



Pathways RTC

RESEARCH & TRAINING CENTER FOR PATHWAYS TO POSITIVE FUTURES



Supporting College Success for Youth and Young Adults with Lived Experiences in Foster Care



Shannon Turner
Jennifer Blakeslee
Maddy Day
Peter Thompson
Rebecca Griffin
Greg King

April 3, 2018



How to use GoToWebinar

- Move any electronic handheld devices away from your computer and speakers
- We recommend that you close all file sharing applications and streaming music or video
- Check your settings in the audio pane if you are experiencing audio problems
- During the presentation, you can send questions to the webinar organizer, but these will be held until the end
- Audience members will be muted during the webinar

A recording of this webinar will be available online:

<http://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/webinars-previous>



Agenda

- Introductions
- FUTURES
- Fostering Success Michigan
- Seita Scholars
- Avenues to College
- Q & A



Project FUTURES, Pathways RTC, Portland State



Shannon Turner, MSW, LCSW

Project Manager, FUTURES

Pathways RTC

Portland State University

Portland, OR

sturner@pdx.edu, (503) 888-0327



Jennifer Blakeslee, Ph.D.

Principal Investigator, Project FUTURES,

Pathways RTC, Research Assistant

Professor, School of Social Work,

Portland State University

Portland, OR

jblakes@pdx.edu, (503) 725-8389



Center for Fostering Success

RESEARCH & TRAINING CENTER FOR PATHWAYS TO POSITIVE FUTURES



Maddy Day, LLMSW

Director of Outreach and Training
Center for Fostering Success
Fostering Success Michigan
Western Michigan University

maddy.day@wmich.edu

(269) 387-2004



Seita Scholars Program



Peter Thompson

Campus Coach, Seita Scholars Program

Fostering Success Michigan

Western Michigan University

peter.h.thompson@wmich.edu

(269) 387-8338



Avenues to College, New Avenues for Youth

RESEARCH & TRAINING CENTER FOR PATHWAYS TO POSITIVE FUTURES



Rebecca Griffin

College Pathways Coordinator

New Avenues for Youth

rgriffin@newavenues.org

phone



NWEA



Greg King, MS

Senior Research Associate
NWEA

greg.king@nwea.org



FUTURES



Fostering Unity Towards Upward Resilience,
Education and Success:

A post-secondary engagement model for students with
experience in foster care and with mental health stressors



Importance of Population

- 70-80% of youth in foster care and youth with serious mental health conditions aspire to go to college
- 30-40 % of these young people go on to attend
- 6-8% of young adults coming out of foster go on to graduate from a 2 or 4 year college
- Post-secondary education can be a major turning point to facilitate a different life trajectory with successful outcomes
- Ideal population to focus the University's commitments to developing innovative and effective programs



Needed Supports

- Peer to peer mentoring to help support students achieve their academic and personal goals.
- Identifying Campus Champions across campus who have knowledge of available resources to help these students engage and feel more connected to their university community.
- Support learning how to ask for help
- Opportunities to build study skills and other basic know-how not well developed in foster care

“Foster youth are three times more likely to persist in college if they participate in a campus support program for foster youth”.





Fostering Success Michigan: A Collective Impact

Fostering Success Michigan is:

- The backbone organization supporting Michigan's collective impact to **increase access and success in postsecondary education and professional careers** for students from foster care ages 12-25 in Michigan
- A statewide partner in Michigan's college access network to increase postsecondary credential attainment to **60% by 2025**
- A hub for Michigan's network of experts known as the **FSM Network**





FSM Backbone Activities

Resourcing: Building KNOWLEDGE capacity

- Create awareness of the issue of students with experience in foster care
- Provide knowledge on foster care specific resources and support

Supporting: Building SKILL capacity

- Utilize best practices in college readiness and persistence
- Increase institutional capacity to support students with experience in foster care

