

# Promoting Youth Health and Wellbeing

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PRESENTED BY:

FUTURES WITHOUT VIOLENCE

KANSAS COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

# Learning Objectives

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- Define resilience and its key components
- Explore ways to use resilience science to inform youth related program, practice, and policy design
- Describe critical elements that contributed to the successes of KCSDV's Empowered Families Kansas Youth Advocacy Mentoring Program
- Recognize and understand the intersection of runaway and homeless youth and intimate partner violence, and the importance of creating meaningful partnerships between the programs working with youth at risk



# **RESILIENCE SCIENCE OVERVIEW**



# Principles for Supporting Families + Children

- Reduce burden and stress on children and their families
- Enable positive family interactions: child/parent, sibling/sibling
- Prioritize safer and more stable living conditions
- Promote equity
- Encourage predictability & harm reduction, along with healthy social, spiritual, and community connections





# What is resilience ?

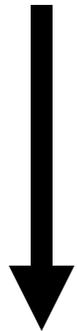


**Observable, often measurable, processes that are identified as helpful to individuals, families, and communities to overcome adversity.** (Ungar, 2012)

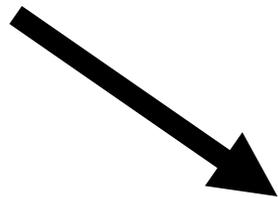
# World-Brain Connections

**Thrive**  
**Opportunity**  
**Seeking Radar**

- **Body**
- **Mind**
- **Emotions**



**Behaviors**

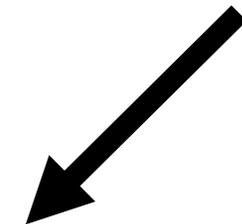


**Survive**  
**Threat Seeking**  
**Radar**

- **Body**
- **Mind**
- **Emotions**



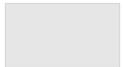
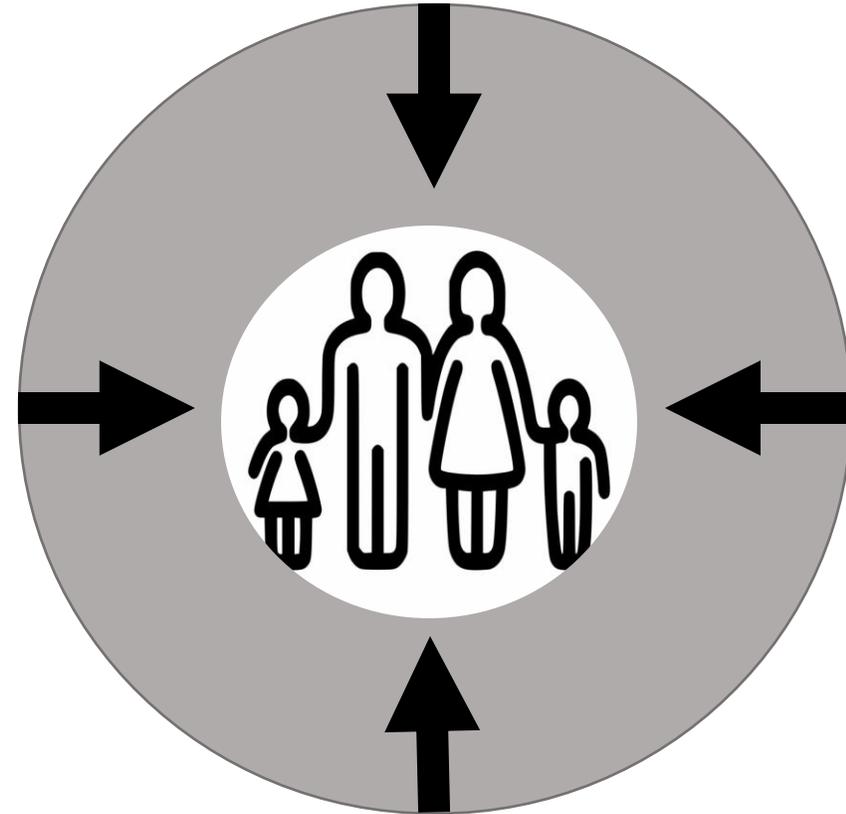
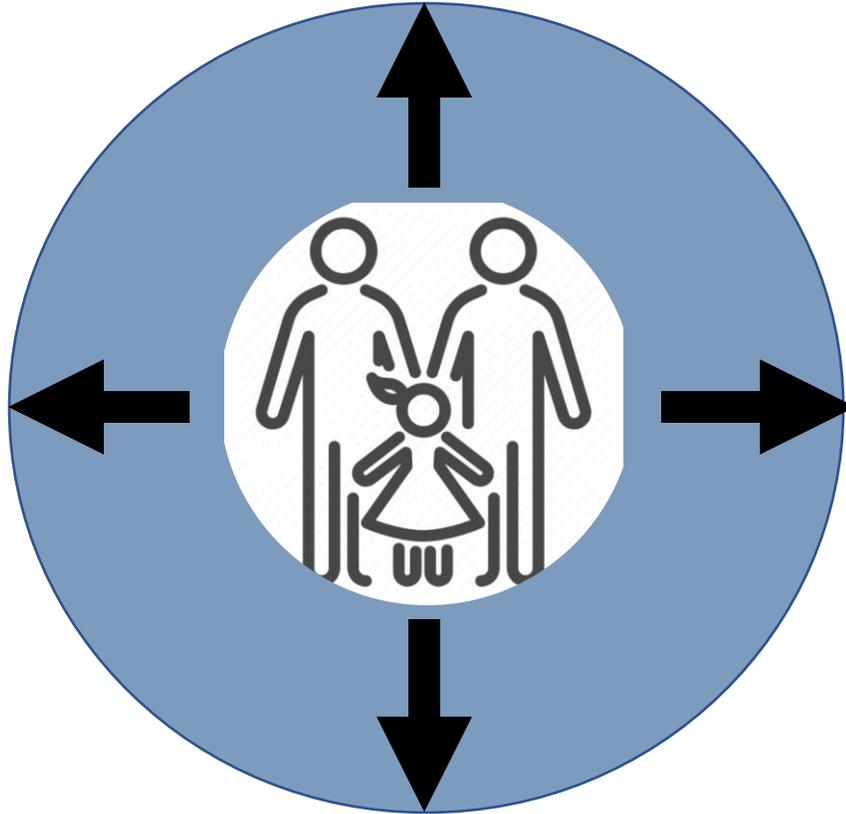
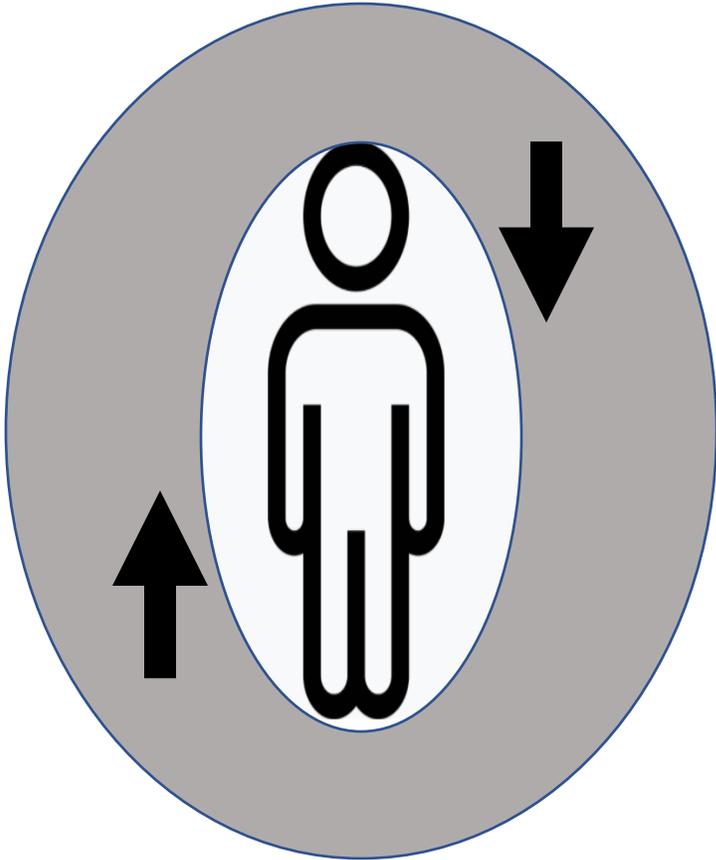
**Behaviors**



