge improvement
- Able to communicate effectively and with respect
- Able to solve problems correctly
- Will be able to advance academically
- Able to collect their thoughts and put these in logical sequence.
- Gives them an opportunity to really think
- Takes ownership of his or her own learning
- Becomes independently resourceful
- Able to learn from their mistakes
- Lifelong learners



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### Emotional upheaval

- Cannot concentrate in school
- Education is not important
- Other worries supersede the importance of continuing their education
- Interferes with test taking skills
- Cannot complete homework
- Does not trust others
- Feelings of hopelessness, isolation, helplessness, or weakness
- Low self-esteem



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Why is being trauma informed important?

-Note: emotional balance state varies from person to person.-

- Control of behavior
- Empowered to control their lives
- Less worried
- Can concentrate on schoolwork, homework and tests
- Self-esteem increases
- Positive outlook towards self and others



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### Lack of Important socialization opportunities

- Feeling of not belonging
- Does not build important age appropriate social skills
- Does not relate to school age appropriate activities
- Decreased self-esteem
- Cannot relate to the social world around them.



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Why is taking advantage of social opportunities important?

- Can relate to others in their age group.
- Experiences school age activities.
- Increased self-esteem
- Feeling of belonging
- Relates to the social world that surrounds them
- Openness to express their wants to participate (in a sport, or school event)



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### Lack of support

- Little or none can lead to a feeling of loneliness, and nonexistent
- Feeling lost
- No mentor or role model
  - Can lead to not understanding their role in this world
  - Does not have someone they can go to for answers
  - Does not know how to develop a network of social persons





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### Why is having support important?

- Leads to being able to understand their own interests, talents and dreams
- Having a network to go to when needing assistance
- Assistance in making good decisions about their future.
- Feels wanted and genuinely loved
- Psychological wellbeing
- Emotional wellbeing
- Physical wellbeing
- Social wellbeing
- Builds appropriate academic skills
- Feeling of accomplishment



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### Lack of formulated goals

- Feeling lost
- Does not understand what the future holds
- Does not see the future ahead
- Not having a goal-leads to confusion
- No self-confidence
- Lack of motivation and enthusiasm



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### Why is having a formulated goal important?

- Having a resolution
- Visualization of the future
- Have a plan in life
- A commitment
- Self-confidence
- Acquired motivation



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Group Activity



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### Educational Liaisons

- a. CFS employees who are former educators, assigned to 2500 youth county wide
- b. Hitting a stride:
  - i. Enrollment success and graduation rate increase
  - ii. Increased collaboration with San Bernardino County School Districts
- c. 9<sup>th</sup> Grade outreach – one on one academic review



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- History
- How many Educational Liaisons?
- Caseload
  - Steps to develop knowledge about case
  - Relationship building
    - Social Worker
    - Caregiver
    - Youth
    - School
    - Community partners



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### Educational Liaison responsibilities

- With CFS department
  - Communicate with and support SW
  - Document educational growth
  - Collaborate to develop educational goals for the youth
  - Liaison between schools and CFS
  - Represent CFS



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- With Caregiver
  - Educate caregiver on educational resources
  - Empower caregivers to advocate for the youth
  - Encourage to be involved





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- With Schools
  - Assist in identification of foster youth and their needs
  - Bring awareness of the trauma foster youth encounter
  - Enrollment
  - Graduation
  - Individual Education Plan (IEP)
  - Educational Rights Holder (ERH)
  - Resolving Fees



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- With Youth
  - Develop an attainable education goal
  - Advocate for their educational needs
  - Assist to Empower them
  - Develop a relationship with them
  - Refer to possible educational opportunities
  - Assist with graduation from high school
  - FAFSA
  - CHAFEE Grant
  - ETV-Education training voucher
  - Assist with transition to post secondary education



## Children and Family Services Placement Resources Division

- What has changed?
- What is working well with the program and Children Family Services (CFS)
  - Enrollment rate
  - Graduation
  - Community building
  - College guide
  - Foster Focus
  - Educating community partners
  - Educating caregivers
  - Supporting CFS staff
  - Empowering youth
  - Raising awareness of importance of education and foster youth



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Brainstorming Activity (Help us grow): What do you see is working well, what do you see as a concern and what do you think should be our next steps?



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Questions /Comments