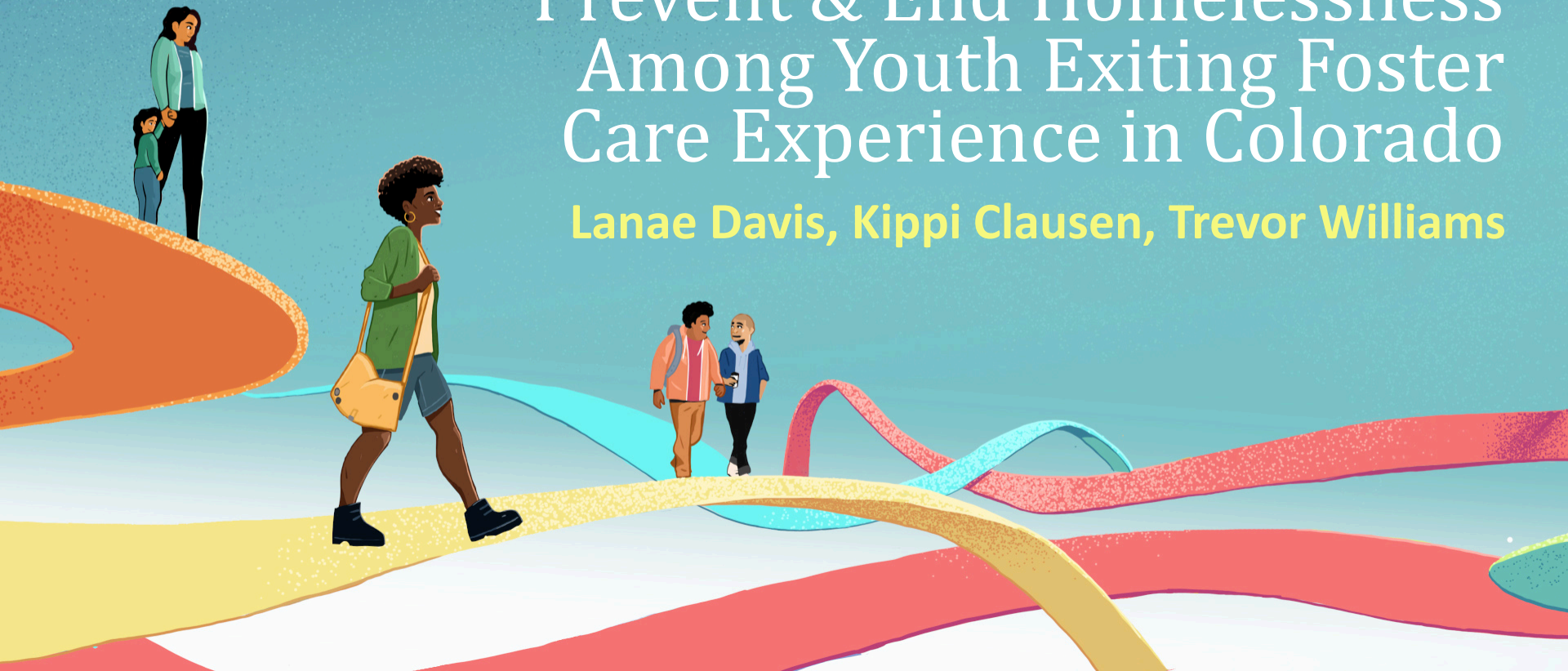
FYSB Family & Youth Services Bureau | Runaway and Homeless Youth Training & Technical Assistance Center

BRIGHTER FUTURES
STRENGTHENING PATHWAYS FOR YOUTH SUCCESS

Prevent & End Homelessness Among Youth Exiting Foster Care Experience in Colorado

Lanae Davis, Kippi Clausen, Trevor Williams



Presenters

Center for Policy Research
Lanae Davis, She/Her
Senior Research Associate
ldavis@centerforpolicyresearch.org

Colorado Department of Human Services/Division of Child Welfare
Trevor Williams, He/Him
Youth Services Administrator
trevor.Williams@state.co.us

CO Rural Collaborative for Runaway & Homeless Youth
Kippi Clausen, She/Her
Strategic Development & Training
kippi@unfoldingdirections.org

COLORADO
Office of Children, Youth & Families
Division of Child Welfare

CPR
center for policy research

Q & A

- Place questions and comments in the chat box
- As many questions as possible will be answered during the session
- All questions will be compiled and answered in a FAQ from the session

Learning Objectives

Understand	Understand the need and benefits of collaboration between child welfare & homeless youth systems along with lived experience youth to improve policy and practice
Increase	Increase knowledge of how Colorado developed and evaluated its youth-driven model intervention to prevent and end homelessness among youth with foster care experience
Identify and explore	Identify and explore key design, implementation & evaluation strategies to apply

Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- The ‘Why & the How’ of Pathways to Success?
- What is Pathways’ Model Intervention – *Engaging Youth in a Coachlike Way?*
- What were the findings of the Pathways Formative Evaluation & Next Steps for the Summative?
- How has Pathways helped advance broader policy & practice changes?

The Why & How of Youth At Risk of Homelessness (YARH) & Pathways to Success?

YARH’s Purpose

“Prevent & address homelessness among youth with foster care experience by developing an evidence-based model”

Why YARH?