Networking: Building SOCIAL CAPITAL capacity

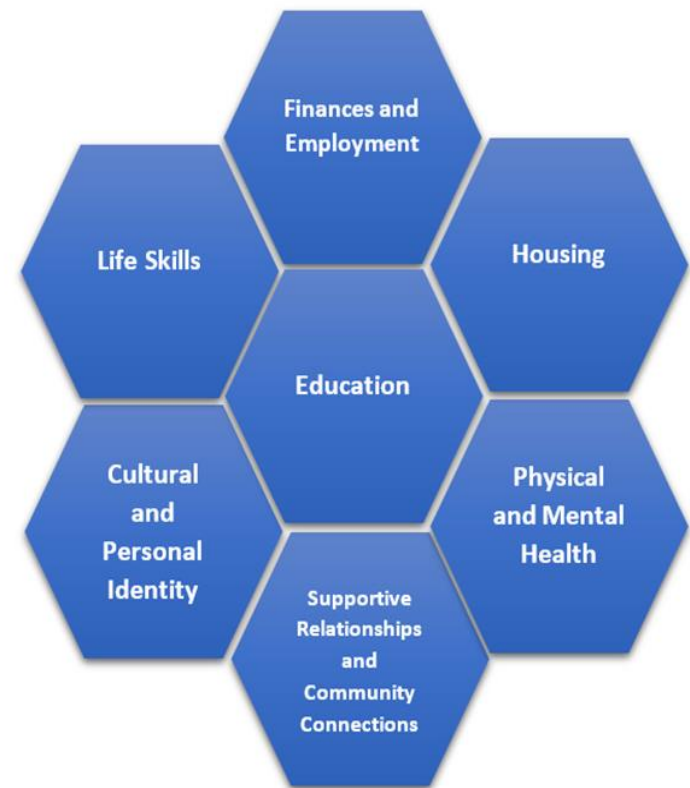
- Facilitate opportunities to bring diverse groups of participants together
- Engage new participants into the work to expand resources and support