Inside Out



Outside In



Source: Futures Without Violence



Meaning making, gratitude, hope, growth mindset

Masten, A. (2015)

# Which Experiences & Conditions Matter?

- Positive Identity
- Social Justice
- Access to material resources
- Sense of belonging & cohesion: family, school, community
- Cultural adherence

Ungar, 2008

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Empowered Families Kansas

# Youth Advocacy Mentorship: Improving Outcomes for Children and Youth

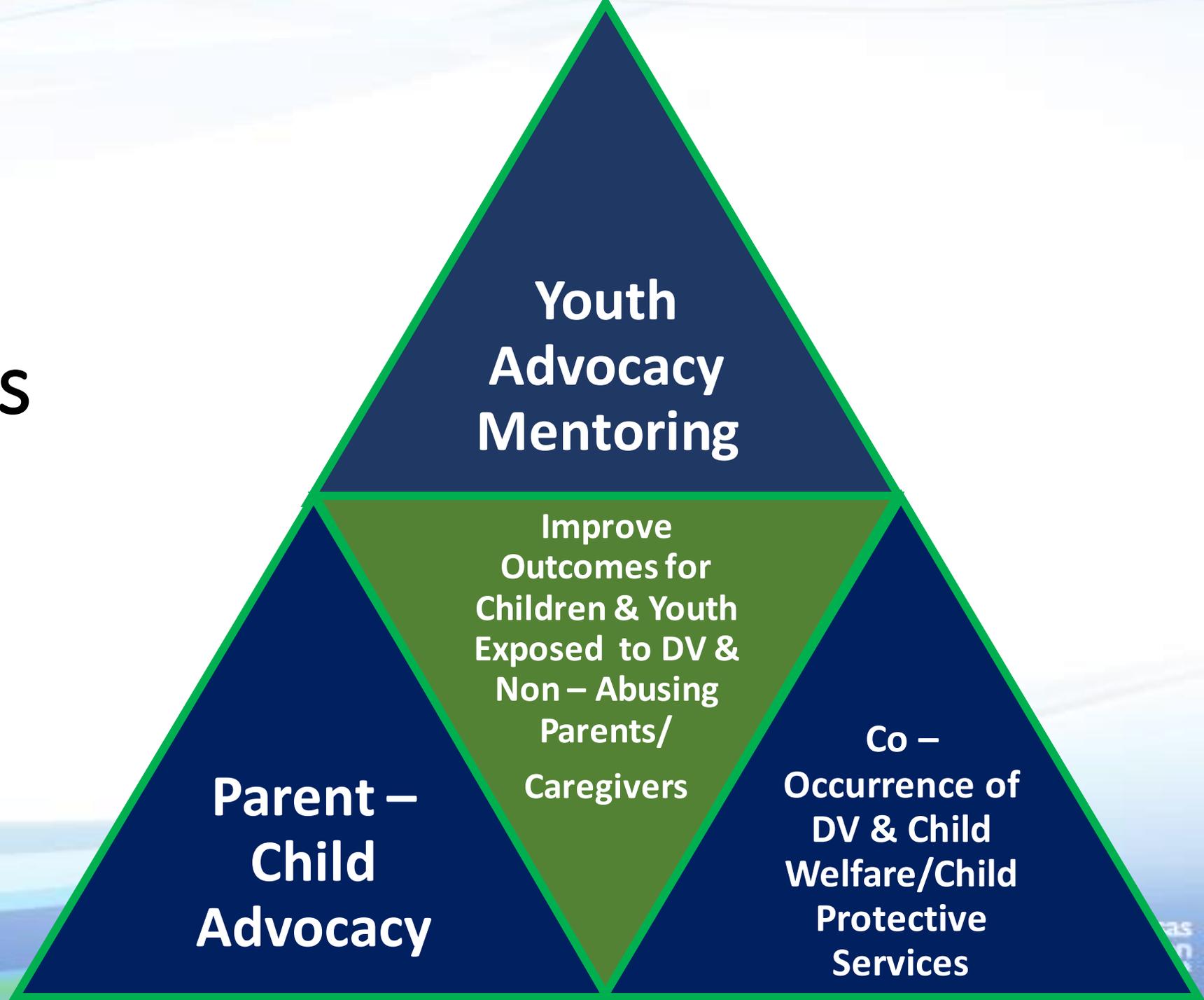
**Presenters:** Carolyn Allred, M.A., Child and Youth Project Manager, KCSDV  
Bre Kirkhart, Child and Youth Services Coordinator, KCSDV