- **Midwest Study Findings** (Youth Aging Out of Foster Care)
  - 20% of youth experienced homelessness.
  - With “couch-surfing” included in the definition of homeless, 40% experienced homelessness after aging out of care at ages 23 and 24
  - 24% did not graduate from HS or have a GED
  - 48% did not find steady work
- **Multi-State Chafee Evaluation Findings**
  - College enrolment
  - Likelihood of youth choosing to stay in care after 18

Progression of YARH Phases

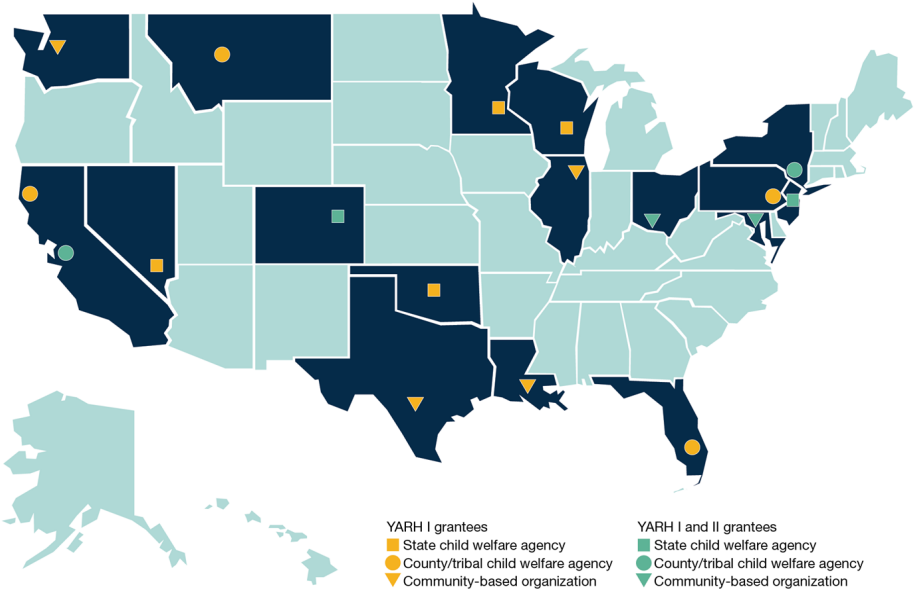
Phase I
Activities included identifying the target population, describing its needs and developing a comprehensive service model.

Phase II
Six Phase I grantees received Phase II grants to implement and conduct initial testing of the comprehensive service model developed in Phase I.

Phase III
Summative evaluations will be conducted to determine the effectiveness of the comprehensive service models designed and piloted in the earlier phases.

Where is YARH?

- YARH grantees represent diverse array of geographic areas and organizations
- Phase I grantees located in 17 states
- Phase II grantees located in 6 states
- Phase III will continue to provide support to Phase II agencies



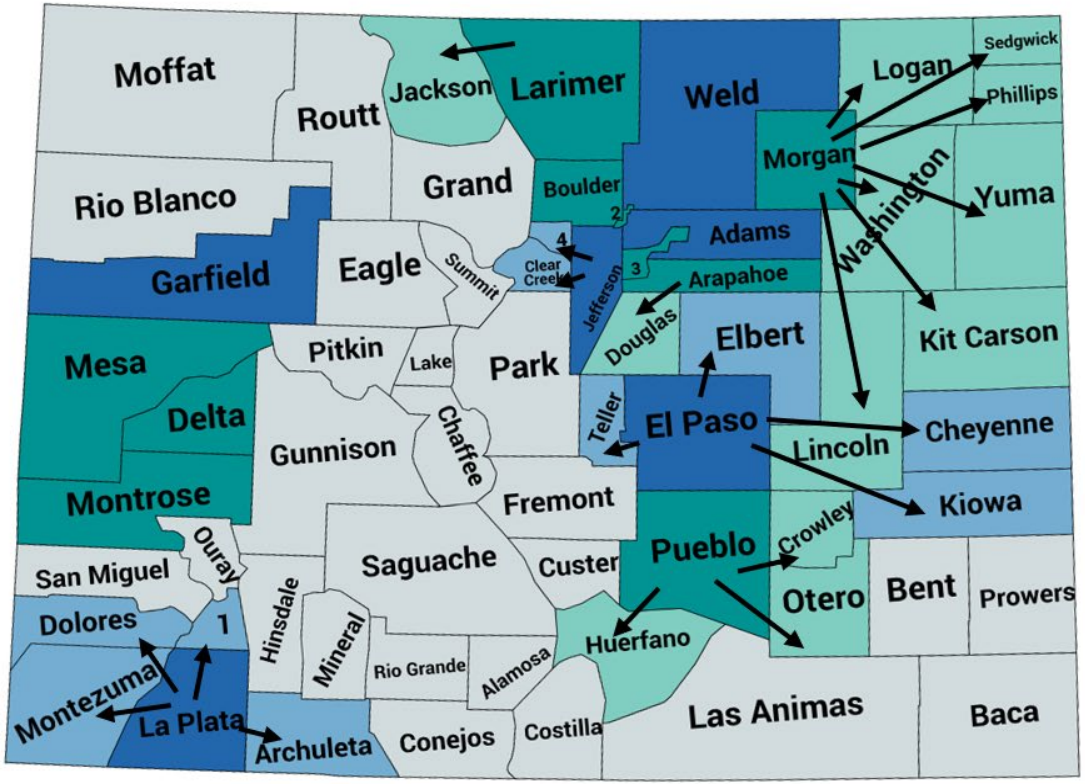
Pathways Phase II Sites

- Denver Collaborative (Urban): Partnership between Denver Department of Human Services (DHS) & Urban Peak
  - 1.0 FTE Navigator at Denver DHS
  - 1.0 FTE Navigator at Urban Peak
- Boulder Collaborative (2nd City/Suburban): 1.0 FTE Navigator split between Boulder DH&HS & TGTHR
- **Rural Collaborative**
  - Part time Navigators at Fremont & Garfield DHSs
  - 1.0 FTE Navigator at Shiloh House covering Weld, Morgan, Logan, and Washington Counties

Phase III - YARH 1 Planning Phase FOA

Reprogramming Chafee program-funded services, and Title IV-E foster care services extended beyond age 18 to better support the population of young people who are most likely to have a challenging transition to adulthood including homelessness and unstable housing experiences.

