The Center for Fostering Success

Best Practice, Best Fit

Webinar Series

Discovery Driven Solutions Related to Educational Attainment for Students from Foster Care

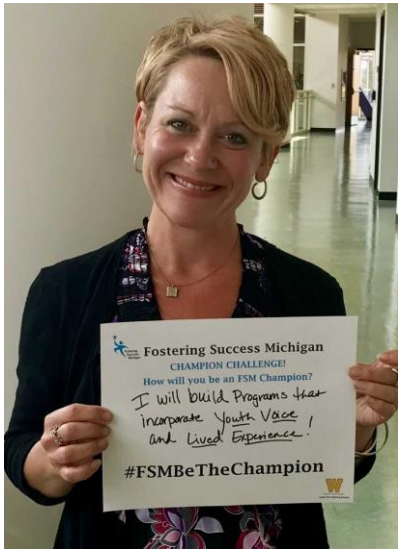
Fostering Success Michigan

Center for Fostering Success
An Initiative of Western Michigan University

The Center for Fostering Success

Best Practice, Best Fit

Webinar Series



Karie Ward, MSW
Program Coordinator
Fostering Success Michigan
Center for Fostering Success
Western Michigan University
Email: karie.j.ward@wmich.edu

Thank you to our funders!

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

THE HAVIRMILL FOUNDATION

THE KRESGE FOUNDATION

Fostering Success Michigan

Center for Fostering Success
An initiative of Western Michigan University

Fostering Inclusion

The Implementation of a Faculty/Staff Mentor Programs for College-Going Foster Youth

Jamie Bennett | Angela Hoffman | Kizzy Lopez | Blaire Tinker

Presenters

Angela Hoffman

Assistant Director, Orientation Programs
Michigan Technological University

Blaire Tinker

Program Manager, Student Support Development
Center for Engineering Diversity & Outreach University of Michigan

Presenters

Jamie Bennett

Academic Success Coordinator
University of South Florida, St. Petersburg

Kizzy Lopez

Renaissance Scholars Program
Program Coordinator
California State University, Fresno

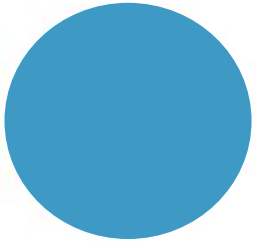
Learning Outcomes

- Identify institutional policies and procedures that are embedded in family privilege
- Identify exposure gaps in the experiences of students on campus
- Learn how to implement a faculty/staff mentor model to mitigate exposure gaps and family privilege

From Foster Care to College

Over

of youth from foster care ***aspire*** *to go to* ***college***



%
Graduate High School

%
Enroll in College

%
Earn a Bachelor's Degree

Data Source: Wolanin, T. (2005). Higher education opportunities for foster youth: A primer for policymakers. Washington, D.C.: The Institute for Higher Education Policy