Seven Life Domains Framework: An Intervention for Success

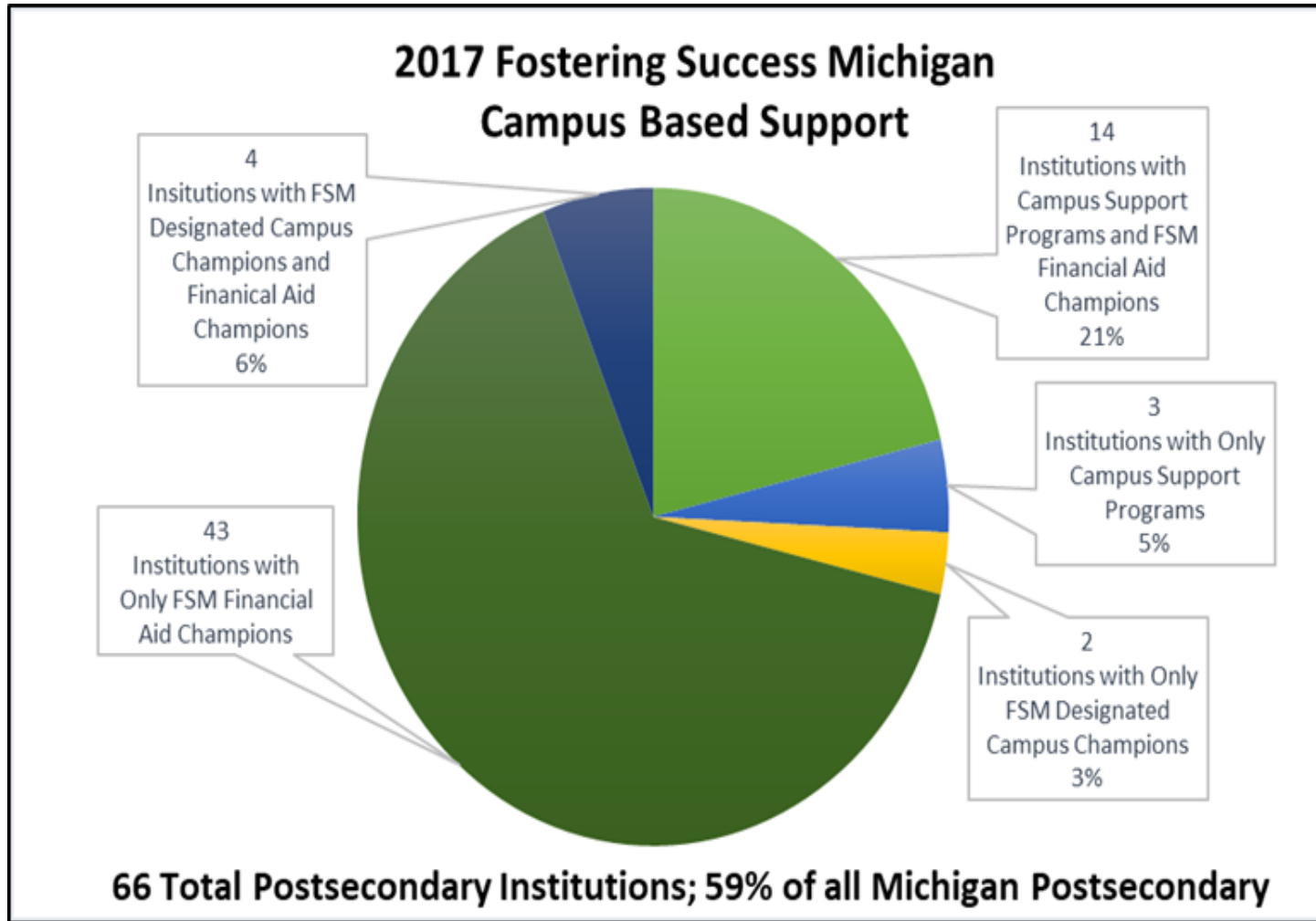
Fostering Success Michigan utilizes the **7 Life Domains Framework** to holistically support student success through the alignment of activities and resources of the participants in the FSM Network.