Phase III: Intervention & Comparison Sites

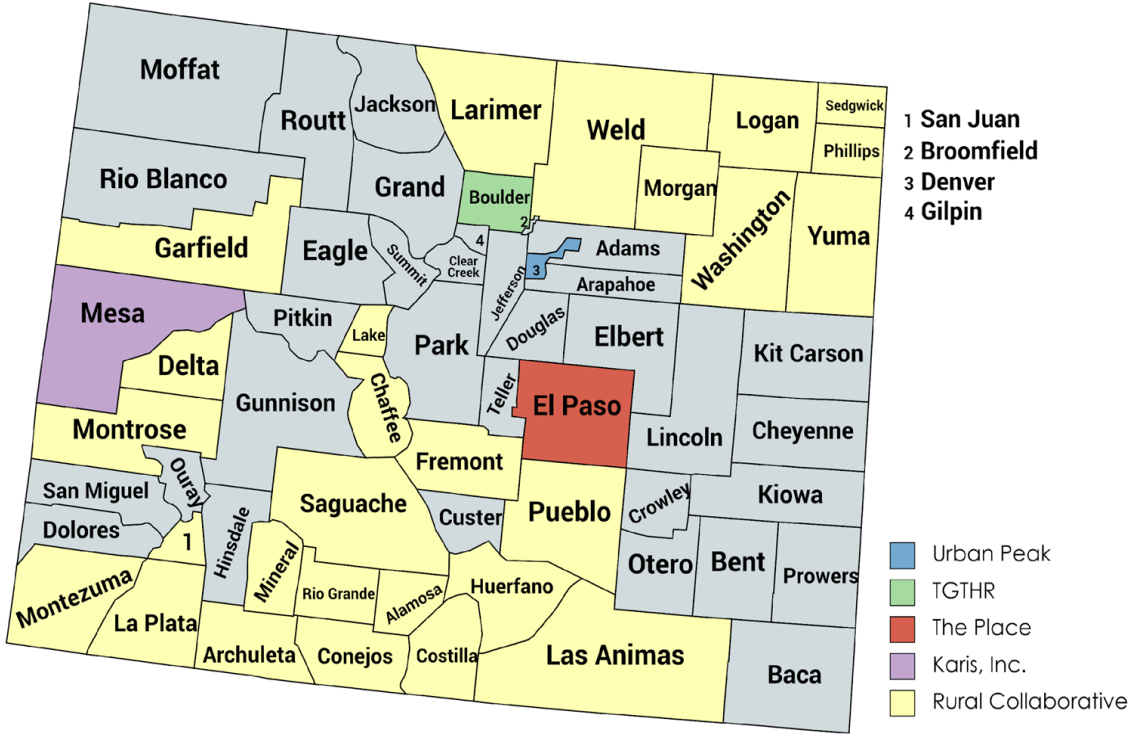


YARH-3 Groups

- Treatment (Hub)
- Treatment (Supported)
- Comparison (Hub)
- Comparison (Supported)

1 San Juan
2 Broomfield
3 Denver
4 Gilpin

FYSB Funded RHY Providers



Lessons Learned about Collaboration

Denver: conduct monthly staffing

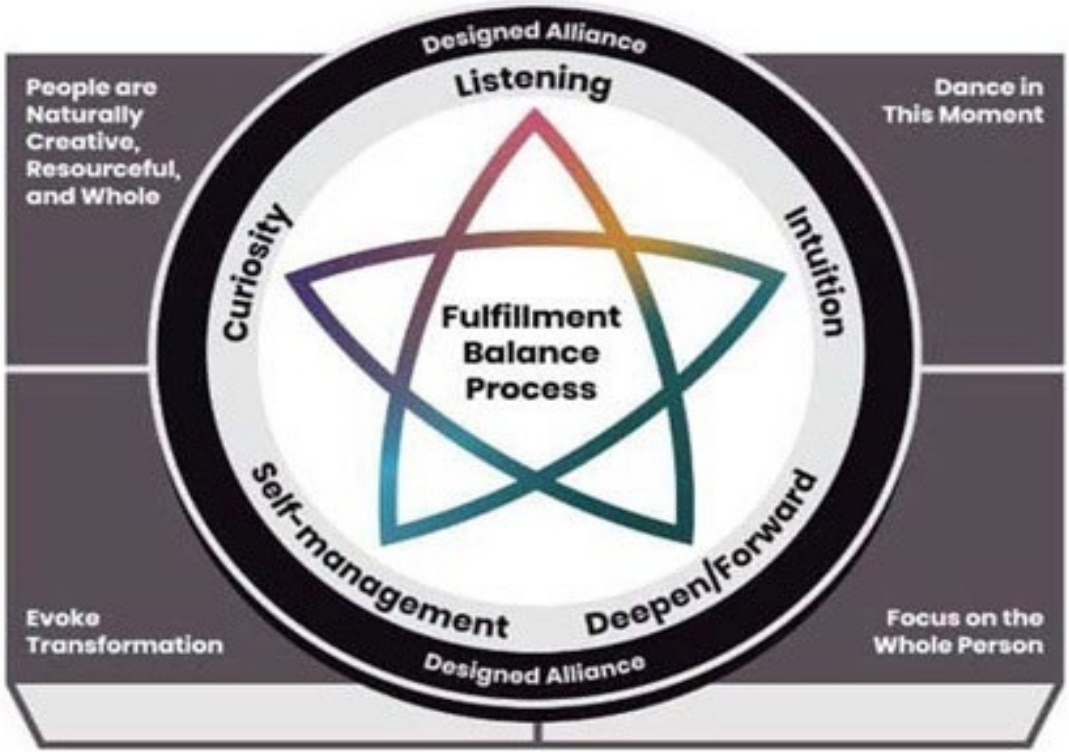
Boulder: formalize existing informal arrangements. Have firm, key contacts in place

Shiloh House (RHY Provider): Be clear about who the point of contact is for each specific process

MOU Template

For Chafee Programs and RHY Providers to formalize agreement

What is Engaging Youth in a Coach Like Way (EYCLW)?

