

# Learning Circle



**Involve a diverse array of stakeholders in the development of a comprehensive continuum of services and supports for youth transitioning out of the foster care system.**

# **Preparation for Adulthood: Supervising for Success**

**Learning Circle: Involve a diverse array of stakeholders in the development of a comprehensive continuum of services and supports for youth transitioning out of the foster care system.**

## **Agenda**

**9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

9:00am	Welcome and Overview of Day
9:15 am	Introduction to Learning Circle and Review of Past Action Plans
9:30 am	Focus Questions
10:30 am	Digital Stories and Discussion
11:00am	What Makes Collaborations Work?
11:30 am	Analyzing My Collaboration Colors
12:00 pm	Integration Activity
12:30 pm	Future Planning

## **Learning Circle: Involve a diverse array of stakeholders in the development of a comprehensive continuum of services and supports for youth transitioning out of the foster care system.**

### Supervisory Competencies:

- Appreciates that young people transitioning out of foster care need a range of supports and services that extend beyond the child welfare system.
- Knows and understands that collaboration and networking with multiple systems in the community is essential to creating a “safety net” for transitioning youth.
- Knows and understands that the development of comprehensive continuum of supports is the shared responsibility of the community.
- Knows how to reach out to and work with a diverse array of stakeholders to build and sustain a continuum of supports and services for young people.
- Knows how to effectively collaborate with a diverse array of both youth-serving and non-youth serving systems and stakeholders in the community.
- Can and is able to provide build awareness about challenges facing youth in foster care through public education and training.
- Can and is able to facilitate the involvement of young people in the community.
- Can and is able to create linkages to resources in the community for young people to promote their successful transitions to adulthood.

### Guiding Principles:

- A comprehensive continuum of supports, services and opportunities to promote the safety and well being of young people involved with and transitioning from the foster care system.
- A diverse array of community stakeholders are involved and investing in preparing young people for adulthood.
- Effective community interactions and interagency collaboration model for youth the importance of networking and community support systems.

### Practices:

- Identify existing community resources and link young people to services and supports prior to their discharge from foster care.
- Facilitate the involvement of youth with the community to promote a sense of connection and belonging.
- Provide cross system training and education about the challenges facing youth as they transition out of foster care.
- Engage both traditional and non-traditional partners in the community to broaden awareness and advocate for the need for services to prepare youth for adulthood.
- Create formalized mechanisms to facilitate collaborative efforts.

## **Focus Questions**

### **Question #1**

**What kinds of collaborations are you involved with to support young people as they prepare for adulthood? What is your role? How do these collaborations function? If they function effectively, please talk about the components of an effective collaboration. If not well, why? What barriers have you encountered?**

### **Question #2**

**In your supervision, how do you help develop collaboration skills with your staff?**

## **Definition of Collaboration**

Adapted from: Collaboration Framework - Addressing Community Capacity: the national Network for Collaboration <http://crs.uvm.edu.nnco/collab/framework.html>

Collaboration is a process of participation through which people, groups, and organizations work together to achieve desired results. Collaborations accomplish shared vision, achieve positive outcomes for the audiences they serve, and build an interdependent system to address issues and opportunities. Collaborations also involved the sharing of resources and responsibilities to jointly plan, implement and evaluate programs to achieve common goals. Members of the collaboration must be willing to share vision, mission, power, resources and goals.

## **Goal of Community Collaboration:**

(Adapted from: Collaboration Framework - Addressing Community Capacity: the national Network for Collaboration <http://crs.uvm.edu.nnco/collab/framework.html>)

The goal of collaborations is to bring individuals, agencies, organizations and community members themselves together in an atmosphere of support to systematically solve existing and emerging problems that could not easily be solved by one group alone. Collaborations should focus on increasing capacity, communication and efficiency while improving outcomes.

## **Principles of Collaboration**

(adapted from Community Collaboration [www.communitycollaboration.net/id22\\_m.htm](http://www.communitycollaboration.net/id22_m.htm)) and Collaboration Framework - Addressing Community Capacity: the national Network for Collaboration <http://crs.uvm.edu.nnco/collab/framework.html>)

1. Start with a unifying purpose.
2. Create, maintain and revisit Mission and Vision statements. The vision represents a picture of the future and should be written in the present tense. The mission describes the purpose of the collaboration – it is the fundamental reason for the collaboration’s existence.
3. Set measurable goals and objectives.
4. Set high expectations – expect the best from the people with whom you are working.
5. As a group, identify leaders for the collaboration who are open minded, willing to share leadership and empower others.
6. Show respect for members of the collaboration (consider people’s time, transportation, child care needs, access and comfort, acknowledge the contributions of others, and be flexible.)
7. Foster open and honest communication – remember that everyone needs to be heard.
8. Obtain feedback and evaluate the efforts of the collaboration.