From Foster Care to College

Over 80% *of youth from foster care* ***aspire*** *to go to* ***college***

50%

Graduate High School

Compared to
70%
U.S. Average

20%

Enroll in College

Compared to
60%
U.S. Average

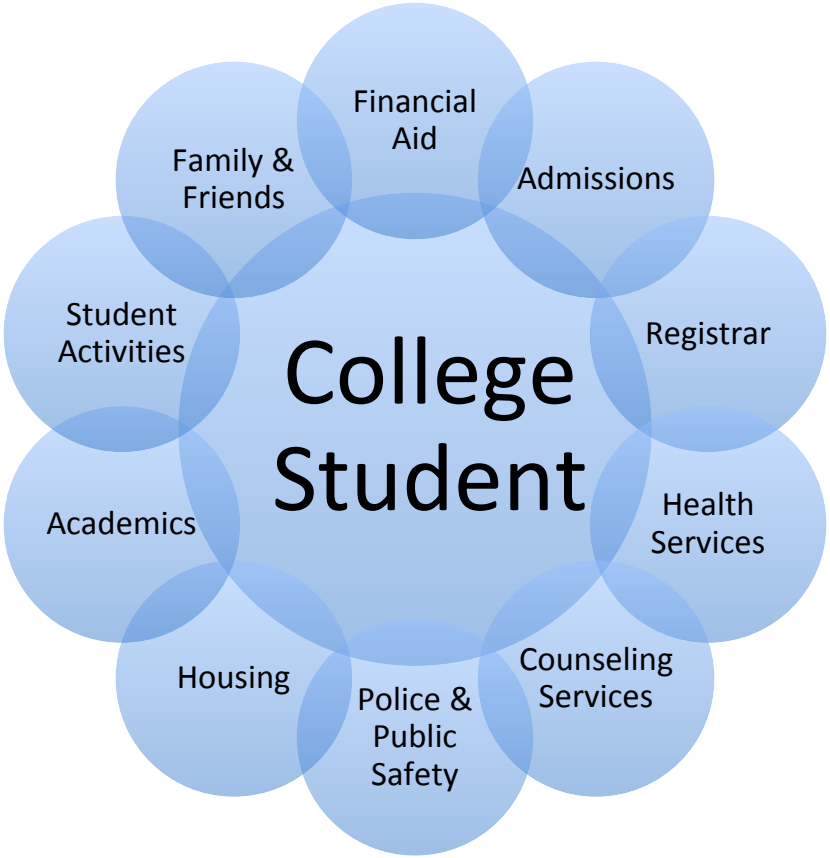
2%

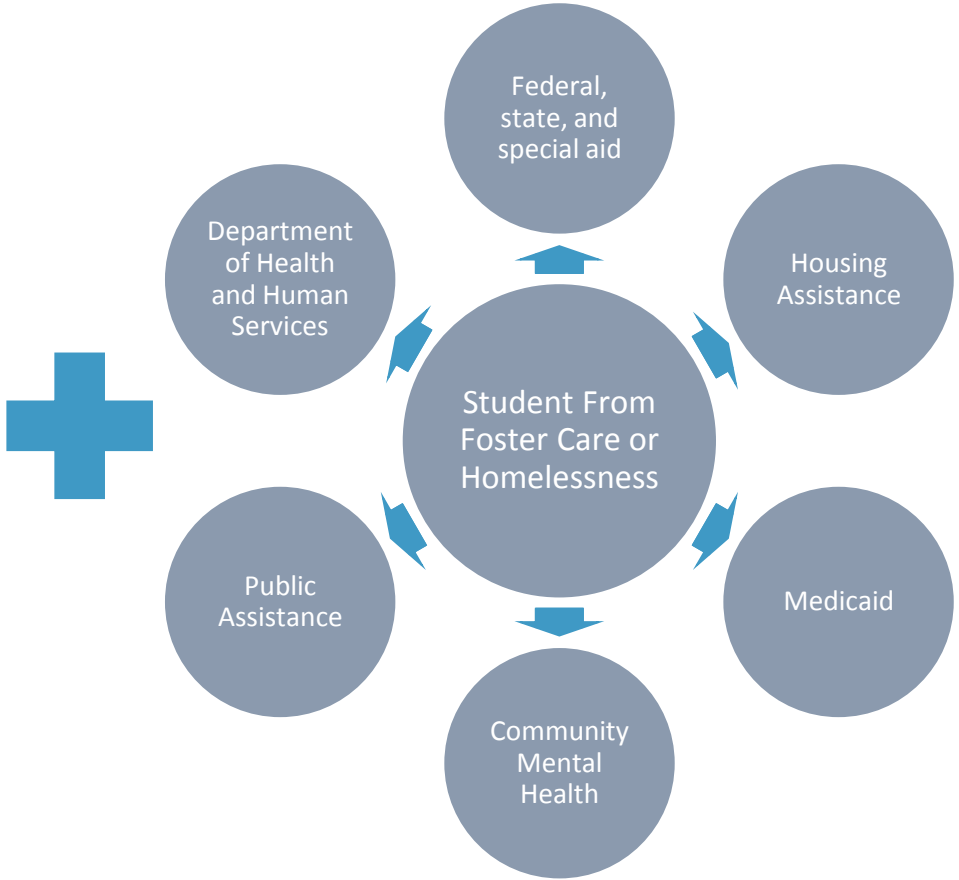
Earn a Bachelor's Degree

Compared to
25%
U.S. Average

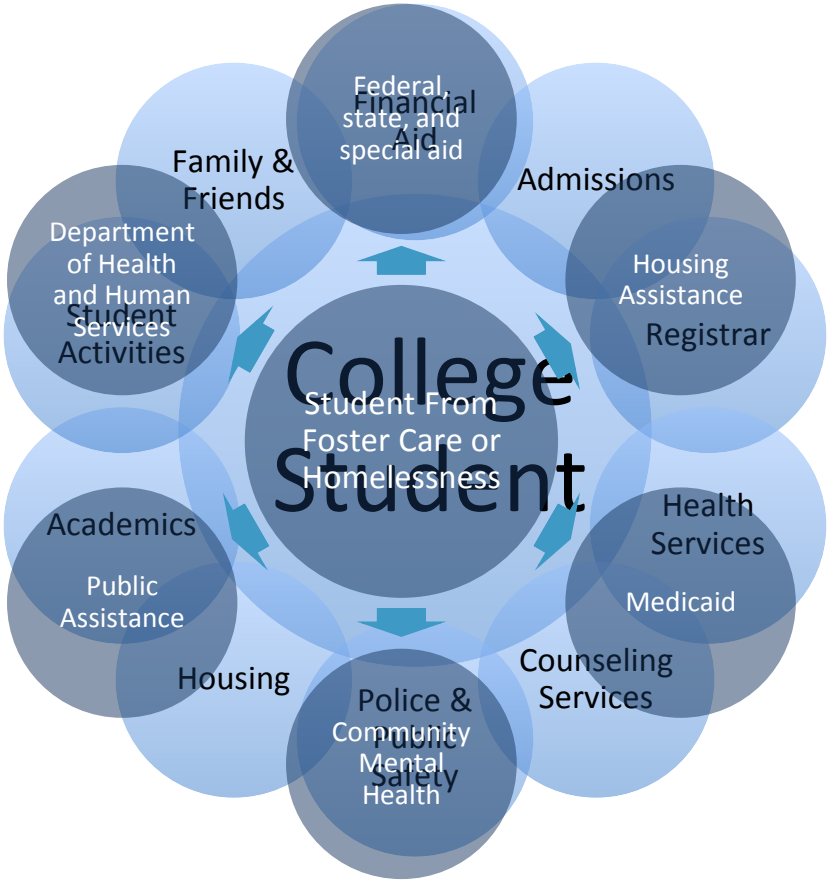
Data Source: Wolanin, T. (2005). Higher education opportunities for foster youth: A primer for policymakers. Washington, D.C.: The Institute for Higher Education Policy

Navigating Foster Care and College





Navigating Foster Care and College



Many students with experience in foster care have to navigate multiple complex systems to access and achieve success in higher education.

“It is a curious reality that societies most vulnerable youth, those who have suffered abuse or neglect and have never known consistent, permanent, nurturing adult relationships, are asked to be self sufficient at a time when other youth are still receiving parental support in college or are experimenting with their first jobs from within the safe confines of a family.”

