# Supporting Special Populations Students in CTE

A self-paced online course for CTE leaders and instructors

# Module Eight

# Supporting Foster Care Students

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# Who are "Foster Care Involved" Students?

- Children and youth receiving temporary services for children who cannot live with their families.

- Children and youth in foster care may live with relatives or with unrelated foster parents.

- Foster care can also refer to other placement settings -- group homes, residential care facilities, emergency shelters, and supervised independent living.

- In Pennsylvania, youth "age out" of foster care at the age of 21 but have access to aftercare services until 23.

# Challenges Faced by Foster Care Students

- Academic setbacks

- Attachment issues

- Attendance Issues

- Lack of familial support

- School transience

- Difficulty forming relationships

- Behavioral and emotional challenges

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# Strategies - Supports & Services

- Provide intensive postsecondary and career guidance.

- Collaborate with social service agencies.

- Monitor students' progress and identify needs to address, and practices to implement.



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# Strategy - Identify a "Point Person"

Identify a point person in the CTC who is responsible for checking in with students in foster care to see if/how their needs outside of school are being met.

The point person should learn about these students' lives – what trauma they may have experienced, what their current living arrangements are – and establish trust with them.

The point person should be knowledgeable about living situations in Pennsylvania so that students can be informed of their options/opportunities

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# Strategy - Build a Culture of Support & Respect

- Hold professional development sessions to educate CTC staff members, especially the point person, about foster care and its impact on students.

- Professional development topics should address:
  - The foster care system
  - Characteristics of students in foster care
  - To the extent possible, provide reasonable flexibility to students regarding homework and testing dates.

- Other practical tips include:
  - Planning for students who enter school mid-year.
  - Providing school notices and newsletters from earlier in the year to new arriving foster care families
  - Encouraging foster parents' involvement.

# Strategy – CTE Classroom Supports

- Invite foster care involved youth get involved with school or work-based learning opportunities to build confidence and boost attendance. Examples include:
    - volunteering
    - job shadowing
    - school-based enterprises
    - youth apprenticeships
    - paid work experiences
- Arrange periodic progress report meetings with the foster parent(s), caseworker, and student - discuss the student's accomplishments and needs.

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# Promising Practices: Foster Care Students

California Special Populations

Colorado Special Populations Programming: ACE

Georgia Special Populations

Oklahoma Special Populations

Connecting CTE and Special Populations

YouScience: Aptitude and Interest Inventory

Capstone Portfolio Example – Work Experience Transition Toolkit

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# Module Eight Resources

Strategies for Special Populations Success

Webinar: Role of Data to Support College and Career Readiness and Success for Students in Foster Care

Strategies for Serving Special Populations in CTE

Resource Guide: Publications & Electronic Resources Relating to Special Populations

Ensuring Educational Stability for Youth in Foster Care – FAQs

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# Module Eight Resources (Cont.)

PDE and DHS Resources and Tools for Youth in Foster Care

Assisting Students Experiencing Educational Instability

Tuition Waiver Program

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# Module Eight Assignment

**Please complete the Module Eight Prompts (Reflection Journal):**

1. How is your institution currently supporting foster care involved students?

2. What are your key takeaways from this module that will impact your classroom practice?

# Contact/Mission

For more information on supporting special populations students in CTE, please visit PDE's website at www.education.pa.gov

*The mission of the department is to academically prepare children and adults to succeed as productive citizens. The department seeks to ensure that the technical support, resources and opportunities are in place for all students, whether children or adults, to receive a high-quality education.*

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