

FSM Community Collaborative: Central 2, LCC

February 17, 2017

Total Periscope viewers: 31

Brandy MYOI 4 youth

Tanya Samaritas

Jen: Dept of Treasury

Sarah W: Dept of Education

J. Munley: Fostering Stars

Americorps College Access

LCC Foundation

Family Charities

1 youth MYOI LCC

Marty: LCC staff/educator/mentor

Tristan: LCC student

Nate: Peckham (2)

Jen Baumann: DHHS

Veronica Putnam SVSU FAST (3 staff)

Mona: MYOI

Emily DHHS MYOI

1 youth MYOI

Jeff stephens, LCC staff

Meg: LCC faculty professor.

Welcome from J. Munley, Carrie G.

Maddy Presentation: Highlights of 7 life domains, Supportive Relationships life domain.

Supportive Relationships and Community Connections:

The experience of foster care disrupts relationships with an individual's family, friends, and community.

“Social Capacity”: Healthy connections are instrumental in helping individuals succeed in all aspects of their lives.

*Often more than one caseworker (MYOI in Michigan can help provide support, Mentors).

Carrie Gregg: Use 7 life domains at LCC on a chart. “Rate all of the domains on scale of 1-10, and if it’s not a 10, what would it take to get you to a 10. Action steps developed accordingly. Next meeting, check in on action steps.”

J. Munley: 7 Life Domains allow us to work on skills that are built around the domains. 69-70 skills we want to target. Focus in on that and look at plan, what does it mean to gain skill in each domain. “road map”

Student feedback on life domains:

- Tristin: Helpful to reflect in midst of busyness. “how is my happiness level?” The more happy I am the higher the each of those are. Helps me improve happiness and know what to work on.
- Talking to Carrie is better than talking to a counselor sometimes.

School of health model: 8 domains....allows for a complete picture.

Mona: MYOI coordinators always work on the 7 life domains, asset trainings always focus on one of the domains. Coordinators provide the supportive relationships.

Whitney: MYOI Student: It’s important because you don’t know who is around you or what doors are going to open for you. Learning how to speak, job opportunities, I was on the news. Letting kids behind us know that there is good road ahead.

Jen: Fostering Futures scholarship 3/18 avail. June 30th deadline. Recipients will receive reminders. Winter payment just sent to schools. New TIP processes but no new rules. Student portal. Michigan.gov/missg create student portal.

Transitional Housing project currently underway, building partnership w/ LCC: Pinnacle Recovery Services....FB site.

MI Teen Conference: SVSU this year. 2 days of workshops and activities all geared toward youth with experience in foster care.

FSM Collaborative Panel: [Click here to view periscope recording.](#)

Question 1: When you think of this domain, how do you define it?

BY: Having a support network that is there to assist you in various ways. Taking the time to think about who in that support network could do what. My father is very hands-on. He’ll give me his two cents about cars, but I wouldn’t ask him about scholarships because he’s never been to college. Taking the time to think about who is good for what in your life.

JB: Building supports and connections for youth in foster care and transitioning out of foster care. Building community connections and adult supportive connections. We are focused on building these connections better for youth so they can transition out of foster care successfully and be successful adults.

TW: Where you have a group of people who are in-between a friend and a parent who can really help you deal with your own concerns, questions, and can help you figure out where to go.

JM: I love the *Jungle Book*. Mowgli learns the path of the jungle. The strength of the wolf is the pack, and the strength of the pack is the wolf. When we work to connect our youth to the resources they need, and when we accept them for who they are and push them to be the best they can be, then we put our feet on the ground in this domain.

SS: Having connections to better yourself. It makes you feel part of something. Some foster kids feel like people don't want to talk to them like normal humans. It's something to fall back on if you don't have family or if family can't be there for you.

CG: It's being humans, we are designed to be in complex social networks. This can be challenging for youth with experience in foster care because they are faced with challenges associated with change.

MD: It's people with specific expertise, it's resources, a sense that we are stronger together, people that can help you better yourself, we all need a community to support us and help us feel like we belong—these are the people you feel like you can fall back on. This is a full definition and underscores the complexity of this domain.

Question 2: How does this life domain impact your life/work?

CG: We work hard to help our students identify and establish relationships and connections that will help our students achieve their goals

SS: These connections has helped me get a house and get through school. If it weren't for these relationships, I'd probably be on the streets.

JM: We need to have a grasp on what resources are in the community, who is running those resources, and how to set our students up to connect and use those resources. We can't expect students to learn if they are hungry and they don't know where they are going to spend the next night. Knowing people who are out there and have the resources is the most important thing we are doing right now.

TW: This really impacts my financial life because when I entered Fostering Stars Program, there were a lot of things I didn't know how I was going to pay for. These supportive relationships have really helped me with worrying about financial stability. I was able to find work. You have to be purposeful in these relationships.