-Wendy Whiting Blome (1997)

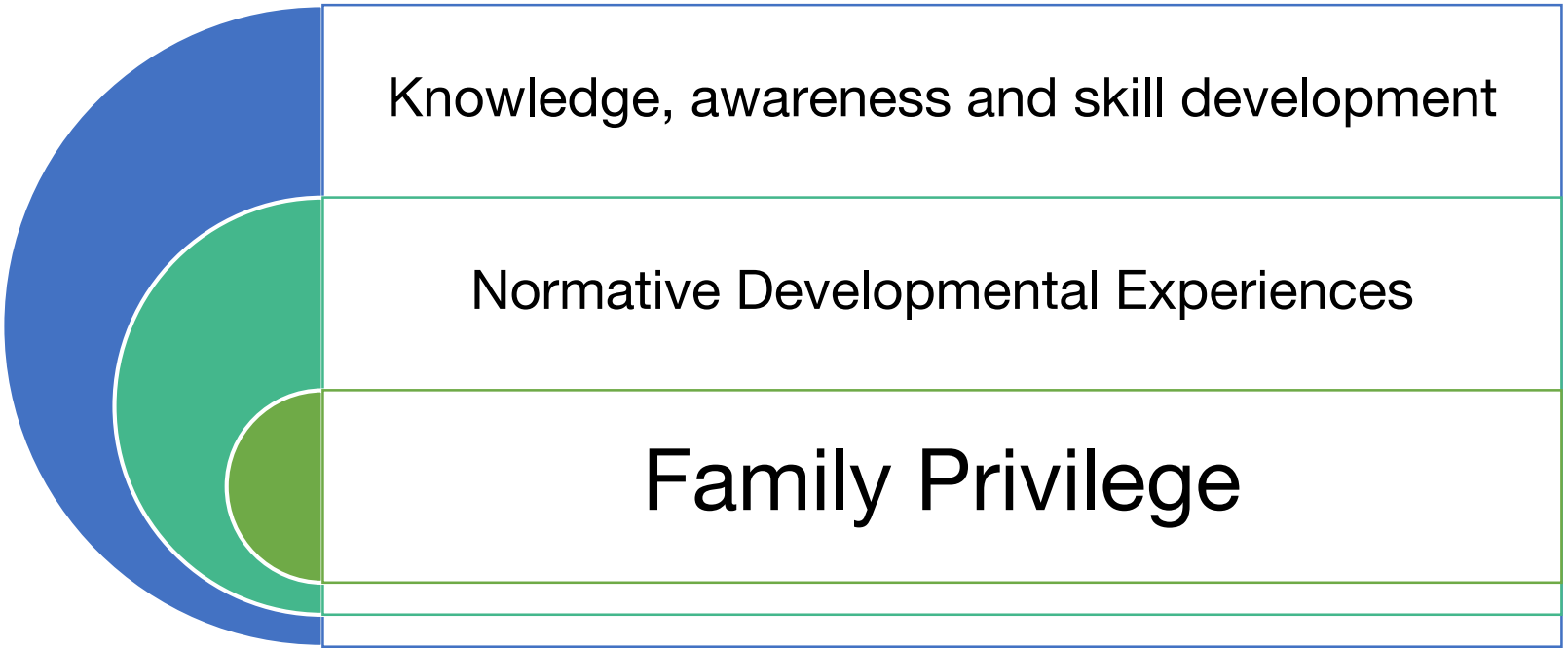
Family Privilege

Coined by John Seita (2001) to describe the often-unnoticed benefits that stem from being the member of a stable family