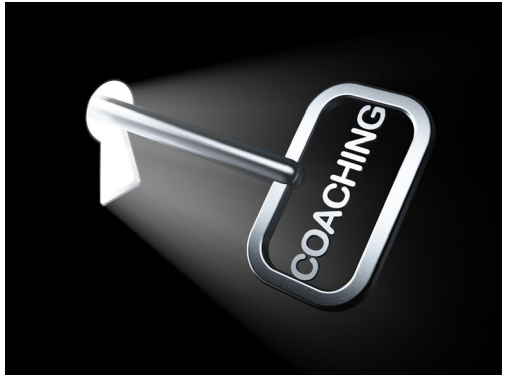


© CO-ACTIVE® Training Institute

Pathways - Engaging Youth in a Coach-Like Way

- An Ongoing Relationship that's
  - Youth Driven based on a
  - Designed Alliance in which the
  - Coach presents forward thinking questions through listening and out of curiosity to
  - Build on the Coachee's strengths and values &
  - Challenge the Coachee to take action and provide accountability.

"Youth are naturally creative, resourceful & whole"



Referrals

No agency is a one-stop-shop for helping foster care youth overcome the myriad of challenges necessary to be equipped for independence

Navigators tap into a wide referral network

Direct referrals, warm hand-off's

Cultivate direct relationships with service providers in your community

Who Does Pathways Serve?

- Youth with one or more yes response (risk factor) are enrolled in Pathways

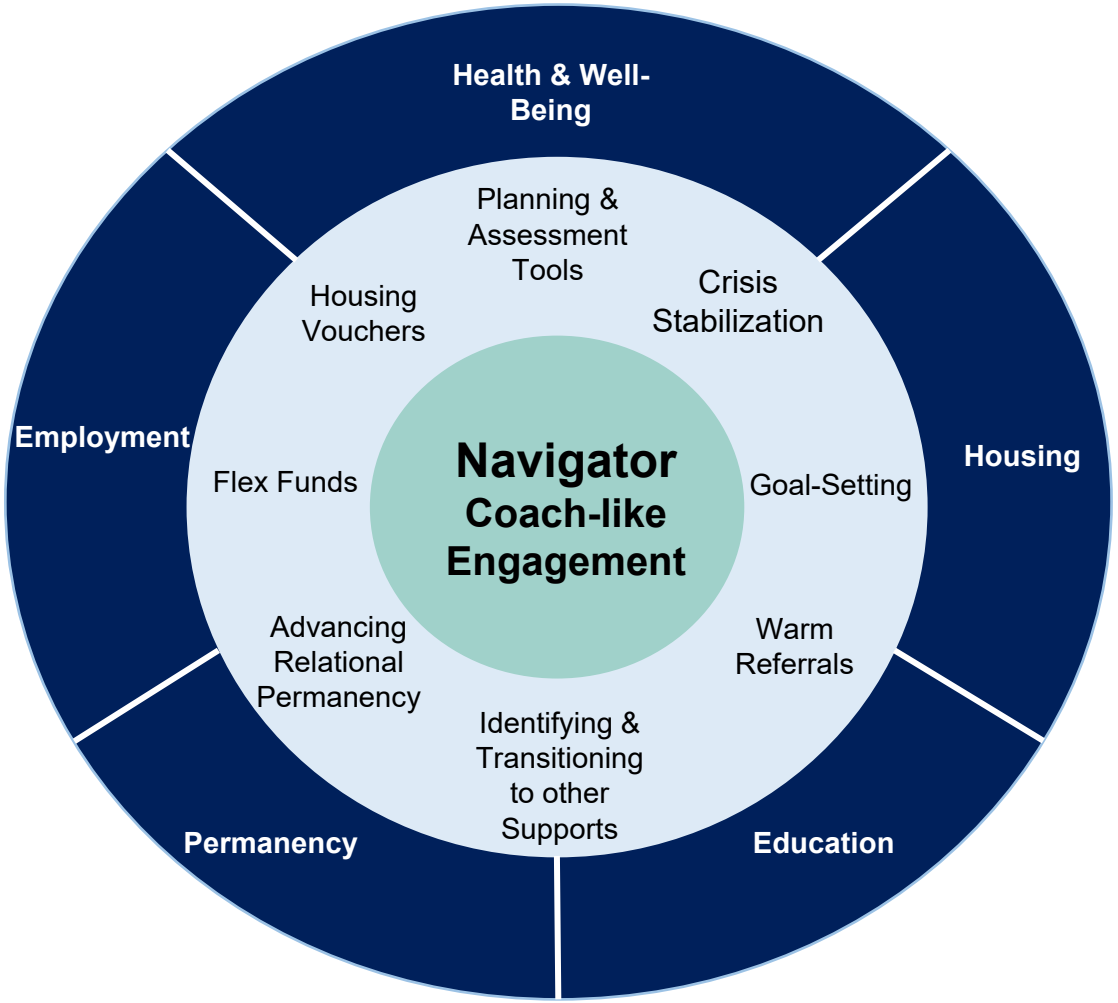
Have you ever been in foster care, currently or in the past?