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**Empowered  
Families Kansas  
(EFK)  
Project  
Components**



**Youth  
Advocacy  
Mentoring**

**Improve  
Outcomes for  
Children & Youth  
Exposed to DV &  
Non – Abusing  
Parents/  
Caregivers**

**Parent –  
Child  
Advocacy**

**Co –  
Occurrence of  
DV & Child  
Welfare/Child  
Protective  
Services**

# Project Vision

The Empowered Families Kansas: Advocacy Mentoring Program envisions a community in which at-risk youth exposed to domestic violence, teen dating violence, and/or co-occurring bullying experiences nurturing, one-to-one relationships and community support, which in turn allows each of them to develop into **their** full potential, capable of making informed, responsible decisions as involved members of our community.

# Program Goal and Objective

**Goal:** Improve outcomes for children and youth exposed to domestic violence, teen dating violence, and/or co-occurring bullying.

**Objective:** Establish new, residential & non-residential culturally, developmentally, and linguistically appropriate, evidence- and trauma-informed specialized advocacy mentorship services available to youth (ages 8-18) exposed to domestic violence, and their non-abusing parents or caregivers, within a network of five Kansas domestic violence advocacy programs that serve as project implementation sites.

# Expected Short Term Outcomes

- Increase youth's perception of social support.
- Increase youth's understanding of healthy and unhealthy dating relationships.
- Increase youth's knowledge of social support via community/social institutions.
- Increase non-abusing parents/caregivers' understanding of safety planning related to youth's safety.
- Improve communication of non-abusing parents/caregivers' and youth.
- Increase non-abusing parents/caregivers' understanding of impact of DV and CEDV on youth.