This alignment allows participants **do what they do BEST.**





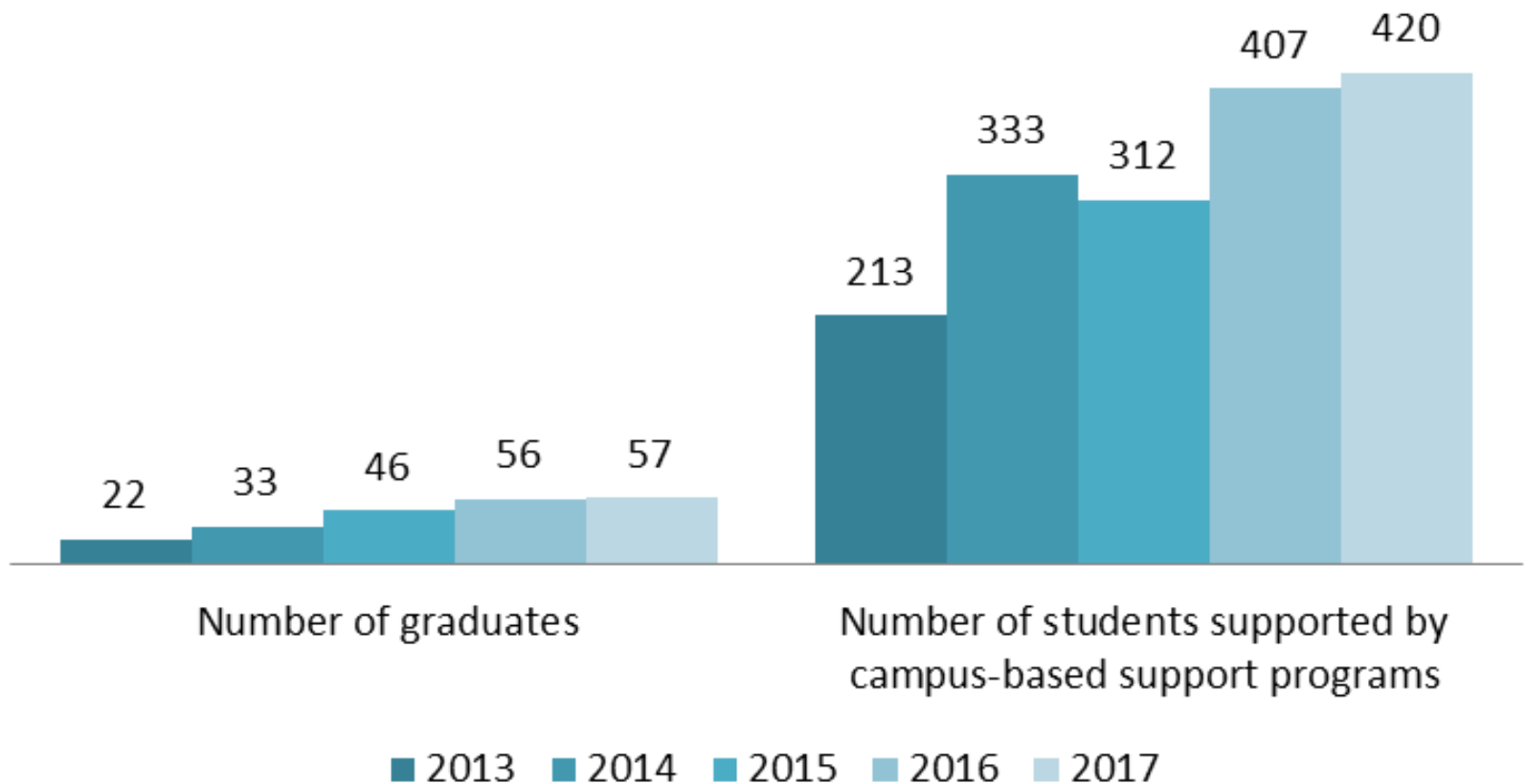
FSM: Outcomes for Impact





FSM: Outcomes for Impact

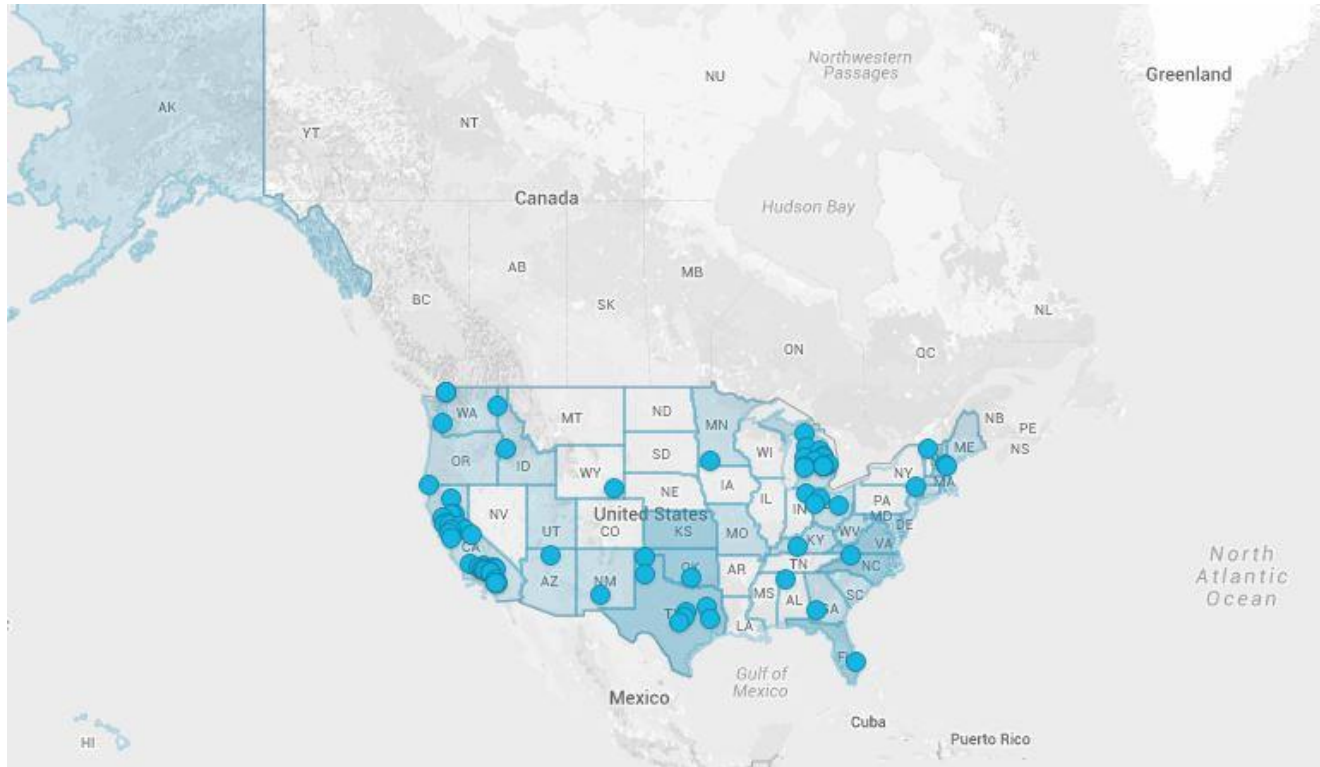
Trends in Student Support for Campus-Based Support Programs