☐ Yes ...Continue with screening assessment

☐ No ...Stop, no screening assessment needed

	Check each box that applies↓		Doesn't Apply	Youth Refused	Unknown
1.	Have you ever become homeless because you ran away from your family home, group home, a foster home or placement?	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	Have you ever become homeless because there was violence at home between family members?	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	Have you ever become homeless because you had differences in religious beliefs with parents, guardians or caregivers?	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	Have you ever been pregnant or got someone else pregnant?	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	Have you used marijuana? If yes, how old were you when you first tried marijuana? (age: ___)	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	Before your 18th birthday did you spend any time in jail or detention?	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	Have you ever been homeless, used an overnight shelter, or got housing assistance like public housing or a housing voucher?	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	Has your mother ever spent time in jail or prison?	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	Has your father ever spent time in jail or prison?	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.	Has your mother ever been in foster care?	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.	Has your father ever been in foster care?	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.	Have you ever engaged in a sexual act for something of value, such as money, food, housing, gifts or favors?	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Enter Total Number of **Yes** Responses →				

- ✔ Navigators work **alongside** youth (coaching)
- ✔ Utilize tools and resources
- ✔ Achieve **youth's** goals in five key outcome areas

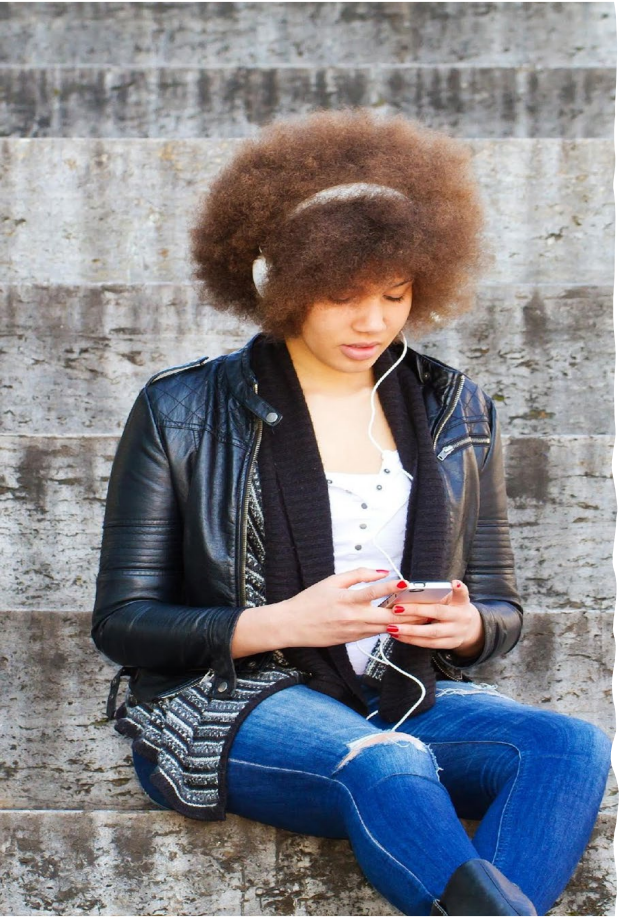


Core Components of the Intervention

- Engage Youth in a Coach-Like Way
- Crisis Stabilization
- Establish Goals
- Obtain & Maintain Safe and Stable Housing
- Case Planning and Assessment Tools
- Small-Scale Financial Assistance
- Referrals
- Advance Permanency
- Identify & Transition Youth to Community Connections

Crisis Stabilization

Some youth, especially those experiencing homelessness, enter Pathways during a time of crisis. When this occurs the primary focus of the Navigator is on crisis stabilization.



Establish Goals

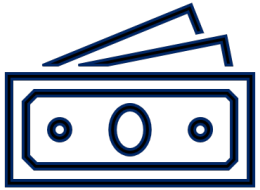
- Every youth works with the Navigator to develop two goals during the intervention that relate to one or more of the five outcome areas
- Youth may set goals as desired and are free to add goals throughout
- Navigators track progress and support the youth in working towards stated goals
- Additional goals may be developed but only two are required

Secure and maintain safe and stable housing

This can take many forms:

- Help support relationships with friends and family with whom the youth plan to live
- Help apply for housing vouchers
- Help youth understand and acquire necessary documentation and forms to become a renter

Provide Small-Scale Financial Assistance



Advance Permanency

- Ensuring youth have at least one supportive adult they can turn to for help when needed
- Pathways model defines supportive adult as – any adult the youth identifies as a supportive connection who is not providing professional support to them
  - Could be family member, coach, etc.
  - Navigators support the development of these relationships in a variety of ways

Identify community connections & transition youth to other supports

- Pathways is designed to be short term and intensive
- Navigators help youth identify supports in the community that can support them long term