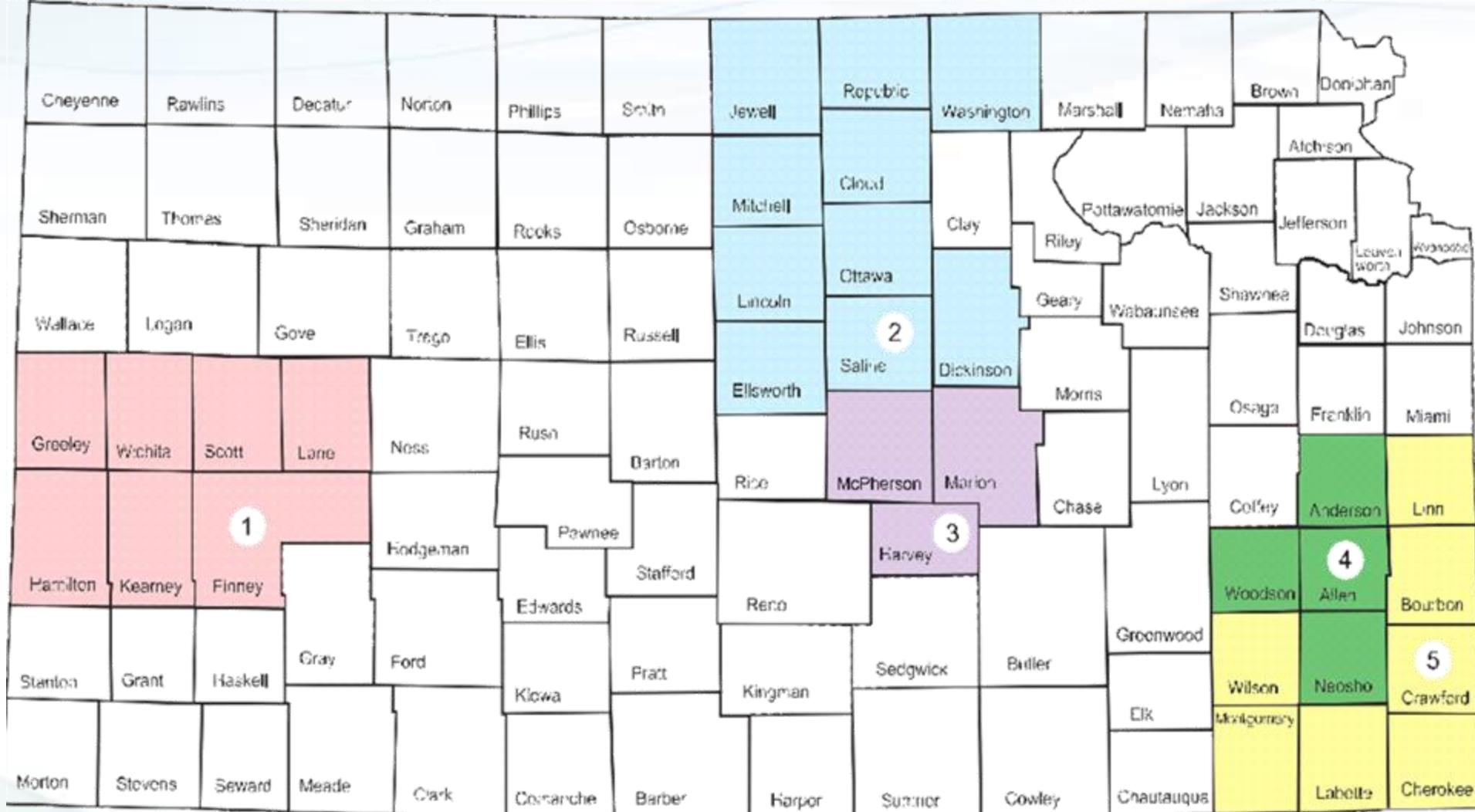
# Expected Long – Term Outcome

Increase youth well-being and  
connectedness.

# What is Youth Advocacy Mentoring?

- Mentoring programming for youth between the ages of 8 to 18 who have experienced domestic violence, teen dating violence, and co-occurring bullying within domestic violence advocacy programs.
- Youth advocate mentors provide long term, supportive one on one mentoring relationships for youth that promote healthy life choices, healthy relationships, and healthy boundaries.
- 6-12-month relationship goal through an outreach services approach.
- Foundation of programming is based on Positive Youth Development.
- Individual activities for each youth mentee based on interests, goals, and strengths. Activities are youth driven. Activities include a more authentic approach to delivering healthy relationship and healthy boundaries curriculum.
- Focus on increasing youth well-being and connectedness.
- Mentor meets with youth mentee in a one – to – one capacity, as well as meeting with the non – abusing parent/caregiver.

# Youth Advocacy Mentoring Programs



1 - Family Crisis Services, Inc. - Garden City, KS

2 - DVACK, Inc. - Salina, KS

3 - Safehope - Newton, KS

4 - Hope Unlimited, Inc. - Iola, KS

5 - Safehouse Crisis Center, Inc. - Pittsburg, KS

# Program Implementation Strategies

- The Science of Mentoring
  - Monitoring and Support
- Positive Youth Development
- Developmental Relationships Framework
- The Five Interrelated Domestic Violence Protective Factors
- Growth Mindset
- Nurturing Children Wheel
- Futures Without Violence Resiliency Factors

# The Science of Mentoring: Youth Outcomes

- Enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence
- Improved interpersonal skills
- Healthier relationships
- Stronger relationships with parents, teachers, and peers
- Positive attitude about school
- Increased graduation rates
- Lower High School dropout rates
- Higher college enrollment rates and higher educational aspirations
- Decreased likelihood of initiating drug and alcohol use
- Decreased violent/abusive behavior

# Advocacy Mentoring Monitoring and Support

- KCSDV Child & Youth Coordinator contacts Youth Advocate Mentors **twice per month**
- Contact Discussions:
  - Advocacy Mentoring Activities
  - Relationship Development
  - Safety Planning
  - Youth Mentee Outcomes
  - Technical Assistance

# PROMISING FUTURES

## PROMOTING RESILIENCY

among children and youth experiencing domestic violence

Almost 30 million American children will be exposed to family violence by the time they are 17 years old.<sup>[2]</sup> Kids who are exposed to violence are affected in different ways and not all are traumatized or permanently harmed. Protective factors can promote resiliency, help children and youth heal, and support prevention efforts.

Research indicates that the #1 protective factor in helping children heal from the experience is the presence of a consistent, supportive, and loving adult—most often their mother.<sup>[1]</sup>

### PROTECTIVE FACTORS THAT PROMOTE RESILIENCY

#### INDIVIDUAL

##### Temperament

Individual temperament or sense of humor



##### Understanding

Ability to make sense of their experiences

##### Relationships

Ability to form relationships with peers



##### Mastery

Opportunities to experience mastery



##### Expression

Opportunities to express feelings through words, music, etc.



##### Conflict Resolution

Development of conflict resolution & relaxation techniques



##### Culture

Strong cultural identity

#### FAMILY

##### Role Models

Adults who role model healthy relationships



##### Health

Healthy caregivers



##### Networks

Relationships with extended family members and others



##### Supportive Relationships

Positive child-caregiver relationships



##### Stability

Stable living environment

#### COMMUNITY



##### Access to Services

Basic needs, advocacy, health



##### School

Positive school climate and supports



##### Mentors

Role models & mentors, i.e. coach, faith leader

##### Neighborhood Cohesion

Safe & connected communities



Get started at [www.PromisingFuturesWithoutViolence.org](http://www.PromisingFuturesWithoutViolence.org)

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)