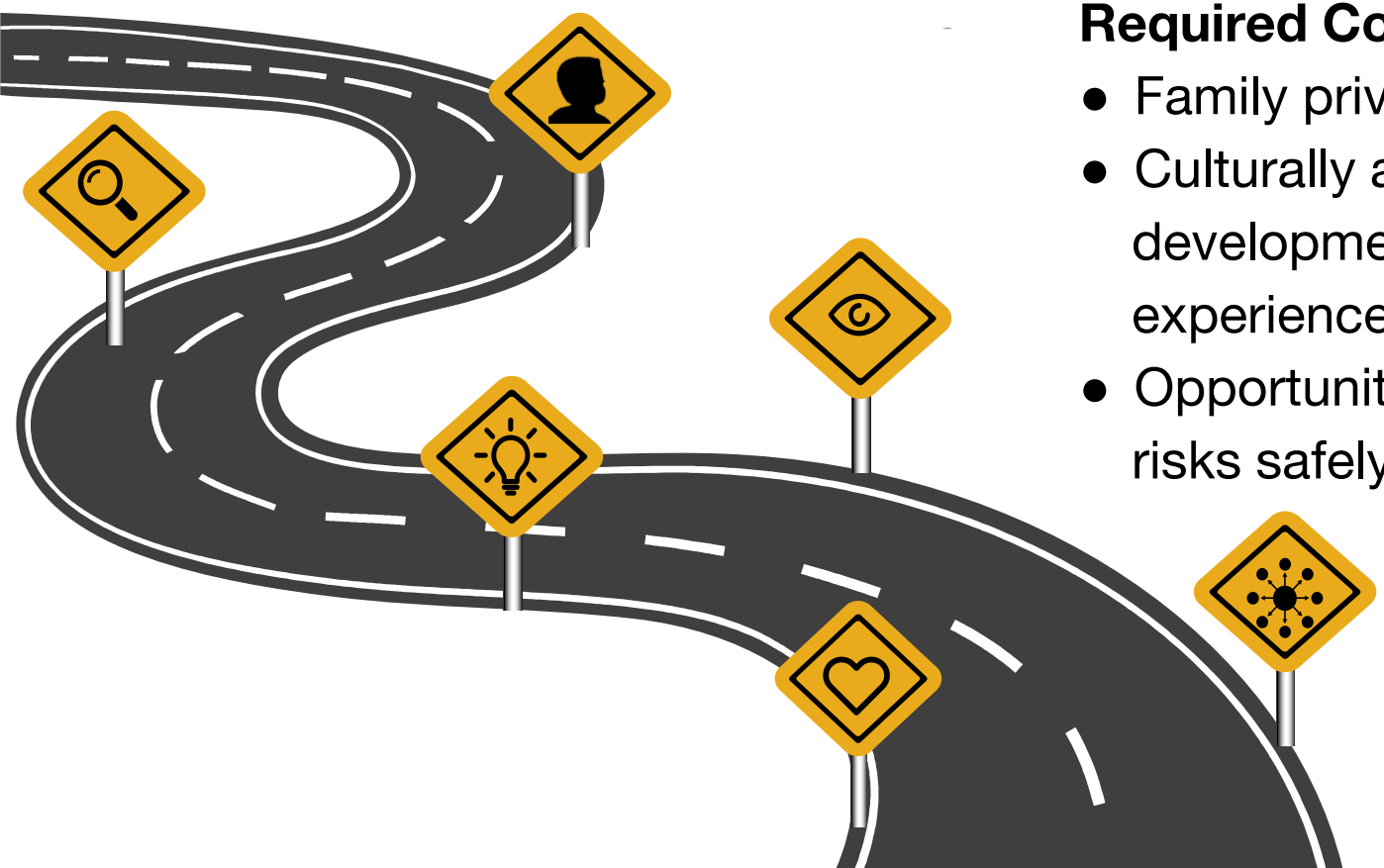
Examples

Exposure Gaps

Missing knowledge, personal insights, and life skills that carry into adulthood as a result of the experience of foster care



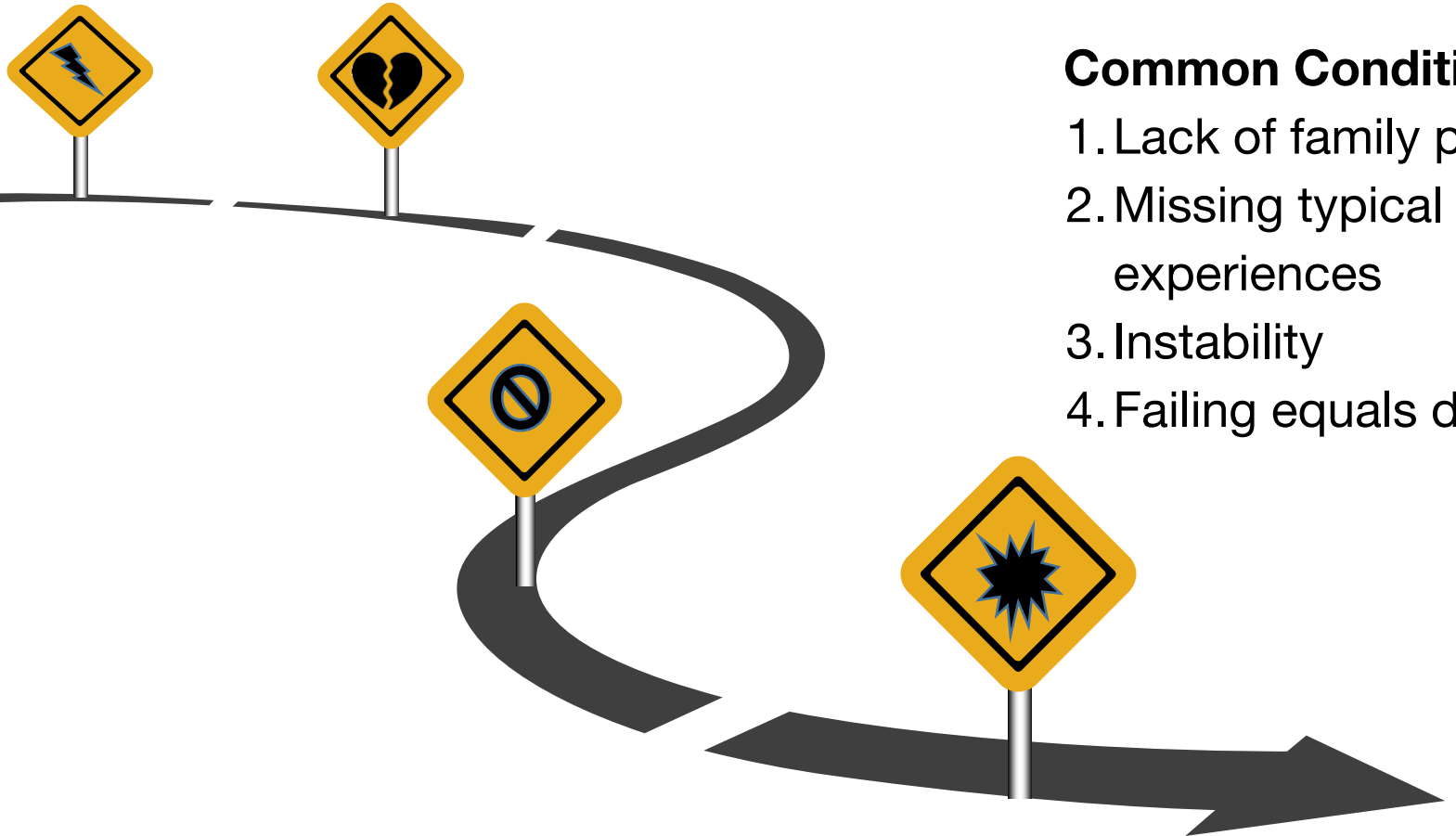
Typical Childhood Development



Required Conditions:

