

Executive Summary

Course Title: Engagement From the Youth's Perspective

Target Audience: This course is targeted toward child welfare workers who are involved in formally facilitated, agency meetings that affect transition aged foster youth, such as: TDMs, GOALS meetings, TILP meetings, and Permanency Team meetings. Involvement could include serving as a facilitator of the meeting, attending a meeting as a resource broker or other supportive function, or as one whose responsibilities entail preparing youth for such meetings.

Course Description: The goal behind this course is to sensitize participants to foster youth's experiences as they pertain to being involved in formally facilitated team meetings. The course is taught by a panel of former foster youth trainers, who will share personal experiences with *adulthood* and outline strategies that can be applied in practice that reconstruct adult spaces to make meaningful inclusion of youth possible. The course is fast-paced, interactive, with a heavy focus on skills practice. Teaching methods include lecturette and small and large group activities.

Outcome Objectives for Participants:

1. Participants will engage in a discussion illuminating the inherent power imbalances that exist in youth/adult relations, be able to articulate the ways these power imbalances play out in formally facilitated agency meetings, and be able to propose multiple solutions towards youth inclusion and empowerment.
2. Participant will examine how the formality inherent in public child welfare methods (i.e. formalized case plans, ILP "classes", social work "interventions"), is antithetical to the normalization of adolescent development, and acts as a barrier to youth inclusion.
3. Participant will develop strategies around adjustments that can be made to formally facilitated agency meetings so that they are developmentally sensitive and adaptive to the needs of each youth.
4. Participant will revisit and recommit themselves to the social worker code of ethics, acknowledging that the "nuts & bolts" of a quality social worker are the same, whether the worker primarily works with youth or adults.

Ways that Supervisors can support the Transfer of Learning from the classroom to the job...
BEFORE the training...

- Talk to the participant about the learning objectives and identify one objective as a special area of focus.
- Participant should report back on what they have learned post-training.

AFTER the training...

- Observe staff in a formally facilitated agency meeting. Talk with them about new methods they employed that fostered youth inclusion.