National Dating Abuse Helpline: 1-866-331-9474 or text "loveis" to 77054

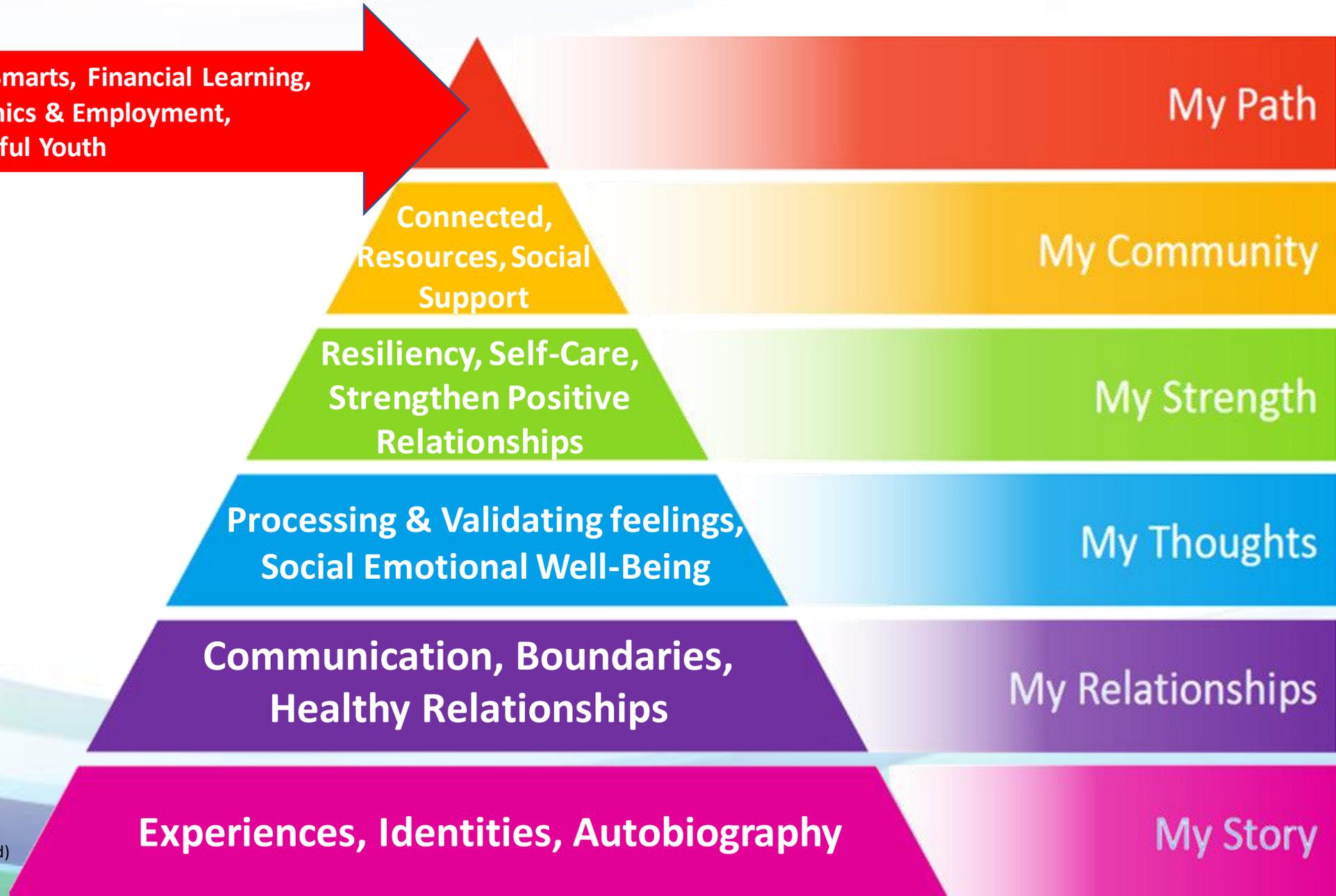
*Promising Futures: Best Practices for Serving Children, Youth & Parents is a project of Futures Without Violence*

**FUTURES**  
WITHOUT VIOLENCE™

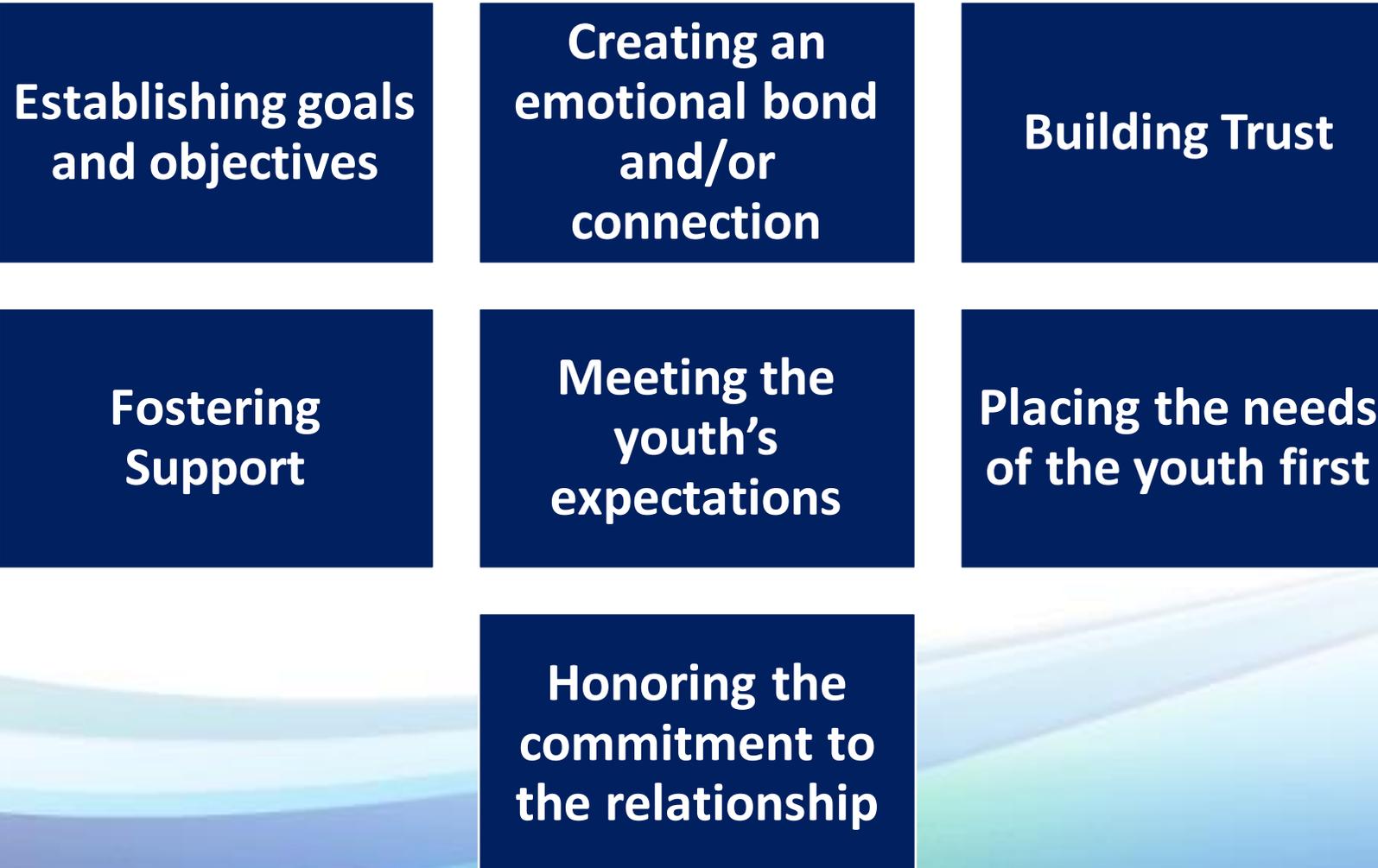
Formerly Family Violence Prevention Fund