- Family privilege
- Culturally and developmentally appropriate experiences
- Opportunity to fail and take risks safely

Experience of Foster Care



Common Conditions:

1. Lack of family privilege
2. Missing typical childhood experiences
3. Instability
4. Failing equals danger

Addressing Exposure Gaps

Best Practices:

1. Teach, don't just tell
2. Check in versus assume
3. Bridge gaps through building knowledge, awareness, and skill

Exposure Gaps Key Takeaways

- Family privilege is not likely to be replaced by professionals
- To bridge exposure gaps, create experiences

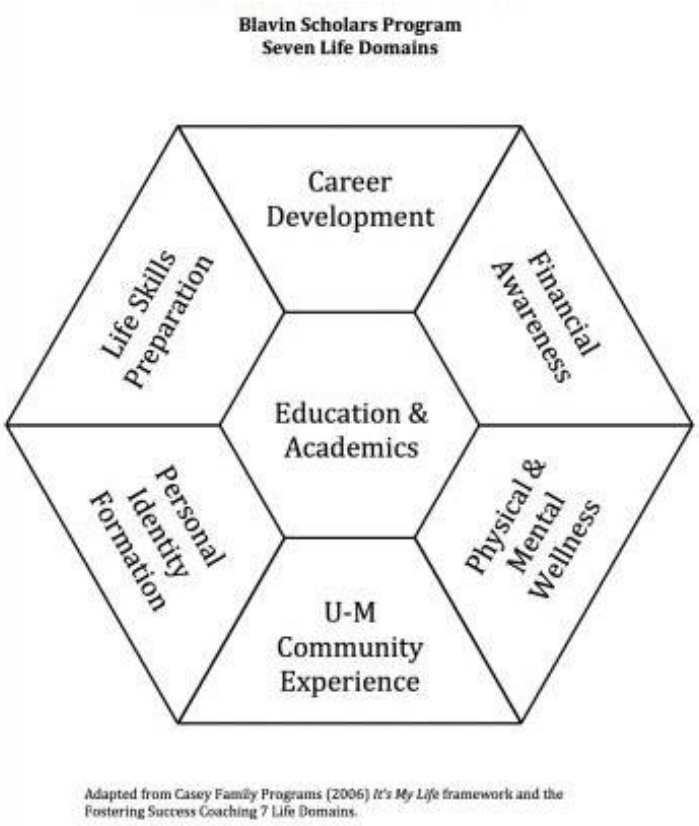
Implementation of a Mentoring Program

Why Mentoring?

- Majority of youth indicate they have too few adults they can rely on
- Provides opportunities to have safe experiences and build social capital
- Provides different but often synergistic support along with formal program staff support

Mentoring Program: Phase 1

- Determine program structure (holistic and student-centered)
- Finalize a proposed budget and secure funding (if any)
- Create application or interest process
- Recruit mentors
- Prepare and conduct training



Mentor Recruitment

STUDENT LIFE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Student Life Staff

MENU

STUDENT LIFE STAFF

- Student Life Mission, Core Work, and Values
- Resources
- Concerning Students
- Organizational Development
- Professional Development
- Technology
- Budget & Finance

Apply to be a Blavin Mentor Today!

We are looking for U-M Faculty and Staff from a variety of fields, experiences, and interests to serve as mentors to current and incoming Blavin Scholars. The mentor match relationship is a mutual one-to-one relationship between a U-M faculty or staff member and a Blavin Scholars mentee. Blavin Mentors compliment the support offered by the Blavin Scholars Program and Staff by serving as an additional supportive adult and resource in their mentee's life.

Mentor Application Due Date | July 31, 2017

STUDENT LIFE TODAY - JUNE 20, 2017

- U-M Unveils Tuition Guarantee for Michigan Students with Need
- New Learning and Professional Development Courses
- Volunteer Opportunity: Lead an ELI Conversation Circle this Summer!
- Your Input Desired Regarding Google and Box Training
- Holiday and Season Day Reminders!
- Apply to be a Blavin Mentor Today!
- Don't Miss the MSTAFF200 Bicentennial Celebration
- LGBTQ+ Staff at U-M

Mentor Training

- Population Experiences
- Program Overview and Expectations
- Trauma-Informed Mentoring
- Establishing Trust
- Establishing Boundaries
- Addressing Exposure Gaps

Mentoring Program: Phase 2

- Conduct mentor matching
- On-going training
- Supporting mentor matches
- Building community of mentees/mentors

Mentor Matches

- Speed matching
- On-going program directed matches
- Providing opportunity for student input