FSM: Outcomes for Impact

The Foster Care and Higher Education MOVEMENT!



www.FosteringSuccessMichigan.com



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY



The Seita Scholars Program (Est. 2008)

A Program Overview

Presented by: Peter Thompson, Campus Coach





Program History and Goals

- Create **Transitions**
 - that lead to success in college and career for WMU students from foster care ages 18 to 25 years old.
- Develop a **Community of Scholars**
 - among WMU students who have aged out of foster care, and create a safe community to deconstruct and reconstruct identity.
- **Educate**
 - WMU students from foster care and their support network to enhance their professional skill set.
- **Transform**
 - WMU students from foster care by integrating experiences from students' past to build opportunities for their future.





Support

Campus Coaches (5)

- Every student has a coach
- 24 hour on call support
- Assist with connecting with resources and navigating campus
- Full-time professional staff
- Foster care experience
- Student-centered philosophy
- Focus on strengths of student
- Relationship Centered
- System Support & Advocacy
- Collaborative Approach
- Accessibility



DHHS Liaison (1)

- Secondary worker
- YIT (Youth in Transition)
- ETV (Education Training Voucher)
- Medicaid
- Bridge Card
- Direct access to the Department of Health and Human Services





Successes and Lessons Learned

Success:

- 125 Graduates to Date
- Dean's List
- Honors College
- Presidential Scholar
- Study Abroad
- FS Coach Training
- ...and more!



Lessons Learned:

- If you build it, they will come
- A concentrated effort is necessary
- Engagement
- Relationship
- Finances, mental health, academic preparedness
- ...and we are still learning





Avenues to College

RESEARCH & TRAINING CENTER FOR PATHWAYS TO POSITIVE FUTURES



Avenues to College

A program of New Avenues for Youth

NEW
AVENUES
for **Y o u t h**



Who We Are

▶ **New Avenues for Youth**

- ▶ Our mission is to work in partnership with our community to prevent youth homelessness and provide young people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness the resources and skills needed to lead healthy, productive lives.