9. Stick with it, persevere and support each other!
10. Celebrate success.

## **Benefits and Barriers to Effective Collaborations**

Adapted from Ohio State University Fact Sheet (<http://ohioline.osu.edu/bc-fact/0001.html>)

**Benefits** of collaboration may be immediate or long term, direct or indirect. It is important to note that some members of the collaboration may benefit more than others. Benefits include:

- Improved delivery of programming;
- Opportunities for professional development;
- Improved communication and enhanced information;
- Increased use of programs and resources available in the community;
- Elimination of duplication;
- Come in many different shapes, sizes and are of varying duration – one size does not fit all;
- Increased availability of resources; and
- Improved public image.

**Barriers** to collaboration include:

- Turf issues and turf mentality;
- Lack of staff or time to participate in the collaboration;
- Conflicts with organizational focus and priorities between the collaboration and its members;
- Mistrust of other organizations;
- Slowed decision making;
- Limited resources or lack of willingness to share existing resources;
- Position statements that are inconsistent with policies of individual coalition members;
- Withdrawal of support as a result of outside pressures from individuals or groups;
- Decreased levels of cooperation among collaborators during a crisis.

# Think Differently

An eccentric old king wants to give his throne to one of his two sons. He decides that a horse race will be run and the son who owns the slower horse will become king. The sons, each fearing the other will cheat by having his horse run less fast than it is capable, ask the court fool for his advice. With only two words the fool tells them how to make sure that the race will be fair. What are the two words?

Think of a way you can put a sheet of newspaper on the floor so that when two people stand face to face on it, they won't be able to touch one another. Cutting or tearing the paper is not allowed, and neither is tying up the people or preventing them from moving.

This has two parts – by adding only a single line turn the Roman numeral seven into an eight: VII. Want something more challenging? Show here is Roman numeral nine: IX. By adding a single line, turn it into a six.

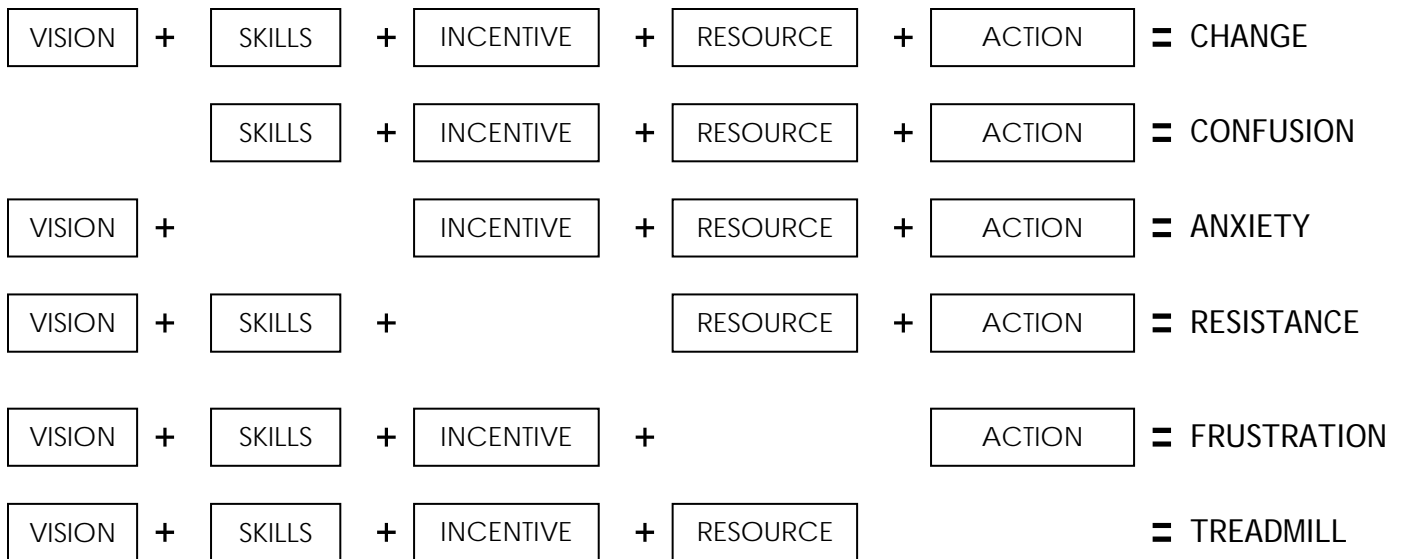
Source: <http://crs.uvm.edu/hnco/>



# The Change Process

Working together on a youth development initiative requires "change" for everyone. We all know that change is rarely easy or fast, but it does produce important results. As we work together, remember and reflect on these basic premises of managing complex change.

## Managing Complex Changes



Adapted from Knoster, T. (1991). Presentation at TASH Conference, Washington, D.C.

# Instructions – Broken Squares

In there are five envelopes, each of which contains the pieces of cardboard for forming squares. When the facilitator gives the signal to begin, the task of your group is to form **five square of equal size**. The task will not be completed until each group has before them, a perfect square of the same size as that held by others.

- No talking, pointing, or any other kind of communicating among the people in your group.
- Participants may give pieces to other participants but may not take pieces from other members.
- Participants may not simply throw their pieces into the center for others to take; they have to give the pieces directly to one individual.

It is permissible for a member to give away all the pieces to their puzzle, even if they have already formed a square