Emerging Adults – Paths from Childhood Poverty to Self- sufficiency

> by Gregory Markle Executive Director Operation Fresh Start



Mission: Provide Emerging Adults a Path to Self-Sufficiency

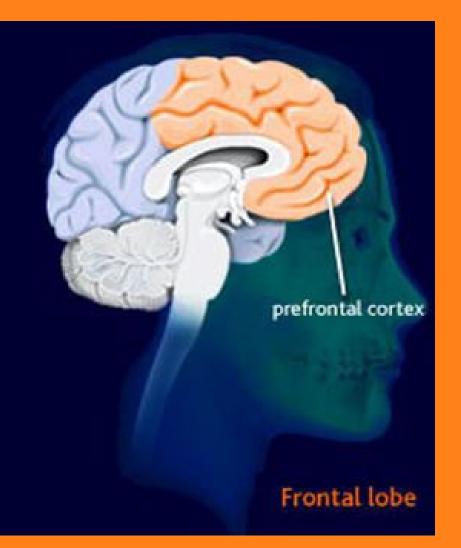
- What are emerging adults
- Young people ages 16 24

Not Children:

Things that don't work:

- School based programming focus on academics for the sake of academics.
- Recreational Programming basketball nights, movie nights.
- Forced Relationship.
- Providing Mentors just for the sake of mentoring.

The Development of the Older Youth



•Prefrontal Cortex is still growing and developing

• The levels of dopamine produces shifts during adolescence

Childhood Poverty's Impact: Stress Hormones Adrenaline and Cortisol Increase

- Decrease neural connections to thinking areas of brain -academic development is delayed
 - Decision Making Development is Delayed

Brain Development Impacts Youth Behaviors

• Greater willingness to take risks

• More likely to seek pleasure through actions and consumption

• Lower ability to understand consequences and make long range plans

Youth

Drop Outs

Kids

Delinquent unozánunado

Things That DO work:

- Hard Skills Attainment Programming Leading to the Emerging Adult's Goals.
- Mentoring Relationships Built on Work or Training
- Choice Based Relationships
- Experiential Learning with a Safety Net

Wisconsin's Emerging Adult Social Service Network:

- 26 Emerging Adult Centers through out the State
- Annual Budget: \$6.5 Billion
- State Funding: \$1 Billion
- Housing, Mentorship, Career Exploration,
 Education, the opportunity to make mistakes and learn from them.

Bucky's Tuition Promise:

began in 2018

- Free Tuition and fees for students whose household gross income is \$65,000 or less.
- 4,888 students out of 50,0000 UW Madison students enrolled over last five years.
- Yet 21% of 18 24 year olds live in poverty in Wisconsin -- 117,794
- Madison College (Tech College) has 109 graduates of its Scholars of Promise program (24,588 total 2023 enrollment)

Why Isn't This Working?

- It only covers tuition not housing, food, necessities...
- Brain Development delayed by poverty
- Breaking Generational Poverty Norms

• Most Importantly... no one asked the young people.

What We End Up With:

- 87% High School Graduation Rate Second Highest in the Nation: 50,700 noncompleters age 18 -24
- 50% Planning To attend a 4 year college
- 47% Enroll in any college (2 year or 4 year)
- Approximately 70% of population not part of Wisconsin's Emerging Adult Social Service Network

June 13th

- Resources and Supports as a student end
- Navigate Adults Systems which focus on families and adults
- Disconnection from formal and informal social networks
- 25% of Emerging Adults have no plan for after High School

What Should You Do to Help Them:

Don't treat them like adults in the system.

Don't treat them like children in the system.

- Recognize that this population exists
- Advocate for them
- Do Something
- Listen

How To Do Programming

- Developmental Relationship:
 - Express Care
 - Challenge Growth
 - Provide Support
 - Share Power
 - Expand Possibilities

- https://www.search-institute.org/developmentalrelationships/developmental-relationships-framework/ What We Did In Dane County:

Road Map for Opportunity Youth

Part of a Capital Campaign for a new facility

Asked 100 young people in focus groups about their experience

Also asked 30 business and community leaders



Step 1 was to explore barriers to success for Opportunity Youth in Dane County.

- Trauma, fear and anxiety
- ACCESS Availability
- Work Readiness



- Recognize where services exists and identify gaps:
- RESOURCE CONNECTIONS
- CAREER ASSESSMENT AND COUNSELING
- DRIVER'S LICENSE ATTAINMENT
- EXPANDED INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

Fix Gaps

• Resources:

- Resources Specialist on staff

- Access:
 - Options
 - CareerScape
- Train & Credential:
 - Legacy (YouthBuild/Corps Network)
 - Drivers License
 - Academies (Conservation & Construction
 - CareerPoint (Financial, Health, Customer Service)



Questions?