# Advocacy Mentoring Core Components

Street Smarts, Financial Learning,  
Academics & Employment,  
Successful Youth



# Successful Advocacy Mentoring Relationship Building Blocks



# Advocacy Mentoring Roles



# What would a Youth Advocate Mentor/Youth Mentee session look like?

- Conversation over coffee
- Homework in the park
- Helping with college applications
- Watching mentee's sports game
- Rides to and from school
- Lunch, Recess, Study Hall visits at school
- Art & Crafts
- Peer support
- Improve communication of non-abusing parents/caregivers' and youth

# Community Activities

- Volunteering
- Career Exploration
- College Visits
- Homework Help
- IEP Meetings
- Truancy, Criminal, Civil Court
- Connection to Social Service Agencies
- Extra-curricular Activities
- Cosmetology School
- Library
- Festivals & Fairs
- Leadership Camp
- Awareness Events
- Medical Appts.
- Obtain Documents

# Overcoming Barriers

- Transportation
- Phone access
- Parent Engagement (occasionally)
- Navigating confidentiality regarding:
  - public settings
  - text and social media communication
  - providing transportation to/from home
  - spending time with child or youth 1:1, without non-abusing parent or caregiver present

# Overcoming Barriers, Cont.

- Crisis intervention vs. on-going/long – term relationship development
  - Emotional intensity of long-term relationship development,
  - level of involvement in entire family areas – school, work, relationships, peers, career and future planning, etc.
- Time commitment and capacity
  - Working with several families in a long-term capacity
  - Regularly meeting with multiple participants (weekly and monthly)
  - Additional agency duties outside of mentoring program

# Positive Impacts

- Increase in services provided to young people, specifically between the ages of 8 to 18.
- Survey analysis shows increases of youth mentees' perceptions of social support and safety through involvement in the mentoring program.
- Development and/or enhancement of policies and procedures related to Parent – Child Advocacy within Member Programs across the state of Kansas.

# Positive Impacts, Cont.

- Positive impact statements shared by youth mentees and non – abusing parents and caregivers regarding:
  - School performance
  - Sibling relationships
  - Family dynamics
  - Parent – child interactions and bonds
  - Coping skills
  - Increasing hope and resilience for health and positive futures!

“About a year ago, [Mentor] from [Program] told me about a mentoring program, through [Program], that she thought my [Children] would really benefit from. Around this time, my older [child] had just moved back into my home from [their] father’s. The tension between the [children] was almost unbearable. My youngest, having bad anxiety, was rarely home due to this tension. When [my youngest] was home, the [children] stayed in their rooms. They could not have a conversation without voices getting raised. Neither of the [children] were involved in any school activities or activities of any sort. I decided to go ahead and try out this mentoring program. Since then, and with the help of counseling, my home is a peaceful place. They both have jobs and have become involved with church. My youngest has become more confident in [themselves] and [their] anxiety has gotten better. [My youngest] no longer needs to stay away from home to avoid conflict. [My youngest] has discovered a passion for art and is starting to adventure out of [their] comfort zone. My older [child] is now involved with school cheer, soccer, wrestling, and competitive cheer outside of school, as well. [My older child] is very focused on school and what [their] next step will be to furthering [their] education. They have established a bond with each other, as well as with [Mentor], and have been able to ask [Mentor] for help with any concerns they may have. [Mentor] has helped our family recover from being torn apart by domestic violence. I am so thankful for [Mentor] and everyone at [Program]!”

"This program really helped me feel like I had people supporting me. My mentor is someone I always know I can go to and someone that always tries their hardest to help me figure things out! My mentor gave me plenty of opportunities I would not have had without this program. [My mentor] connected me with the police department, a career field I'm interested in, and helped me get my birth certificate so I could get my license! I'd highly recommend this program to young teenagers. I think anyone would benefit from being in this program, but there are a lot of troubled teens out there that could really change their future with this program's help. My mentor has been amazing."