JB: This is all that we do in our program office. We are singularly focused on how to make sure young people transitioning out of fc are housed, going to school, have a job, improving the connections and supports that are available for our youth

BY: In whatever capacity I can, I like to assist students that are newer. A lot of times it's past the hours that coaches are working, I try to keep up with all the students I know personally. I've always had really good support, I would not be where I am today without that support. We live in a village and you have to work with each other

MD: To recap, Supportive Relationships are the people who help form identity, establish yourself, help you achieve your goals. These are so essential to meeting basic needs. Even knowing about resources because you have connections is a huge piece of establishing more connections. Young people often don't know about resources because they don't have anyone to tell them about the resources that are available. In DHHS there is such a focus in getting young people these connections and resources.

Question 3: What challenges have you encountered related to this domain and how have you resolved them?

SS: One of the challenges I have encountered is foster care TEACHES DEPENDENCY. MYOI helps but there aren't enough resources that help prepare for the real world, once you leave foster care. Another thing is wanting to be helped, or knowing where the boundaries of your help is...there are a lot of resources that only help with one thing.

TW: Some of the challenges I encountered, right out of foster care, once you graduate high school and become fully independent, when you need resources in college, I didn't find out about the Fostering Stars Program until after orientation. For colleges to tell their students about the resources and supportive relationships in orientation would be very helpful. I really think that colleges across MI should be purposeful in doing that. I have had challenges finding the best resource that fits my need. I don't want to go through every resource, I want the one that will help me the most.

BY: When I was initially in foster care, I couldn't get ahold of my case worker, and she had only done a home visit maybe 5 times in 2 years. Back then I was very uncertain about what was going to happen in my case. I had a pretty good foster care experience. I only had one foster home for 5 years. In terms of communities, maybe each resource center should have a liaison that is there to do outreach to all the other community resources so they can collaborate.

MD: To recap, foster care teaches dependency. At Fostering Success Michigan we like to talk about inter-dependency, so being a strong self-advocate and being able to ask for what you need and want. Knowing the right resource and knowing the right person to go to for that resource. I like the idea of liaisons with community resources. Broadly creating diverse professional networks. For the professionals at the table, I would like to talk to you about creating those networks and broad support for the students. What are some challenges in creating the community connections?

JB: Kind of a mixture, so how do you not create dependence on the system? How much is just enough support? How do we walk the fine line? How many supports are too many supports? Do they have a mentor, education support, MIWorks? Sometimes we over-serve them.

JM: Two challenges: Trust, a lot of our students have been through a lot. I am here to be nonjudgmental. If that trust isn't there then it's hard to move our relationship forward. Once they know we are here consistently and without judgement, we can start moving our relationship forward. The other challenge is coming from outside of Lansing, knowing what is out there and who is doing what. I had to get on the phone, start meeting people, I had to move forward to know what was out there, so I could better serve my students.

CG: We are in an interesting situation because a lot of our students are already kind of transient. A lot of our students age out of a residential treatment center, and this is not where they are from or where they are going to stay. I love Tristin's idea of bringing awareness of resources to school orientation.

MD: The more people have information and build trusting authentic relationships then the better equipped we are at finding that "just right" space.

Audience question: This is for Jenn. What is your feedback mechanism, what supports do you have to try and make those decisions?

JB: We ask youth what they need to build a stronger system. We have a youth advisory board to advise us on our policies. We want to hear from the youth as much as possible. Right now, the MYOI and the 800 youth enrolled in that program provide us with valuable feedback on our services.

Audience: There are a lot of challenges we encounter in foster care. I was aware of resources late, when I was about to age out of the system. When is a good time to let the young people know about these resources, not waiting until a year before they age out? When is a good time for you to step in and let them know what's out there?

CG: Entering MYOI at the age of 14 has helped bring awareness to the resources that are available.

JB: We really start hammering home what resources are available at age 14. We encourage caseworkers to always be asking what they need?

Audience: What's plan b? My caseworker did ask what I needed, but I was still confused about what was going on. I was lost.

JB: Our plan b is not perfect. MYOI is fantastic, we are in the governor's budget to expand, but right now we are not in every county. Another plan b would be a youth who did not end with caseworkers, we connect them to community mentors.

MD: Sometimes we don't ask for things because we don't know what we don't know. Before we can go through the laundry list of saying this is what you need, we can say this is what available, what do you need now what do you need later? There is a lot of opportunity for improvement, we can continue looking at a lot of ways to improve a plan b.

BY: We have a foster care review board, there is a place where citizens are able to act as a check in foster care. A youth board is more ideal, I don't know what the policy implications of adding a youth version of that.

MD: There's lots of opportunities to get involved, but do you know about the opportunities to get involved?

Audience: Everything is about relationships. Teachers are overwhelmed, but our youth should be spending most of their time in schools. There is new funding at MDE for foster youth liaisons to connect youth to resources in the community. This is a hopeful move, and this collaborative piece is so important.

Life Domain Passport Activity: [Click here for PDF of the Passport!](#)