Social, Emotional and Physical Well-Being for Youth in Transition from the Foster Care System

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Today’s Agenda:

Barbara Langford, Youth Transitions Funders Group, Foster Care Workgroup

Wayne Sims, President and CEO, KVC Health Systems, Inc.

Mary Lee, National Transitional Living Coordinator, Youth Villages
Improving the Social, Emotional, and Physical Well-Being of Youth Transitioning from Foster Care

Barbara Langford, Youth Transitions Funders Group
Objectives

• The Youth Transition Funders Group (YTFG) is a network of funders seeking to ensure all young people are connected by 25 to relationships and supports they need to transition to adulthood.

• Share YTFG’s Foster Care Work Group’s efforts to create investment agenda focused on social, emotional and physical well-being for young people who have experienced foster care.

  • Definition and Framework
  • Recommended Investment Strategies
Why a focus on well-being for the FCWG?

- Significant gap in the field of child welfare. While three pillars of federal child welfare policy are (1) safety, (2) permanency, and (3) well-being – few agencies see assuring well-being as a primary responsibility.

- Youth in foster care have lower levels of well-being than their peers. This stems from their experiences before entry into care as well as their experiences while in care.

- Emotional and behavioral challenges are a strong predictor of placement stability – which in turn affects a myriad of other outcomes.

- If a young person is not able to effectively manage social and emotional challenges, it makes it very hard to develop and sustain relationships, succeed in school, and find and keep a job.
Investment Rationale

Increased investments in social, emotional and physical well-being contribute to increased success in education, employment, housing and permanence.
Vision of Well-Being

• Youth and young adults who have experienced foster care have lifelong personal, family and community connections that help them to navigate life’s ups and downs in a healthy and effective way, to deal with problems, to meet their needs, to see opportunity in the future and to realize success.
Well-Being Framework for Older Youth in Foster Care

- Social Development
- Intellectual Potential
- Mental Wellness
- Safety and Permanency
- Physical Health
- Economic Success

Successful Adult