-Mentee of almost 3 years, age 18

# Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence

[www.kcsdv.org](http://www.kcsdv.org)

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[coalition@kcsdv.org](mailto:coalition@kcsdv.org)

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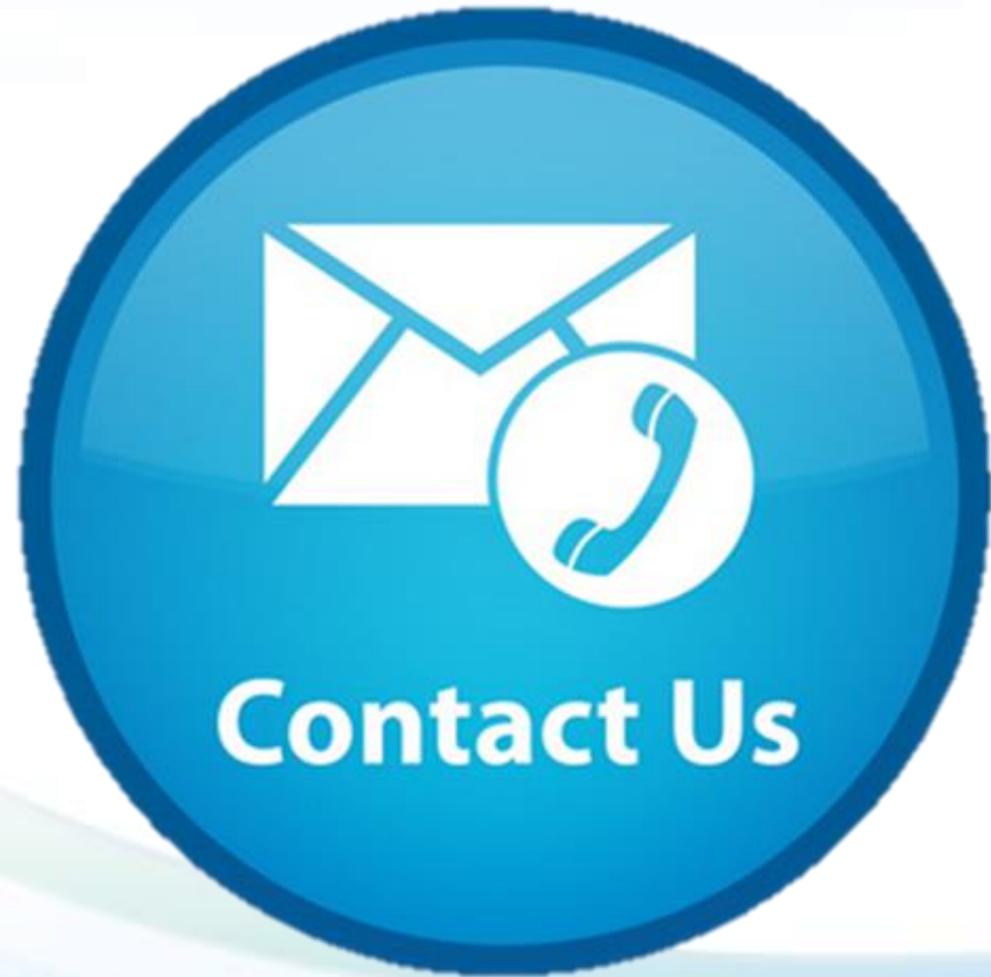
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# National Resource Center on Domestic Violence

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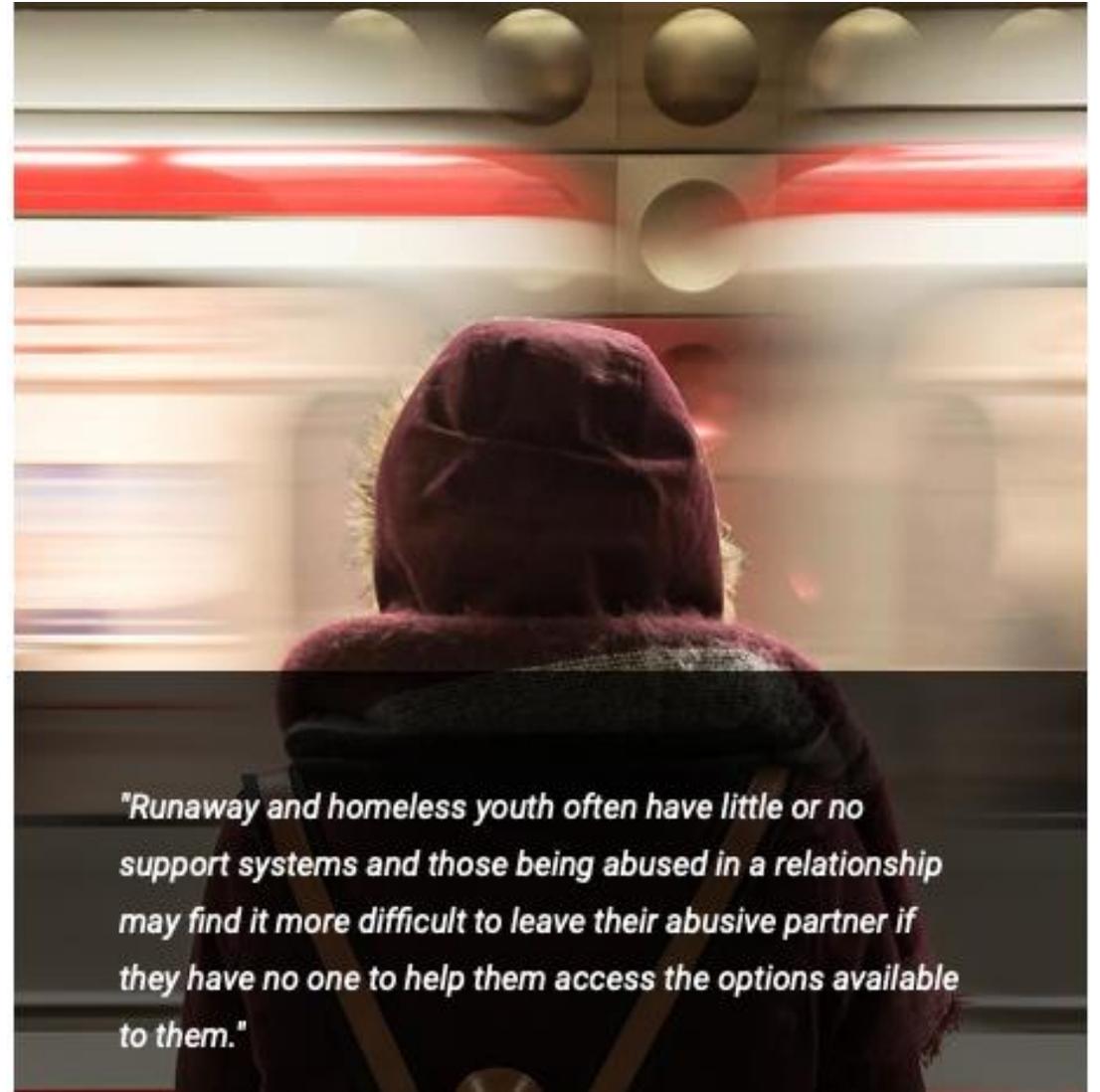
IVONNE ORTIZ