▶ **PDX-Connect**

- ▶ Largest Independent Living Program (ILP) provider in Oregon

▶ **Avenues to College**

- ▶ Nationally only 4% of foster youth graduate with a college (Bachelor's) degree, compared to 25% of the general population.
- ▶ The program is designed to brand college as realistically attainable for all foster youth, create a pipeline of college-ready youth and ensure that youth have the services and support they need to enroll and persist in college.
- ▶ Partners with Portland Children's Levy, Portland Leadership Foundation, College Housing Northwest, Portland Community College, Multnomah Educations Services District and the Department of Human Services.



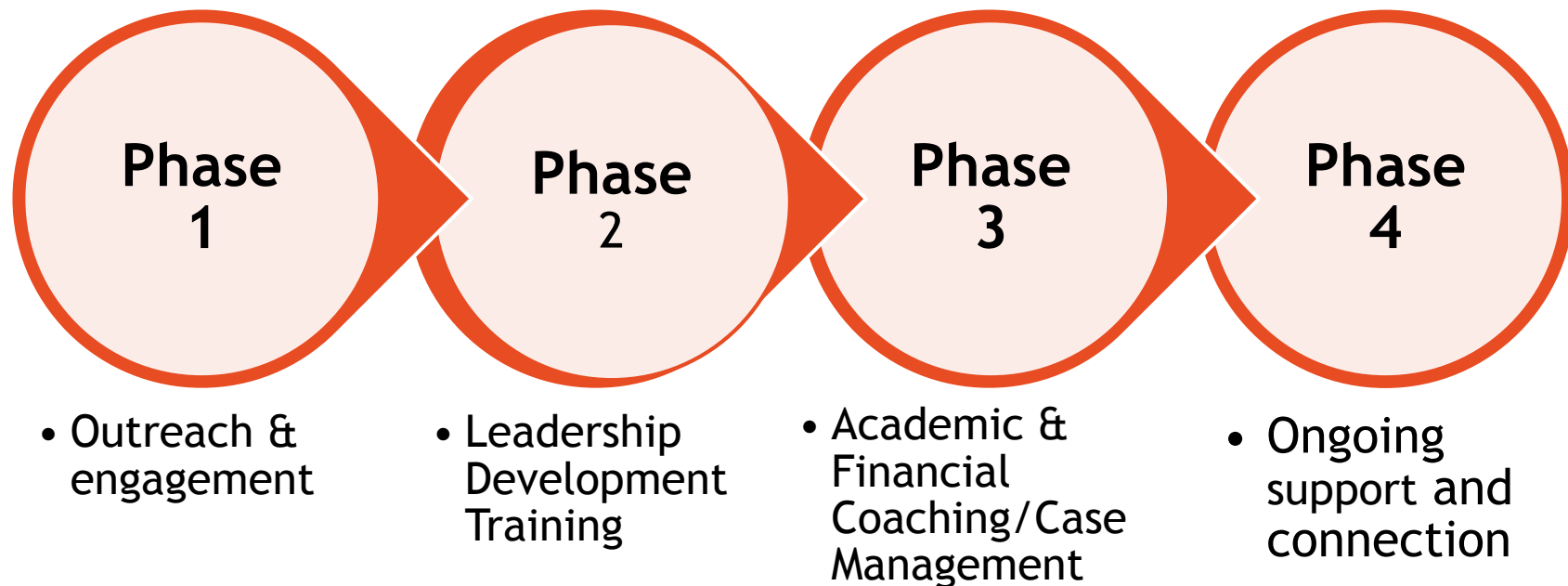
Primary Program Components

- ▶ Leadership Development training and academic prep
- ▶ Supported housing options and wrap around case management
- ▶ Academic, financial, and leadership coaching





Program Phases





Participants

- ▶ **Eligibility for college access support [Phase 1]**
 - ▶ Live in the city of Portland
 - ▶ Be between 17 and 21 years old
 - ▶ Be a current or former foster youth [in foster care and left child welfare substitute care placement at 16 or older, with at least 180 days (six months) of placement services after age 16]
- ▶ **Eligibility for Leadership Development cohort [Phase 2]**
 - ▶ Attained or on-track for high school/GED completion by fall
 - ▶ Interest in attending Portland Community College
- ▶ **Our cohorts have matched demographics of youth in foster care:**
 - ▶ Over-representation of youth of color and youth who identify as LGBTQ