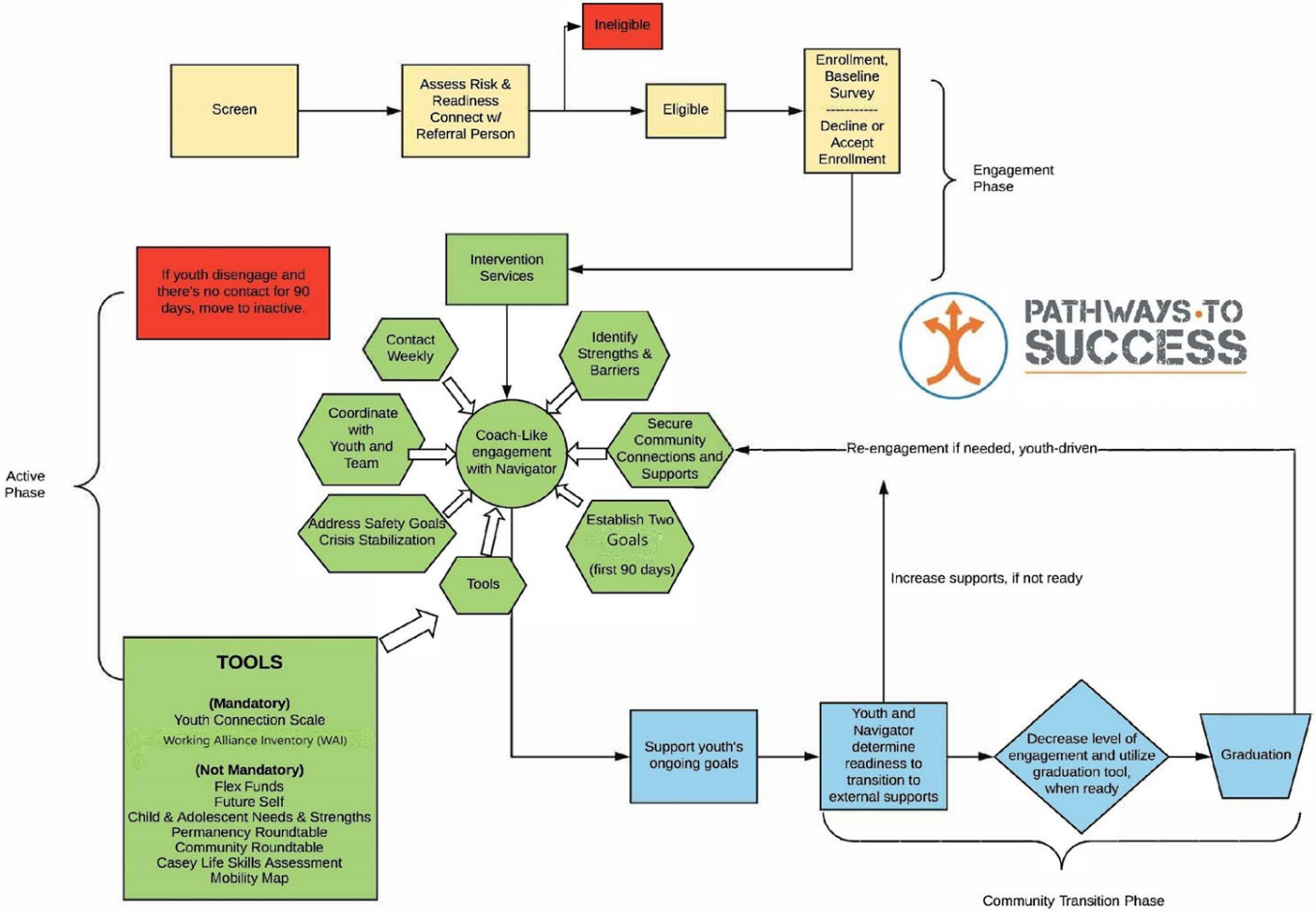
Defining Graduation Criteria

1. Not in crisis: basic needs are met
2. In stable housing: not currently homeless, can be in foster placement, shelter environment or other temporary housing
3. Supportive adult connection: adult can be family, friend or other community connection, non-child welfare professional
4. Complete assessments: screening, baseline, WAI1 and WAI2 completed in PMIS
5. Two goals achieved: achievement or completion of goals is determined by youth and Navigator

Defining Graduation Criteria, continued

- Determining graduation readiness linked to coaching outcome components:
  - Goal-setting
  - Resiliency
  - Self-efficacy
- *Provide 2 examples for each component illustrating how youth demonstrated increase in …*
  - Navigator determination of youth's ability to make and set new goals
  - Navigator determination of youth's increase in overall confidence
  - Navigator determination of youth's ability to self-advocate and be assertive

Pathways Intervention Flow Chart



What Navigators Have to Say?

Coaching has the potential to decrease system dependence and is based on youth choice, which is empowering to youth and helps everyone focus not on the situation a youth is currently in, but rather where they want to be. The skill development around decision-making, goal setting, self-advocating is what will make the difference for youth in the long-run.

How is EYCLW youth driven?

How is Pathways Uniquely Youth Led?

“Pathways helps youth reach their **full potential**. It’s like a crutch but at the same time it allows you to be **independent** but have the support you need & utilize everything that you need.

It’s that **extra support and push** to get you to where you need to be but allows you to have the independence you need after Pathways is gone.”

Conduct interview with youth with lived experience.

What was your experience like leaving foster care?

Pathways is Uniquely Youth-Led

What do other youth say about Pathways?

“[My Navigator] really became a mentor for me, which is really his role. From there he slowly helped me teach myself how I could help myself. He was able to show me what I need to do to help me. With that I can now talk to anyone, and have conversations, and learn.”

Typical Youth Engagement in Pathways

Weekly in-person meetings with their Navigator

Youth are empowered to set and achieve their own goals

Youth self-advocate for services they need

Utilize flex funds

Take advantage of outside referrals

Secure safe and stable housing

Achieve goals and graduate from Pathways

Building Evidence Through Formative and Summative Evaluation

Findings on Education, Employment, Relational Permanency, Well-Being, and Housing

66%

of youth had used an overnight shelter or received public housing assistance before enrolling in Pathways.

56%

of youth had experienced homelessness because of running away from their family, foster, or group home.

49%

of youth spent time in jail or detention before turning 18.

45%

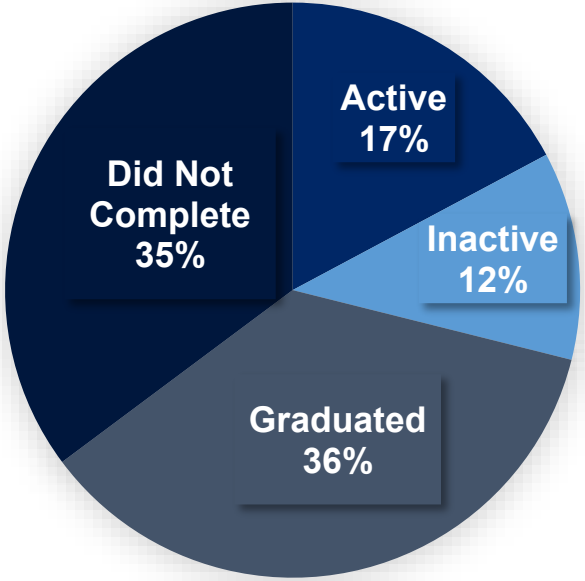
of youth had experienced homelessness as a result of violence at home by the time of their enrollment in the pathways program.