Meet a Mentor Match

On-going Mentor Support

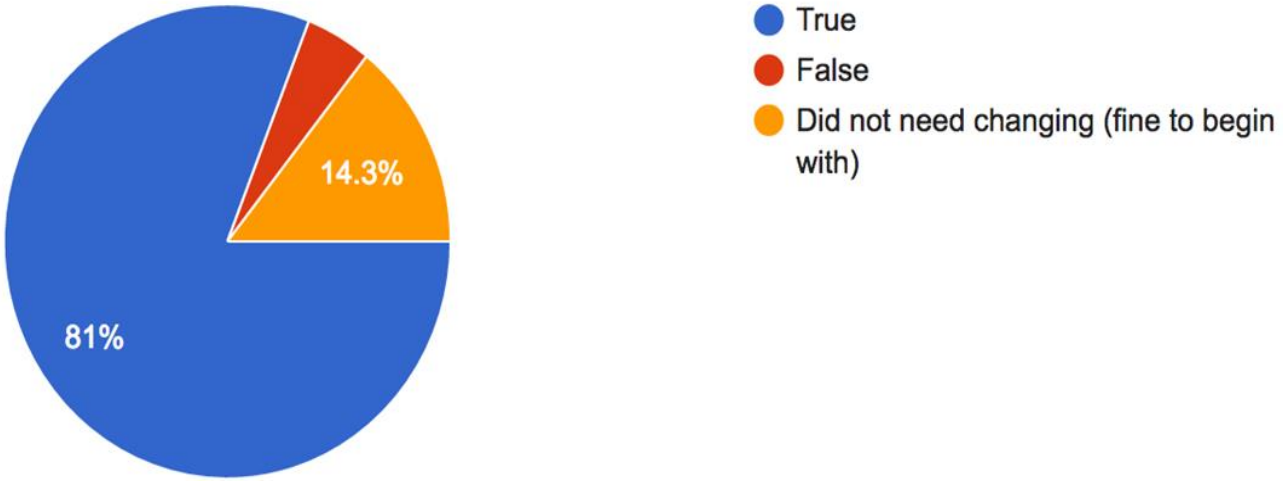
- Mentor meetings
- Timely topics
- Mentor newsletters
- Point of contact for mentors and mentees

Mentoring Program: Phase 3

- Closure of relationships
- Formal and informal assessment

Mentor Program Assessment

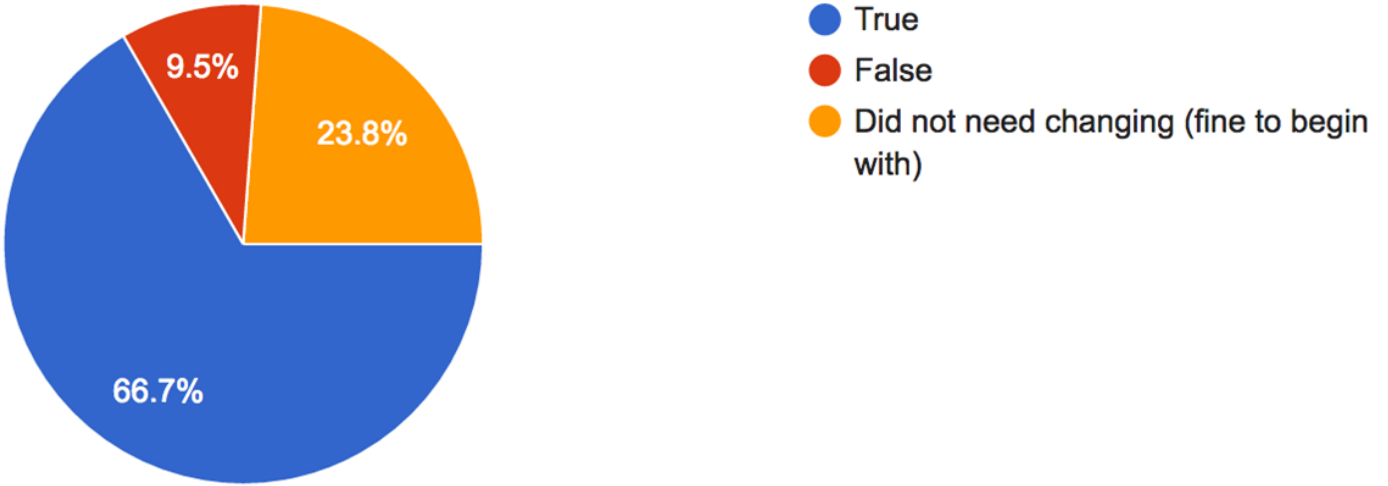
I feel like there are people who will help me out if I need it (21 responses)



STUDENT LIFE
BLAVIN SCHOLARS
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Mentor Program Assessment

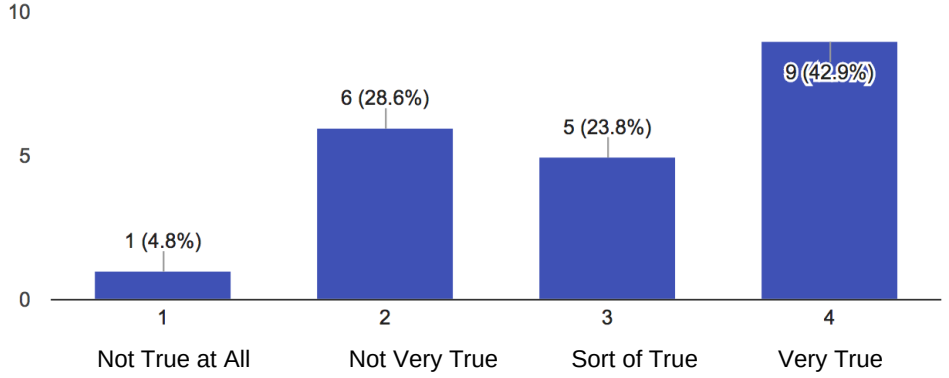
I feel I have more options for my future (21 responses)