Design

▶ Phase 1 (July-June)

- ▶ Outreach and engagement
 - ▶ College access and readiness
 - ▶ 1-on-1 or group setting

▶ Phase 2 (May-September)

- ▶ Leadership Development Training (weekly, with additional retreats)
 - ▶ Academic prep
 - ▶ Life Skills
 - ▶ Cohort Bonding
 - ▶ Budgeting

▶ Phase 3 (August)

- ▶ Utilize relationships with DHS, ILP, and local college access programs
- ▶ Financial management
 - ▶ Stipend
 - ▶ Housing options

▶ Continued Leadership

- ▶ Hold classes on campus
- ▶ Opportunities (at only)

▶ Phase 4 (Found)

- ▶ Ask community partners and students from prior ATC cohorts to help facilitate
- ▶ Case and support
- ▶ Recruitment and retention of incoming cohorts



Design

▶ Phase 1 (July-June)

- ▶ Outreach and recruitment
- ▶ College readiness
- ▶ Leadership development

Students have access to up to \$300 a month

▶ Phase 2

- ▶ Leadership Development is a balance of advocacy opportunities and fun celebratory gatherings

- ▶ Academic support
- ▶ Life skills training
- ▶ Career development
- ▶ Budgeting

Opportunities for engagement continue with an emphasis on leadership

▶ Phase 3 (September-August)

- ▶ Academic and Financial Coaching/Case Management
 - ▶ Financial support—Stipend
 - ▶ Supported housing options

- ▶ Continued Leadership Development opportunities (at least monthly)

▶ Phase 4 (year-round)

- ▶ Lighter on-going case management and support services as needed
- ▶ ATC Leaders assist in recruiting, engagement, and retention of incoming cohorts



Lessons Learned:

Student recruitment and engagement

- ▶ We set to cast the net really wide to capture everyone - including those who had not thought of college as an option - rather than just working with those who were already on track, part of the 4% who finish post-secondary
 - ▶ While we originally set this up as mostly workshop/class-based support, we've found that our coaches have the most impact on the largest number of youth by setting up 1:1 meetings with youth to help with FAFSA completion, scholarship/essay writing, even just dreaming about what college could be like
 - ▶ More intensive 1:1 meetings in Phase 1 has meant that we have seen an increase in youth participating in the leadership cohort a year or two later once they feel ready
- ▶ We originally hoped to work with schools and foster parents/guardians
- ▶ School staff did not always know which of their students were in foster care
 - ▶ There is little to no data sharing between DHS and schools—where data is shared, it is not easily accessible to teachers and counselors
 - ▶ Frequent school changes made any data unreliable
 - ▶ Stigma around self-disclosure
- ▶ Now we focus our recruitment work with individual staff at DHS, ILP and other college access programs.



Lessons Learned: Finding students that 'fit'

- ▶ Marketed housing/Requirement to live at CHNW—led to poor fit
 - ▶ Reaction to shortage of supportive foster homes and Portland housing crisis
 - ▶ Students were being referred who needed access to housing without it being tied to school
- ▶ Marketed college success—led to better fit
 - ▶ Added flexible housing options and funding
 - ▶ Decreased number of students moving to independence before ready
 - ▶ Avoided interrupting good placements
 - ▶ Allowed ATC to support students who needed more DD supports



Service Goals

With small cohorts,
1-2 program exits
have a big impact on
service goals



	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Cohort 1 (2014-15)	75/75 youth	10/10 youth	8/10 youth	2/7 youth
Cohort 2 (2015-16)	88/75 youth	10/10 youth	8/10 youth	5/7 youth
Cohort 3 (2016-17)	62/60 youth	13/10 youth	on track to meet goal	on track to meet goal


In our third year, we
over-enrolled in order
to account for any
program exits

As we have better
defined “fit” for our
program, our retention
has improved



Program Outcomes

	FY14-15	FY15-16	FY16-17
Youth will have a better understanding of the college application process	53/67 youth	63/64 youth	54/54 youth
Youth selected for the Phase II leadership cohort will enroll in college	7/8 youth	7/9 youth	11/11 youth
Phase III cohort participants will complete the school year in good academic and financial standing for the following year	N/A	3/6 youth	5/7 youth



Changing focus from housing and budget support to college success has led to better program retention



What Makes Avenues to College Different?