Who Does Pathways Serve?

Enrolled Youth Report an Average of 4.9 Risk Factors of homelessness

Pathways Youth Graduate & Achieve Goals

Status for All Youth (N=128)



- ✔ **53%** Graduation rate at final status

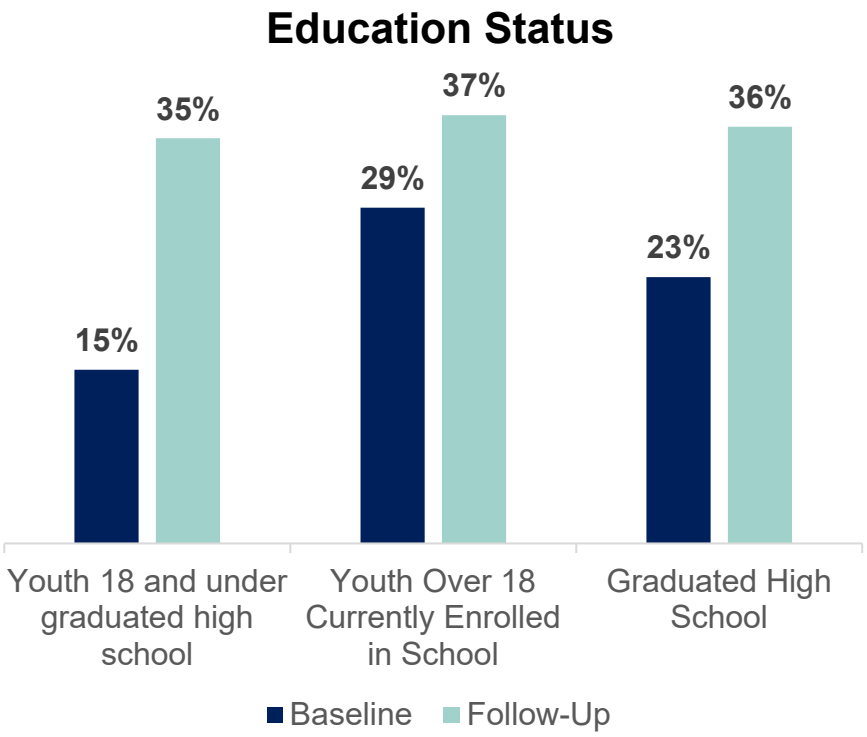
  36% Graduation rate for all youth enrolled (includes those in program at endpoint)

- ✔ **67%** of youth who graduate set goals
- ✔ **88%** of youth who completed the Follow-Up Survey report setting goals
- ✔ **95%** felt they achieved their goals

Education Outcomes Improve During Pathways

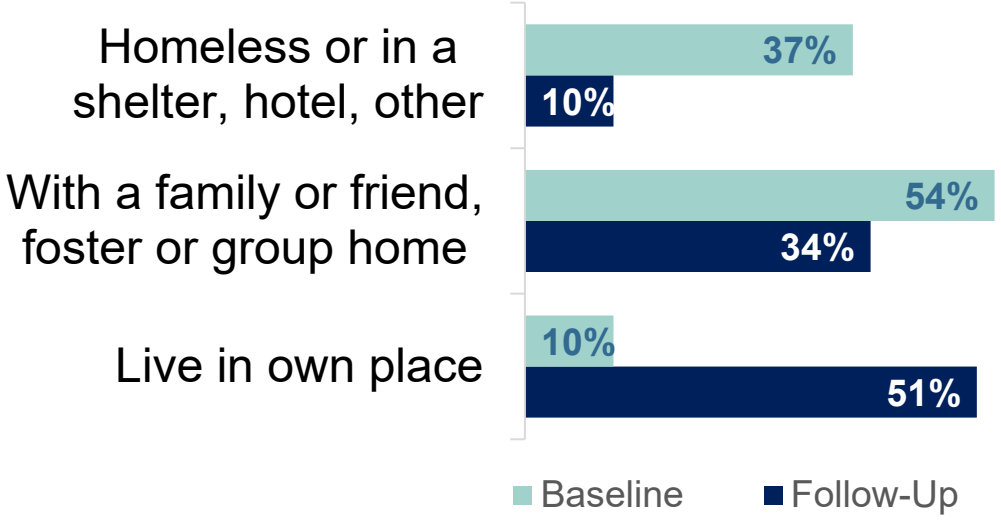
Between Enrollment and Follow-Up

- ✔ Younger youth are graduating high school at higher rates
- ✔ Older youth are returning to school
- ✔ Increase in percent of youth graduating from High School



