

# Person-Centered Planning for Youth with IDD Transitioning out of Foster Care: Through the Lens of Foster Youth and Facilitators

Clare Emmert, Trainee; Jacy Farkas, MA; Lynne Tomasa, PhD, MSW – Sonoran UCEDD, University of Arizona

## Background

### Person-Centered Planning:

- Person-Centered Planning (PCP) is an individualized planning tool to support one's life transitions and future goals. Rather than focusing on limitations and deficits, the PCP process builds on strengths and encourages youth to voice their preferences, desires, and aspirations for their life.
- Limited empirical evidence exists supporting Person-Centered Planning as an effective tool to enhance one's quality of life.

### Project:

**Creating a "Picture of a Life" for Transitioning Youth with DD in Foster Care (POL)** trains PCP facilitators, conducts person-centered plans with foster youth with developmental disabilities, and offers training in self-advocacy and independent living skills to the youth.

**Goal: Evaluate the efficacy of person-centered planning from the lens of participants and facilitators.**

### Objectives:

- Explore the methodological issues of PCP for foster youth
- Identify the successes and challenges of PCP
- Explore the interactions of multiple systems of support
- Document experiences and perceptions of PCP as an intervention

## Methods

### Data Collection:

Semi-structured interviews – in person or by phone

### Participants:

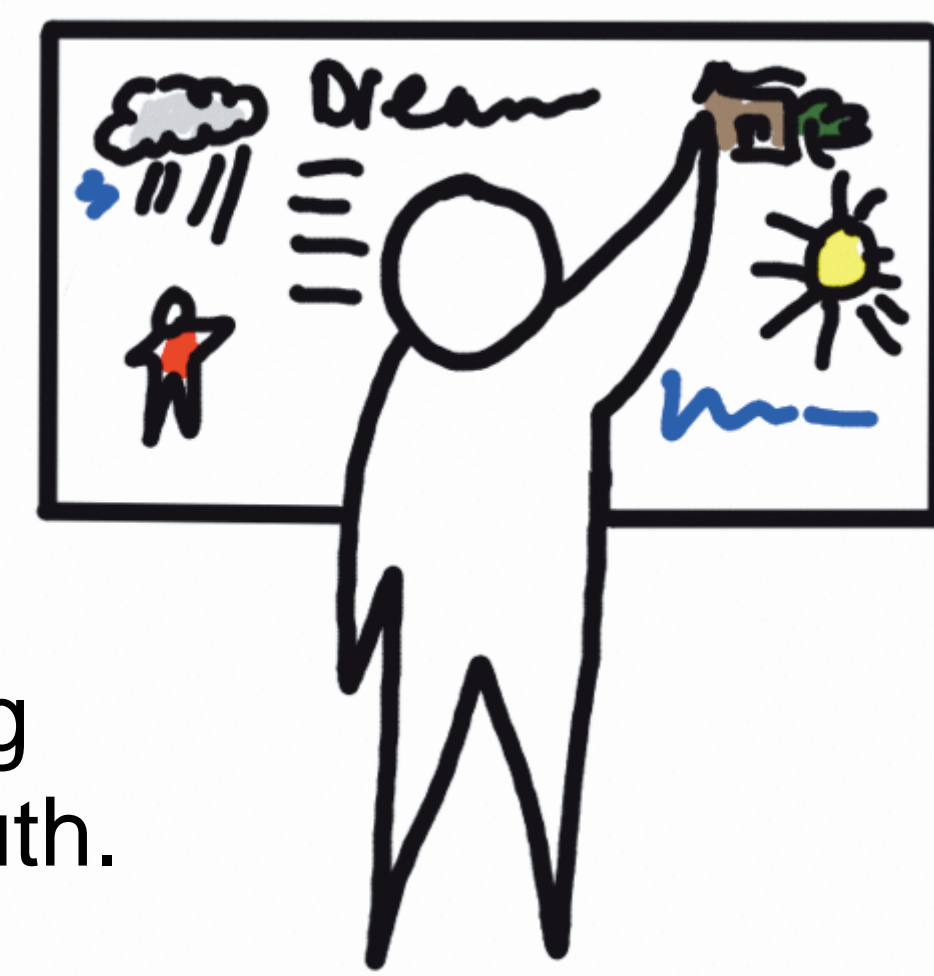
- 4 youth from POL Cohorts YR1 & YR3
  - Ages: 15, 16, 17, 21
  - Gender: 2 males, 2 females
- 4 facilitators (all female)

Interviews were transcribed and analyzed using MAXQDA. Two research staff collaborated to develop the coding scheme through an inductive approach.

## Results

### Primary Thematic Codes

Youth	Facilitators
POL Plan	Motivation
System Impact	Facilitator characteristics
Staff	Support Felt
Life goals	Planning Process
Relationships	Collaboration
Quality of Life	System Components
	Person-Centered Planning
	Successes
	Life After PCP
	Recommendations



### Facilitator Themes (selected):

#### System Components: Complexity

"I think it takes more consistency on all the parts of the players. In other words, less turn-over amongst the DD staff, the agency staff. The young man that I'm working with now; his most consistent person is his behavioral health contact of about 4 years and the rest of the team -- other than his family -- have turned over since I've been involved in the last 6 months"

#### PCP- Unknowns

"Sometimes, I think the kids have no clue what's going on and everyone starts talking around them and over them instead of with them in the meetings and it's hard for them to understand even why they are there."

#### Successes

"I think they get another relationship. The youth that I was involved with...he seemed to enjoy calling me, texting me, having another person to relate to. I think the meeting itself was a positive experience for him. It gave him an opportunity to get a lot of good feedback from other people and his family as well"

#### PCP- Benefits

"They actively participate in the planning which will help them later in life preparing them for what's out there: in planning their education or health or family and knowing the relationship with the person they are with."

### Youth Themes (selected):

#### Quality of Life- Psychological

"Yeah, I actually felt like at home when [my facilitator] was talking to me when we were doing my person-centered planning."

#### POL Plan- Awareness

I: "Do you remember anything about the picture of a life program?"

Y: "I don't know about that."

I: "Do you remember the person-centered plan that you put together?"

Y: "No"

#### System Impact- Consistency

"She said I'm going to get another worker because she's not going to work here. She's going to work at DDD or something. So I'm going to get another one and I don't know if she is going to come out here because the last one, she didn't come visit me at school...And I had to get another worker."



## Conclusions

- Relationships play an important role in the planning process
- The interaction between various systems is a barrier to both youth and facilitators
- Foster youth benefit from new relationships, awareness of opportunities, and being able to voice their aspirations
- Foster youth may not associate their PCP to their future plans and goals

### Next Steps:

- Based on the pilot interviews' findings, we have adapted the questions for additional interviews.
- Follow-up interviews will explore PCP as a conduit for successful transitions and positive change in youth's life.

For more information or comments, please contact Jacy Farkas, Project Director at [jkbell@email.arizona.edu](mailto:jkbell@email.arizona.edu). Primary funding was made available by the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council through contract No. ADDPC-03-08-2012.



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