Extended Foster Care - Caregiver Training
Agenda

• Understanding the youth’s history
  – Attachment and loss – Andrew and Ben
  – Trauma & the brain
  – Multiple placements & losses
  – What does this mean activity

• How you can help today
  – Understand adolescent development
  – How old are they
  – Be trauma informed
  – Coaching vs Parenting
  – Tools
  – Handling the hard times
  – Perspective & measurements of success
  – Adult Adoption
Understanding The Youth’s History

- Abused, abandoned, neglected
- It wasn’t their fault
- Many want to go home
Attachment & Loss

• The influence of family, environment and attachment.
Areas of Human Development

- Physical
- Intellectual
- Emotional and Social
Guided Imagery Activity – Andrew & Ben

• Purpose:
  – To help us think about the 3 areas of human development and some of the factors that influence how a baby develops from an infant through the toddler years.
  – See how 2 similar children may be affected by their life experiences, making their development very different.
  – See how certain factors either promote development or limit development of a child’s potential and future.
How Trauma Effects the Brain

Left: normal three year old child
Right: severely neglected three year old child
Three Parts of Human Brain

- Neocortex
  » Conscious Thought

- Limbic
  » Emotion Feeling

- Reptillian
  » Instinctive Reaction
Average # of Moves Per Child Ever
Orange, Osceola, & Seminole
(CREST Feb 2015)

4.48
# Number of Moves
(Mar 23, 2015 Orange, Osceola, & Seminole)

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What does this mean?

• There is a link between foster care instability and poor developmental outcomes.
• Every move to a new placement (including the first from their biological family) will contribute to a loss of one developmental and one academic year.
GAINING PERSPECTIVE

• Example: A 19 year old who has moved 5 times may respond emotionally and behaviorally act like a 14 year old.

• It is only possible for a youth to catch up once they feel safe and secure in a placement with caring adults who provide experiences for them to grow self-sufficiently.
Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

- **Physiological:** breathing, food, water, sex, sleep, homeostasis, excretion
- **Safety:** security of body, of employment, of resources, of morality, of the family, of health, of property
- **Love/Belonging:** friendship, family, sexual intimacy
- **Esteem:** self-esteem, confidence, achievement, respect of others, respect by others
- **Self-actualization:** morality, creativity, spontaneity, problem solving, lack of prejudice, acceptance of facts
Youth’s Age

- Chronological
- Appearance
- Intellectual
- School
- Emotional
- Social
- Cultural, Ethnic, Religious Experiences
- Life Experience
### Reasons, Feelings, Behaviors

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Reason for Referral</th>
<th>Feelings</th>
<th>Behaviors</th>
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<td>Physical abuse</td>
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<td>Sexual abuse</td>
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<td>Neglect/Abandonment</td>
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<td>Emotional Maltreatment</td>
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<td>Parent in Jail</td>
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<td>Parent in Hospital</td>
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The Meaning of Behavior

• To effectively change a behavior, we must try to determine the meaning or purpose of the behavior.
• Understanding the meaning of behavior is the first step toward dealing with it.
• When you understand the meaning of behavior, you understand what motivates a person to behave in a certain way.

(continued)
The Meaning of Behavior (continued)

• Motivation typically relates to satisfying some sort of need.

• Ask, “What need is this child fulfilling by acting in this manner?”

• If you can identify the need, then you can work toward other ways for the child to get the need met.
Needs that Motivate Behavior

• **Basic needs** including food, clothing, shelter, & safety.
• Need to connect to one another and **belong**.
• Sometimes we behave in certain ways in order to **get attention or recognition**.
• We also have a need for **power** or to control our environment.
• We pursue activities that we will **enjoy**, & we value our **freedom** to do so.
How You Can Help Today

• Understanding adolescent development
• How old are they
• Be trauma informed
• Coaching vs parenting
• Tools
• Handling the hard times
• Perspective & measurements of success
Understanding Adolescent Development
Ages 18 - 20

• 3 stages
  – Early (12 to 14 years)
  – Middle (15 to 17 years)
  – Late (18 to 20 years)
Early Adolescence
Ages 12 - 14

- Emotional
  - May have moody behavior
  - Struggles with sense of identity
  - Is sensitive and has a need for privacy
  - Is anxious due to increased social & academic stresses
  - Starts to look for loving relationships outside of family
  - May become opinionated and challenge family rules and values
  - May try to “show-off”
Early Adolescence
Ages 12 - 14

• Social
  – Becomes increasingly self sufficient.
  – Usually seeks out friends with beliefs and values similar to those of his family
  – May be preoccupied by appearance
  – Influenced by peers about clothes and interests.
  – May be influenced by peers to try risky behaviors (alcohol, tobacco, sex)