Pathways Reduces Homelessness, Increases Safe Stable Housing

Living Arrangement at Program Entry and Exit



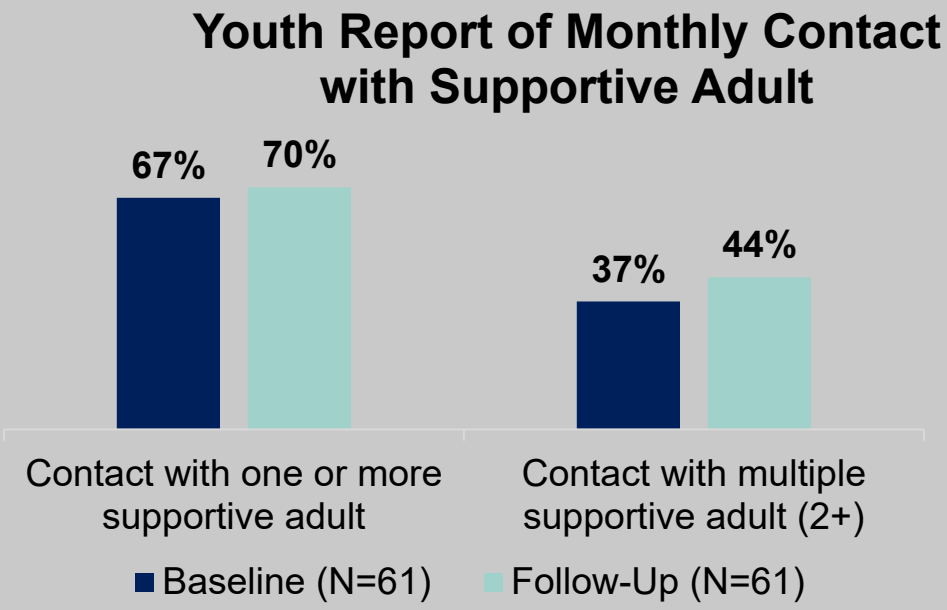
Housing Outcomes

- ✔ Fewer average moves reported
- ✔ Increased attainment of safe, stable housing
- ✔ Reduction in homelessness

Pathways Improves Economic Security & Employment

- ✔ Unemployment ⇩ **14%**
- ✔ Percent of Youth Employed **59%**
- ✔ Average reported wages ⇧ **$425/mo**
- ✔ **41%** of youth opened a new checking or savings account after Pathways
- ✔ **53%** reported feeling “very prepared” to manage their finances at Follow-Up
- ✔ On average, youth experienced reductions in circumstances such as: not being able to pay bills, having to borrow money, or using a food bank/soup kitchen

Pathways Increases Youth Connections to Supportive Adults



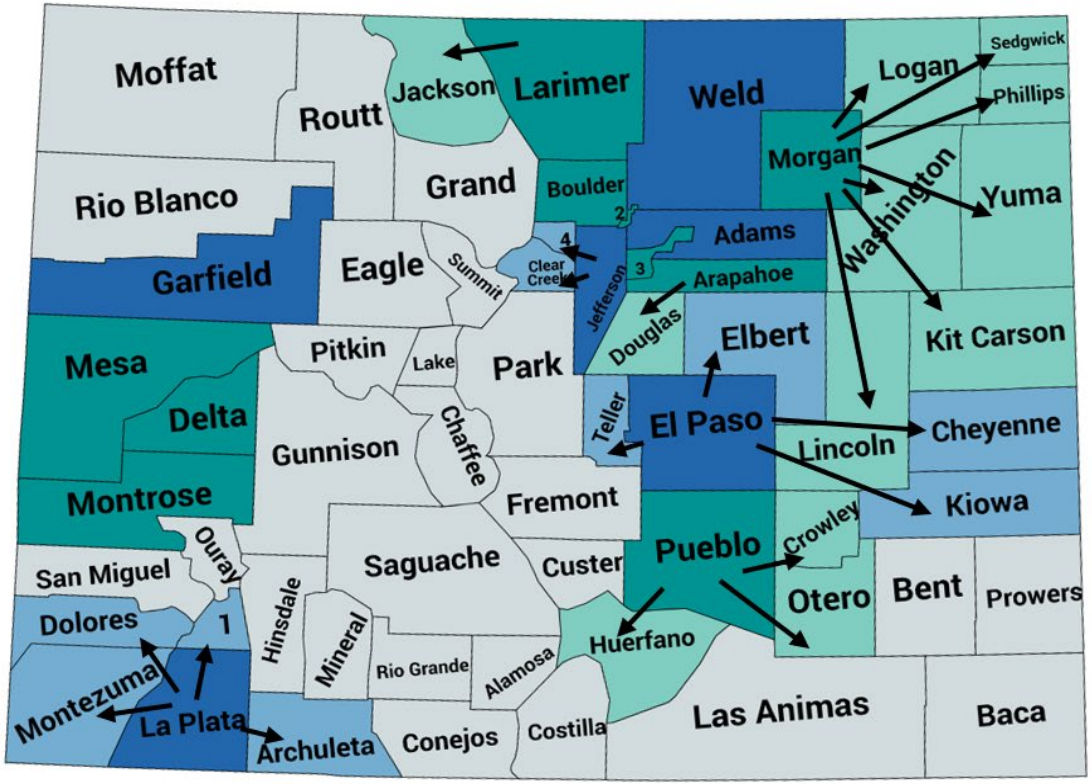
What is a formative vs. a summative evaluation?

Formative	Summative
Occurs during program development	Occurs when program is clearly specified
Determines whether program is feasible and appropriate	Assesses program impact
Might include a comparison group	Must include a comparison group

Phase III Summative evaluation will compare the outcomes of the Pathways model (intervention condition) with Chafee services (comparison condition)

Outcome data will be collected from youth in follow up telephone interviews, and from administrative data sources (TRAILS)

Phase III Treatment & Comparison Sites



YARH-3 Groups

- Treatment (Hub)
- Treatment (Supported)
- Comparison (Hub)
- Comparison (Supported)

1 San Juan
2 Broomfield
3 Denver
4 Gilpin

How has Pathways helped advance broader child welfare policy & practice changes?

By creating a direct line of communication between child welfare and youth homelessness systems and key stakeholders.

Additional Resources at:

https://centerforpolicyresearch.org/pathways-to-success/

- Developing a Model Intervention to Prevent Homelessness Among Youth Aging out of Foster Care
- Colorado Pathways to Success Intervention Manual
- Utilizing Coaching to Prevent Homelessness Among Transition-Age Youth with Foster Care Histories
- Colorado Pathways to Success Formative Evaluation Final Report and Research Brief
- Lessons from the Field: Using Housing Vouchers to Support Youth with Child Welfare Experience

Thank You!

Please complete the evaluation for this session.

Click on the link in the Chat, then select:

Day Three

Workshop

Prevent & End Homelessness among Youth Exiting Foster Care Experience in Colorado