## RUNAWAY & HOMELESS YOUTH AND RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE TOOLKIT

A project of the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence



*"Runaway and homeless youth often have little or no support systems and those being abused in a relationship may find it more difficult to leave their abusive partner if they have no one to help them access the options available to them."*



## RUNAWAY & HOMELESS YOUTH AND RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE TOOLKIT

A project of the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence

### Recognizing and understanding the intersection of runaway and homeless youth and intimate partner violence.

This Toolkit organizes information, resources, tips and tools drawn from the wealth of information gathered when the two service systems were convened through local collaborative projects funded by the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



RHY & Relationship Violence



Building Services



Intersecting Issues



Measuring Success



A Look at Each Field



Sustaining Collaboration



Common Ground



Additional Resources



Building Partnerships

# What Domestic Violence Advocates are Encountering

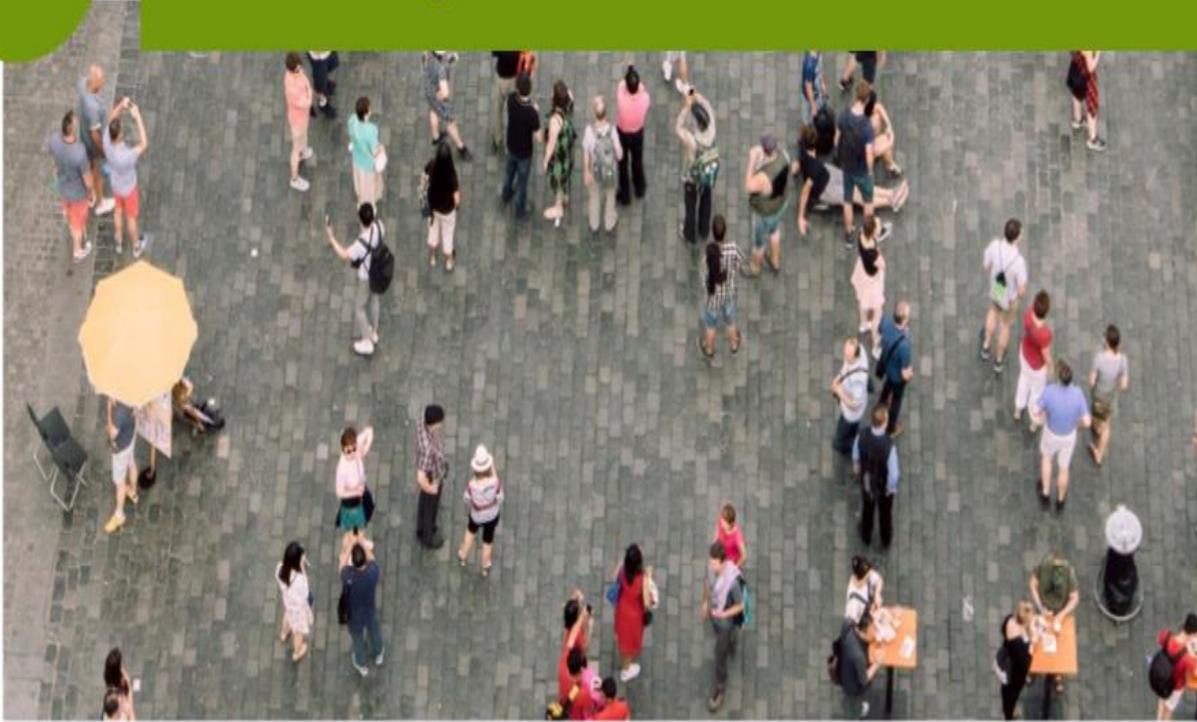
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- Teens that have aged out of foster care, experience abuse and need shelter, but are unable to fully care for themselves.
- Youth in homes where the parent's partner is abusive and the teen is kicked out and cannot care for themselves.
- Tweens/teens that are couch surfing due to being in abusive homes.
- Older teen boys that are not allowed in shelter due to age and must go to a homeless shelter while mom and other kids are in the emergency safe house.





# Finding Common Ground



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- Identifying Shared Principles
  - Honoring, Valuing and Involving the Individuals we Serve
  - Creating Justice Through Social Change
  - Creating Safety and Fostering Trust
  - Building Autonomy Through a Strengths-Based Model

# Logic Model for RHY and DV/SA Collaborations





## RUNAWAY & HOMELESS YOUTH AND RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE TOOLKIT

A project of the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence

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Together we can create a broader set of resources to help all youth develop the skills to form and sustain healthy and safe relationships and a stronger safety net for youth at risk.

Questions?



# Contact Us

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