• Mental
  – Mostly bases judgments on concrete rules of right and wrong, good and bad
  – Thinks in terms of present rather than future
  – May start to think abstractly and about complex issues
Early Adolescence
Ages 15 - 17

• Emotional
  – May have anxiety over school and test scores
  – Is self-involved (may have high expectations and low self-concept)
  – Seeks privacy and time alone
  – Is concerned about physical and sexual attractiveness
  – May complain that parents prevent him from doing things independently
  – Starts to integrate both physical and emotional intimacy into relationships
Early Adolescence
Ages 15 - 17

• Social
  – Is increasingly aware of social behaviors of friends
  – Seeks friends that share similar beliefs, values, and interests. Friends become more important.
  – Starts to have more intellectual interests
  – May be influences by peers to try risky behaviors (alcohol, tobacco, sex)

• Mental
  – Becomes better able to set goals and think in terms of the future
  – Has a better understanding of complex interrelationships of problems and issues.
  – Starts to develop moral ideals and to select role models.
Early Adolescence
Ages 18 - 20

• Emotional
  – Has a better sense of self
  – Becomes gradually more emotionally stable
  – Has a greater concern for others
  – Has thoughts about his purpose in life
  – Has pride in his own work

• Social
  – Has become self-reliant and able to make own decisions
  – Becomes more comfortable around parents
  – Becomes interested and concerned in serious relationships
  – Can integrate both emotional and physical intimacy in a relationship.
  – Has developed a clear sexual identity.
Early Adolescence
Ages 18 - 20

• Mental
  – Has ability to think ideas through and set goals
  – Has ability to express ideas
  – Has developed a deeper perspective of life and may become involved in community issues
Additional Resources

• PRIDEbook – Session 3 – Meeting Developmental Needs: Attachment Development
  – Summary of Stages of Child Growth and Development – Pg 82
  – Effects of Trauma on Child Development – Pg 86
  – Effects of Sexual Abuse on Child Development – Pg 90

• Miscellaneous
  – Attachment in Children: Tips for Caregivers – Pg 78
  – Understanding Child Traumatic Stress – Pg 94
  – Coping with Trauma Reminders – Pg 97
How Old Are They Really?  
Let's Break It Down

• Chronological
• Appearance
• Intellectual
• School
• Emotional
• Social
• Cultural, Ethnic, Religious Experiences
• Life Experience
Be Trauma Informed

- The youth often have experienced trauma that affects their current development and adjustment.
- Our involvement should promote healing and foster hope and resilience.
- We should be sensitive and responsive.
- It’s not what’s wrong with you, it’s what happened to you?
## Trauma Informed Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hurtful</th>
<th>Helpful</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Why are you over reacting?”</td>
<td>“You seem pretty angry, let’s take a break.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Maybe you would rather live somewhere else.”</td>
<td>“It’s ok to be mad but it is not ok to cuss me out and punch holes in the wall.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You aren’t going to be able to get along with anyone if you keep acting like that.”</td>
<td>“I am committed to you even when you make bad choices.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You brought drugs in my house now you have to get out.”</td>
<td>“You are an adult and can chose to take drugs. I care about you and hope you do not use. A rule that is not negotiable is bringing drugs in our house.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Coaching vs Parenting

• These are young adults.
• Discuss options and feelings.
  – Use empathy statements
• Provide choices.
• Be ok with them not taking your advise.
Show Empathy

• Identify the children’s feelings or how the child is affected by the situation
• Let your children know you hear what they are saying and that you care about their feelings and what caused them.
• Make statements to let them know you see how they are affected
  – Examples: “Sounds like you had a good day,” or “That must have been tough.”
## Make Empathy Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Begin with a phrase such as…</th>
<th>Then add a feeling or description such as…</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Seems like you are…</td>
<td>▪ Pleased!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Sounds like you are…</td>
<td>▪ Scared.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ That must have been…</td>
<td>▪ Difficult.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Boy, that sounds…</td>
<td>▪ Like a lot of work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Looks like you are…</td>
<td>▪ Excited!</td>
</tr>
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“The emerging science of adolescent brain development has deepened the understanding of adolescent capabilities and behaviors. Neuroscience has made clear that the brain is not ‘done’ by age 6 as was previously believed. Instead, the adolescent brain continues to develop, providing a window of opportunity similar to that which is open in early childhood.”
“Adolescence is a period of ‘use it or lose it’ in brain development. Young people’s experiences during this period play a critical role in shaping their futures as adults. They can build and practice resiliency and develop knowledge and skills that will positively serve them throughout adulthood.”
Recommendations
The Adolescent Brain Pg 2

1. Take a positive youth development approach to all opportunities for young people in foster care.
2. Provide “interdependent” living services that connect young people with family and caring adults.
3. Engage young people in their own planning and decision making.
4. Be trauma-informed to promote healing and emotional security.
5. Extend developmentally appropriate foster care to age 21.
# 1- Take a positive youth development approach to all opportunities for young people in foster care.

