

Emerging Adults – Paths from Childhood Poverty to Self- sufficiency

by

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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 *At Risk* Kids

Troubled

Disconnected
Those Kids
Drop Outs

Delinquent

Opportunity Youth

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 50,000 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/developmental-relationships/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 exist 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?