



Community Transition Services Stakeholder Group

Meeting Minutes

October 12, 2021 – 9:00 am-12:00 pm
Virtual Meeting

Welcome, Virtual Meeting Protocols and Introductions

DCYF Community Engagement Manager Erin Kerrigan welcomed attendees and initiated introductions.

Esperanza: Homework Recap Activity and Share Out

Members broke into small groups of two to share their homework, discuss questions and provide feedback.

- [Esperanza: Homework Recap Activity and Share Out Feedback](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our conversation centered around relationships. • Transportation is a big issue. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Filling free time with positive activities like a job, school, or counseling etc. is great, but no matter what resources you identify, you have to have a way to get there or it isn't going to work. • The volume of those in need is a barrier. We can't serve everyone. • COVID restrictions are added barriers, as well. • You can do a google search and find a lot of resources in certain counties, but how effective are they in the community? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Leaders in the community can tell young people, "These organizations/resources are not going to be helpful. Here are some things that we can proactively do to get you connected to some folks doing really good work." • Finding housing for level three sex offenders is impossible. • Remote learning is an issue. Trying to make meaningful connections in a drug and alcohol group over zoom is tough. • Having the personal relationship with young people is so important. We can't just give them a brochure of a program and hope it connects. • We want to say we are doing a good job, but we aren't. We have to step it up and let our egos go. • We have to get past the clinical model approach that is rooted in a hierarchy of care or systems of white supremacy. We need to move into a model that is self-determined and takes into account lived experience, cultural tradition and values of the individual. • We can get to solutions if we listen to those closest to the problem.
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Youth Risk and Protective Factor Domain Conversation: Family Relationships and Use of Free Time

Guest Speakers Honey Jo Herman and David Lujano shared their experiences with the two domains of family relationships and use of free time and shared insight into the experiences of the young adults they support.

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My trauma really shaped who I was, I had built this character to belong and to help me survive, but it took time to understand I had to get back to myself and heal from this trauma so I could be the person I was supposed to be. • Post Prison Education Program is staffed by people who had experienced prison. I had the opportunity to go to a minimum security facility (camp) which allowed me to have more freedom and adapt to different jobs and different people. • The work release institution was based on getting things quickly and if you don't do things by a certain time there was the threat of being sent back to camp.
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- Probation was another challenge. The Correction Officer (CO) assigned to me did not really understand my situation. They expected me to function as someone who had not been incarcerated for 16 years.
- The support system needs to be lined up right as, or even before, an individual gets out. Especially for those who do not have the geographical connection to the area they are being discharged from. I was from Seattle, but had nowhere to go, so I ended up in Tacoma. Which ended up separating me from some people who were risky.
- Staying out of jail is a huge accomplishment for a lot of people. We don't always articulate that.
- The prosocial relationships and use of free time are really important domains to focus on. All the friendships and community I built as a young person, happened while I was incarcerated. When I got out there was a huge hole of loneliness for me.
- In pursuit of filling that hole, I found myself in a lot of bad relationships. We need to take specific interest in making sure people have fellowship with others who make them feel loved and cared for.
- Remembering that family is not just blood family, but chosen family. We have to respect the family that the young person is choosing for themselves and wrap the support around who the young person claims as family. If all the resources are put into biological family, and the youth doesn't spend time with that person, those resources are wasted.
- Redefine fun for them, so they have something else to fall back on when released.
- It is much easier when the family is supportive and ready to accept the young person. In our group we are really intentional about connecting with the family long before they get out. We update them on how they are doing and what they are doing, so we create that connection for our guys with their family.
- That loneliness piece is so important. How do we make it more acceptable/normal to not be with your biological families?
 - Someone needs to feel open enough to have that conversation in a way that it is received well. If they say they don't want to be with their mom, there may be worry that the supervisor will take that as a bad sign.
- What does Esperanza need around this? Does it even exist?
 - A lot of hugs
 - Mental health treatment
 - I see a big risk with being a survivor of trafficking. That would be a way for her to get gratification and the support of a social group.
 - We have to be really intentional about working with the family. Sometimes the family doesn't want to change, they don't think they are the problem.
 - We can give Esperanza's mom more services. She is going to need to realize that she is part of the problem and has the opportunity to grow and scale and build those things that will allow her to parent more effectively.
 - This needs to be done in a culturally responsive way.
- I want to go back to fun. We need to help them find what they like whether it is fishing or mini golfing or gardening.
- One of our coworkers discovered that he loved white water rafting and climbing and these things we were showing the kids, and I think that is a really beautiful illustration of helping people discover that there is more to life. We have to show them.
- It seems like solving the negative social relationships is an important piece.
- Understanding and providing support for change. Helping young people create and articulate boundaries with family of origin.
- Education is important, but it can't be successful without a good foundation.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One of the things we have in our curriculum is healthy relationships and what does that look like.• For many of the young men that we serve, this is the first time that they are sober and processing things in real time. They can be reflective and observe. This is peak time to deliver the information about healthy relationships and help young people heal themselves.• What would the wraparound continuity of care look like, particularly in a county where they're many not be as many resources. We need to find someone she can trust who can help her navigate these things.• Part of this work could be recommendations for the agency and a big nod for private funders and nonprofits who want to help our kids but don't know what to do. The system can't do everything• We need someone who can facilitate those family conversations, where young people can communicate their needs and thoughts to family about what will work for them.• I think there is a lot of misunderstanding of what young people need no matter where they are living or like what systems they are involved in. They just need to have fun, to be supported, like any young person.• From the system and service providers we often don't hear that desire to support. On paper it may say trauma-informed, but in reality it may not be.• Understanding depth of impact in our own complicity as service providers rooted in systems of white supremacy. We need to ask the youth and family what they need and follow that.• We need a graduated system when leaving incarceration, so young people don't just want to stick it to the man.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ I don't think young people are intentionally wanting to stick it to the man. I think it is more the trauma and times they had been taken advantage of.○ There is a human part of what is being called out with the trauma in the system. Even if people who run these systems love the kids, we are traumatizing them. Example: shared showers for someone experienced abuses.○ Being a child raised in really intense poverty, I always perceived systems to be dangerous and traumatizing.
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Closing Remarks/Adjourn

Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The next Community Transition Services Stakeholder Group meeting will be on October 26, 2021 from 9:00am-12:00pm.
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