- ▶ Direct link to supported housing
- ▶ Consistent financial support and financial coaching
- ▶ Flexibility of services provided
 - ▶ Not everyone needs financial support and not everyone needs help registering for classes
- ▶ Adaptability of program model
 - ▶ We have been able to adjust our program goals and implementation in order to best match the needs of students and community
- ▶ Embed ourselves with partners at the community college and university level to provide a spectrum of programs
- ▶ Program partners that are flexible and willing to grow with the program
- ▶ Two staff share direct service responsibilities
 - ▶ College Pathways Coordinator: manages the day-to-day operations of the program and acts as lead case manager
 - ▶ College Access Specialist: provides outreach and engagement, recruits for program, assists with case management



Student Perspectives

What are your
future plans?

How did Avenues
to College Staff
help you meet
your goals?

How is Avenues
to College
different than
other supports
you have?



Next Steps for Avenues to College

- ▶ Expand eligibility
 - ▶ Include students who live outside of our primary funder's geographical area
 - ▶ Include students who want to go to a school other than the one outlined in our original grant agreement
- ▶ Build PDX-Connect's Youth Advisory Council(YAC) into ATC's Leadership Development model
- ▶ Continue partnership with local Fostering Success program to build a more robust and sustainable support network in Portland and beyond





Avenues to College is funded in partnership with: the Portland Children's Levy & the Joyce N. Furman Scholarship





Greg King, MS

Senior Research Associate
NWEA

greg.king@nwea.org



Wrapping up

Q & A



To Learn More

Tip Sheet: Helping Young Adults from Foster Care Succeed in College

<https://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/pdf/proj-1-FUTURES-helping-young-adults-from-foster-care.pdf>



Acknowledgments/Funders



The contents of this product were developed under a grant with funding from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research, and from the Center for Mental Health Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, United States Department of Health and Human Services (NIDILRR grant number 90RT5030). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of this product do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, HHS, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.





<https://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu>

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Pathways RTC website. The header features the Pathways RTC logo, a search bar, and a newsletter sign-up button. The navigation menu includes links for Home, About, Research, Training, Publications, and Connect. The main content area is divided into three sections: Publications, Webinars, and Training. The Publications section highlights a featured product and a publications search. The Webinars section features a new tip sheet titled 'What Is Peer Support?' and a survey of service providers' training needs. The Training section features a journal article titled 'Increasing Youths' Participation in Team-Based Treatment'.

PATHWAYS RTC

Search [] [] Newsletter Signup

Home » About » Research » Training » Publications » Connect »

Publications

Pathways RTC produces publications on young adult mental health.

Featured Products »

Publications Search »

Publications **Webinars** **Training**

Improving the Lives of Young People with Serious Mental Health Conditions Through Research & Training

PATHWAYS PUBLICATIONS

Tip Sheet: What Is Peer Support and What Is Not Peer Support? (PDF)

Journal Article: Increasing Youths' Participation in Team-Based Treatment

New Tip Sheet: What Is Peer Support?

Posted 06-29-17

This tip sheet from the **AMP+** project provides some clarity around the primary functions of the young adult peer support role, and addresses the common misconceptions of

Participate in a Survey of Service Providers' Training Needs

Posted 06-22-17

Pathways researchers in collaboration with **Youth MOVE National** invite you to participate in a survey of service providers'

Research & Training Center for Pathways to Positive Futures,
Portland State University