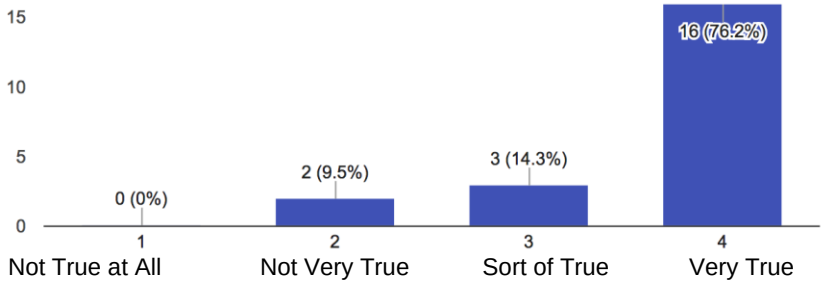
STUDENT LIFE
BLAVIN SCHOLARS
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Mentor Program Assessment

My mentor and I like to do a lot of the same things (21 responses)



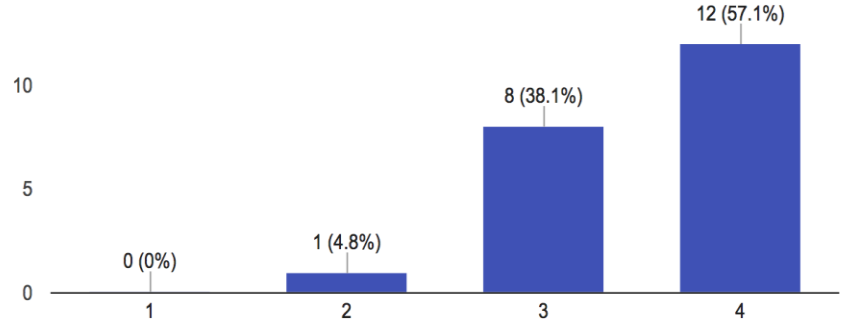
My mentor almost always asks me what I want to do (21 responses)



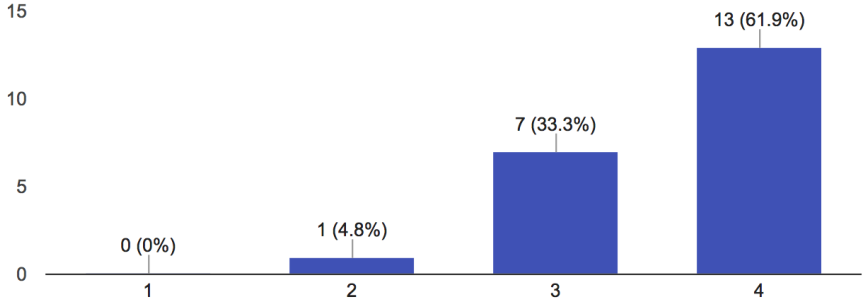
STUDENT LIFE
BLAVIN SCHOLARS
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Mentor Program Assessment

When I'm with my mentor, I feel significant (21 responses)



When I'm with my mentor, I feel happy (21 responses)



STUDENT LIFE
BLAVIN SCHOLARS
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Mentor Program Assessment

"You're doing a great job and are helping me out a lot!"

"You have changed my whole life around and made my college transition one for the books."

"I know we don't have much in common but I appreciate that we can always find a medium and have fun together."

STUDENT LIFE
BLAVIN SCHOLARS
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Mentor Program Assessment

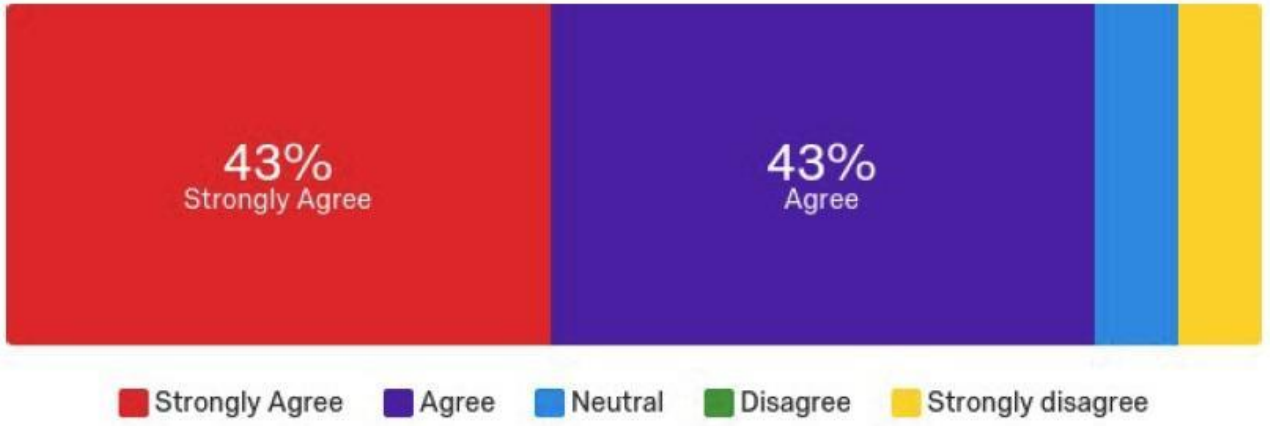
I really appreciate the training that was held at the beginning of the semester that informed us of the possible "triggers" that could potentially create barriers in our communication and rapport building with our mentee. I feel that it gave me a lot more to be mindful of as I strive to be that leader/extended family and trusted point of contact for my mentee. Thank you!

-Mentor

FRESNO STATE
Discovery.
Diversity.
Distinction.