- Provide positive development experiences for youth with developmental delays due to trauma and loss.
- Provide opportunities to connect with their families and communities.
- Intentionally create opportunities for involvement in extracurricular and community groups. Such activities ensure young people spend time with multiple caring adults.
- Provide youth with information, skills and supports they need to drive the direction of their own lives. Help them see the results of their choices and actions.
#1 cont - Take a positive youth development approach to all opportunities for young people in foster care.

- Talk with youth about their strengths, interests, talents, goals, and aspirations. Help them clarify their goals and aspirations.
- Provide youth with the resources to pursue a passion that may lead to a sense of purpose in their lives. Example, musical instruments or art supplies, the means to attend events related to their interests, or the opportunity to take classes that help them develop their skills.
#2 - Provide “interdependent” living services that connect young people with family and caring adults.

- Connect youth with family members – parents, siblings, members of extended family – and other caring adults.
- Give youth opportunities to develop relational competencies – the skills they need to form and maintain healthy relationships. Assist them in building social relationships and networks.
- Make efforts to keep youth in one community to establish connections. These adults act as role models, providing opportunities to develop adult skills and relationships.
#2 cont - Provide “interdependent” living services that connect young people with family and caring adults.

- Minimize barriers to normal relationships. Ex. Provide transportation to events or making it easier for youth to have a part-time job, spend time with friends, date, and participate in a range of social and faith-based events. Place young people in family-based settings where social, educational, and employment activities are support as normal adolescent behaviors.
#3 - Engage young people in their own planning and decision making.

- Use strength-based planning processes that are directed by the youth. Promote youth’s active engagement in all discussions and decisionmaking. Encourage youth to lead meetings when possible.

- Create partnerships between youth and adults. Partnerships should be with adults who model self-determination and healthy decisionmaking.

- Recognize the importance of healthy risk-taking by giving youth the chance to make their own decisions, even if it is not what the adults agree upon.
#3 cont - Engage young people in their own planning and decision making.

- Understand that the adolescent brain is wired for risk and the child welfare practices is designed to eliminate all risks are not developmentally appropriate for emerging adults.
- Place young people in family-based settings – as opposed to group care – to provide environments for healthy risk taking and learning.
#4 - Be trauma-informed to promote healing and emotional security.

- Ensure child welfare and other service staff are trauma informed. They should:
  - Have core knowledge about trauma and its impact on child and youth development
  - Recognize the youth can be retraumatized by systems and services designed to help them.
  - Create safe, comfortable and welcoming environments

- New information increases staff understanding about the importance of meeting the developmental needs of older youth.
#4 cont - Be trauma-informed to promote healing and emotional security.

- Create opportunities for young people to make sense of their life histories and current experiences.
- Develop trauma-specific services that can address the full range of needs presented by young people who have experienced complex trauma.
- Refer youth in need of trauma-specific intervention to skilled and caring clinicians.
- Establish peer support groups to help young people work through their experiences with ambiguous loss and develop a positive identity.
Tools

- Living arrangement agreement
- Life skills reporting form
- CBCCF website
Handling The Hard Times

• Broken agreements
• Placement Support Staffing
• You are not the savior
• It is a process
• Take care of your self
• Lighten up and have fun
Broken Agreements

• It will happen. Expect it!
• Risk taking and pushing limits is a part of adolescent development.
• Attachment challenged youth will test you to see if you will give up on them too.
• They may not be use to structure, rules, routine, and accountability.
• Schedule a family meeting to discuss the situation and come up with solutions.
• Listen and seek to understand the youth’s perspective.
Placement Support Staffing

- Requested through Intake & Placement
- Bring all the players to the table (youth must agree).
- Discuss options.
- Be open minded.
- Remember you are modeling the behavior to the youth.
You Are Not Their Savior

• You may not be appreciated.
• You can teach them a better way.
• You can help them heal.
• You can give them choices for their future.
It Is a Process

- Life is not a fairy tale.
- You will not see immediate results.
- You will take one step forward and two steps backwards.
- Celebrate the little things that are big things.
Take Care of Yourself

• Put on your oxygen mask first.
• You must take care of yourself.
• Water activity.
Perspective & Measurements of Success

• Loss History Chart

• Microscopic changes are monumental
  – My 19 year old attachment challenged son has attached to his girl friend. She is not who I want for him but I am happy he has the ability to attach.
  – This year she started using the F word – family.
Adult Adoption

- Youth can be adopted at 18 even if they were not TPR’d
Making a Difference
Resource 3 – P
Questions