

Intervention Name: Courageous Connection

1. **Brief Description of the Intervention:** The Courageous Connection High School Program is a collaborative, positive intervention and support system designed to be implemented within a youth's high school. The goals of the Program are to improve a youth's connection with his/her school, the climate, staff and opportunities that the youth has at the school site as well as increase staff knowledge of the foster youth attending their schools and positive ways to support and understand the unique lives of youth living in foster care.

2. **Please select the primary categories that relate to the intervention:** (Please highlight applicable categories)

- Academic performance/functioning and achievement
- Adult behavior problems (violence/aggression)
- Adult mental health
- Alcohol and drug use
- Assessment and Measurement Instruments for Target Populations
- Attachment Interventions
- Basic Needs
- Behavioral Management and Treatment
- Child Mental Health – externalizing
- Child Mental Health - internalizing
- Child Mentoring Programs
- Child Supports and community connections
- Child Welfare Practice and Service Models
- Crisis Intervention
- Delinquency and Criminal Behavior
- Educational Support Interventions
- Family Functioning (communication, bonding, interactions and relationships)
- Family Support and Placement Stabilization Programs
- Independent living and career readiness
- Marriage and Relationship Support
- Parental Mentoring Programs
- Parent Engagement
- Parental Supports and community connections
- Parenting Skills - Training and Enhancement
- Peer associations/relationships
- Resource Parent Training Programs
- Sexual Behavior Problems in Adolescents and Children
- Social/emotional functioning (social competence/prosocial behaviors, conflict management, problem solving, coping-stress management, decision making and self -esteem)
- Trauma Treatment

3. Describe the intervention's current use with one or both of the QIC-AG's target population:

- Children with challenging mental health, emotional or behavioral issues who are awaiting an adoptive or guardianship placement as well as children in an identified adoptive or guardianship home but the placement has not resulted in finalization for a significant period of time.

Approximately 75% of the high school aged youth that the Courageous Connection Program works with are currently living within the foster care system either waiting for a permanent home or with no chance of adoption before emancipating from the system. By working with the youth and providing a daily support system within the youth's high school, access to normalizing high school activities, creating a peer support group, staff awareness and support training as well as other activities Courageous Connection has been able to track and measure improvements in youth's school attendance, participation in school activities, peer relationships, social and emotional skills, improved grades, graduation rates and post high school success.

- Children and families who have already finalized the adoption or guardianship. This group , includes children who have obtained permanency through private guardianship and domestic private or international adoptions.

Approximately 25% of the high school aged youth that the Courageous Connection Program works with have either emancipated from the system or been placed in a permanent home. Courageous Connection is unique because we choose not to end support or services simply because a youth has left the system for one reason or another. If the youth continues to want to participate and or receive services we will not turn them away. We recognize that youth do not become instantly "better" once they emancipate or get adopted. By continuing to provide support services we have seen measurable increases in youth's school attendance, participation in school activities, peer relationships, social and emotional skills, improved grades, graduation rates and post high school success.

4. If currently not being used with one or both of the QIC-AG's target population, describe how the intervention could be adapted to respond to the needs of the QIC-AG's target population:

- Children with challenging mental health, emotional or behavioral issues who are awaiting an adoptive or guardianship placement as well as children in an identified adoptive or guardianship home but the placement has not resulted in finalization for a significant period of time.
- Children and families who have already finalized the adoption or guardianship. This group includes children who have obtained permanency through private guardianship and domestic private or international adoptions.

5. Intervention goals/outcomes: *The goals of the Courageous Connection Program are first to improve a youth's self image, self worth and confidence. From there we work to improve a school staff and communities awareness of foster youth and their unique lives as well as how to better work with and*

support the population. The outcomes that we have seen and been able to track include improvements in school attendance, grade point average, participation, graduation rates and measurable decreases in behavior issues, suspensions, expulsions and social and emotional problems.

6. Please name the sites and contact information where the intervention has been replicated/ implemented:

The Program is currently being implemented at multiple high school sites within the Elk Grove Unified School District as well as in Washington Unified School District in Yolo County California. Please feel free to contact the Elk Grove Unified School District's Foster Youth Liaison, Kim Parker at kparker@egusd.net

7. Describe the evaluation or research that has been collected on this intervention: *Courageous Connection has worked side by side with individual schools and their data collecting programs to track attendance, behavior, grades and graduation rates, as well as one on one evaluations from youth participating within the program.*

Please provide contact Information Below:

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