Mentor Program Assessment

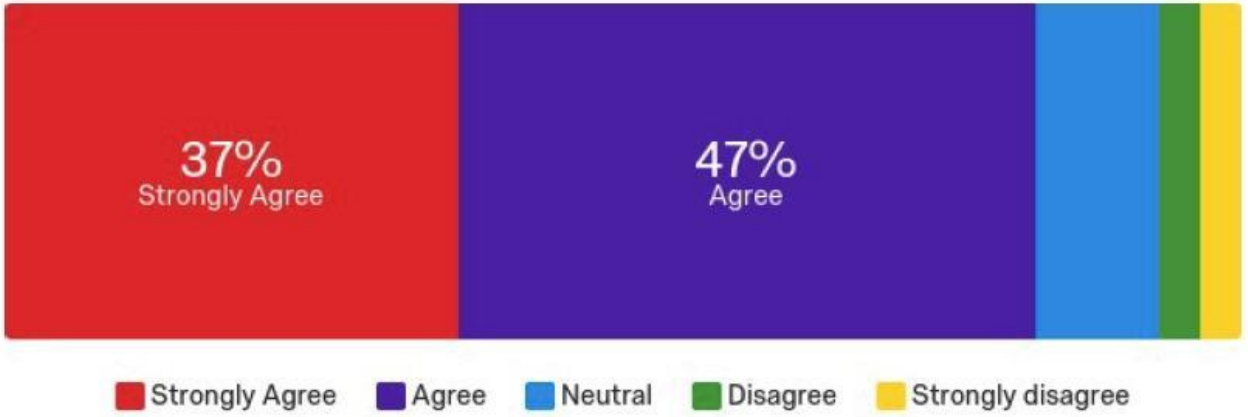
The overall quality of the program was good. (30 responses)



FRESNO STATE Discovery. Diversity. Distinction.

Mentor Program Assessment

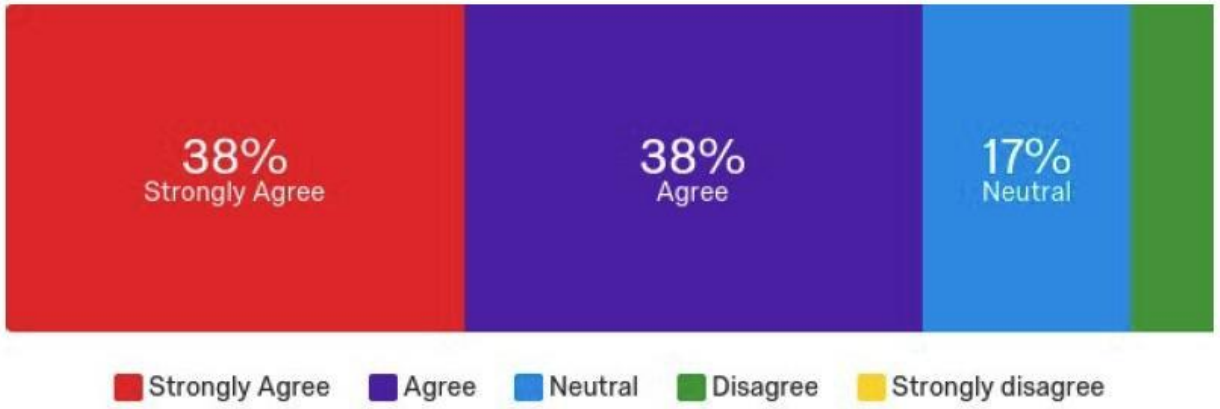
The mentoring program had a meaningful impact.



FRESNO STATE
Discovery.
Diversity.
Distinction.

Mentor Program Assessment

The mentoring program was useful for students.



FRESNO STATE Discovery. Diversity. Distinction.

Mentor Program Assessment

Those pairs who met more frequently face-to-face (at least once a month or more) had higher satisfaction ratings with the mentoring experience.

FRESNO STATE Discovery. Diversity. Distinction.

Benefits of a Mentor Program

- Expands the network of support for students
- Provides additional role models and social capital to support goal achievement
- Together formal staffing, mentors, and students partner together to navigate college and achieve success

A Few Words of Advice

- **Budget.** You can create a mentoring program on any budget or not budget at all.
- **Training**. Training is a critical component of setting your mentors up for success.
- **Make It Your Own.** Every program will be slightly different based on campus climate, program resources, and students' needs.
- **Time Together Matters**. Any relationship requires time together. Emphasize the importance of your mentor pairs spending time together on a regular basis.

FRESNO STATE Discovery. Diversity. Distinction.

Questions

Presenter Contact Information

Angela Hoffman
Michigan Technological University
aehoffma@mtu.edu

Blaire Tinker
University of Michigan
blairemt@umich.edu

Kizzy Lopez
Fresno State University
kizzyl@mail.fresnostate.edu

Jamie Bennett
University of South Florida St. Petersburg
jamiebennett@mail.usf.edu

Recommended Citation:
Hoffman, A., Tinker, B., Bennett, J., Lopez, K. (2018) Fostering inclusion:The implementation of a faculty/staff mentor programs for college-going foster youth [Webinar]. *Center for Fostering Success Best Practice Best Fit Series*.

Thank you for attending!

The Center for Fostering Success

Best Practice, Best Fit

Webinar Series

- Visit www.fosteringsuccessmichigan.com for more information about upcoming webinars or to access a recording of today's webinar.
- If you like this content and would like to see it continue, please donate today by visiting our website!
- If you have a research study that you are interested in presenting via this series, please contact Karie Ward at karie.j.ward@wmich.edu

Fostering Success Michigan

Center for Fostering Success
An Initiative of Western Michigan University