



# FosterClub

## **Finding Balance: A Summit on Youth Wellbeing**

### **Event Dates:**

Friday, May 5, 2023

### **Event Location:**

Gladstone Park Conference Center  
Gladstone, OR

**Theme:** Youth/ Adult Partnerships (We're All In This Together)

### **Total Participants (See Appendix A):**

24 Youth attended Orientation (May 4, 2023)

4 Oregon Peer Navigators

10 Full-time FosterClub staff

39 Youth in attendance

129 Adults attended Summit

### **Event Overview (See Appendix B):**

#### **Agenda**

Registration & Check-In

Opening Session

Round I: Workshop Sessions

Round II: Workshop Sessions

Lunch

Keynote I: Senator Ron Wyden

Keynote II: Jillana Goble & Jennifer Bracken

Roundtable Discussion: Well-Being Solutions at the Individual, Community & System  
Levels

Closing Session: Sources of Strength

Raffle Giveaways



## Overview of Evaluation Learnings

**The following are the key highlights and successes of the Mental Health Summit:**

**1.1 *Roundtables*:** Collaboration between adults and youth: The summit successfully facilitated collaboration between adults and youth through roundtable discussions, enabling diverse perspectives and intergenerational learning.

**1.2 *Excellent facility*:** Gladstone Park Conference Center provided an ideal setting for the summit, offering a comfortable and engaging environment for all attendees.

**1.3 *Engaging peer navigator involvement*:** The active participation of peer navigators played a crucial role in engaging and guiding attendees throughout the event.

**1.4 *Diversity of workshop content*:** The summit offered a wide range of workshop topics, ensuring that attendees could explore various aspects of mental health and access valuable insights and resources.

**1.5 *Ombudsman resource table*:** The presence of an ombudsman resource table provided attendees with valuable information and support related to mental health advocacy and services.

**1.6 *Engagement from Senator Wyden*:** We were delighted to have the engagement of Senator Wyden during the summit, as he actively interacted with youth participants, providing inspiration and guidance.

**1.7 *Prizes and engagement*:** To maintain attendee engagement, prizes were incorporated into the summit, contributing to a lively and interactive atmosphere.

**1.8 *High attendee retention*:** A significant number of participants stayed until the end of the summit, indicating their continued interest and investment in the event's content and discussions.

**1.9 *Excitement among LEx participants*:** LEx participants expressed their enthusiasm and satisfaction in being part of the summit, highlighting the value they found in the experience.

**1.10 *Informative on-stage conversations*:** Presentations and discussions conducted on the main stage, particularly those involving representatives from Portland State University, were highly informative and well-received by attendees.

**1.11 *Cohesive theme*:** The summit successfully maintained a cohesive theme throughout the event, ensuring a unified focus on mental health issues and solutions.

**1.12 *Effective time management*:** The agenda was well-managed, allowing for smooth transitions between sessions and timely completion of activities.



**1.13 Proper distribution of gifts:** To sustain attendee engagement, gifts and giveaways were strategically distributed throughout the day, creating excitement and interest.

**1.14 Event ending slightly early:** The summit concluded slightly earlier than planned, allowing attendees to leave with a sense of accomplishment and an opportunity for networking.

**1.15 Breaks between workshops:** Scheduled breaks between workshops provided attendees with valuable opportunities for networking, relaxation, and reflection.

**1.16 LEx orientation:** A successful orientation for LEx participants ensured their active involvement and contribution to the summit.

**1.17 Positive feedback on food:** The quality and variety of food offered at the summit received positive feedback from attendees, enhancing their overall experience. Participants seemed to really enjoy Chipotle.

**1.18 Coparenting Keynote:** This presentation showcased the potential of a collaborative partnership between biological parents and resource caregivers, highlighting the benefits of this model for fostering a healthy relationship. Additionally, the presentation emphasized the importance of incorporating this approach into the child welfare system as a means to enhance permanency outcomes.

**1.19 Budget:** The allocated budget of \$150,000 was appropriate for this Summit. One of the major expenditures for a project of this magnitude is typically the venue cost. Fortunately, we were able to secure a venue at a lower cost than initially anticipated. The savings resulting from this allowed us to bring in FosterClub's entire leadership staff, including the executive director. This enabled us to engage in more strategic planning and ensure effective execution on the day of the Summit. While it is important to note that annual inflation may lead to rising costs, generally speaking, the budget of \$150,000 is appropriate for this function.

#### **Areas for Improvement:**

**While the Mental Health Summit had several successes, we also identified areas that could be improved for future events.**

These areas include:

**2.1 Longer planning time:** A longer planning period would allow for securing venues, keynote speakers, photographers/videographers, workshop presenters, increased LEx engagement, and attracting more participants.

- In order to effectively accommodate and plan a Summit for 400 young people and adults, FosterClub requests several months for the planning process, taking into account various factors included in this report. This timeframe will allow the organization to effectively plan for essential tasks such as securing a venue (the most important initial



factor), inviting diverse speakers and connecting with the most amount of participants, designing engaging workshops and activities with youth voice included, organizing logistics, and establishing necessary support systems. Ideally, a minimum of 90 days is requested to ensure thorough planning and again to provide as much time as needed to reserve the venue.

**2.2 Constituent form:** Implementing a constituent form during (instead of following registration) the registration process would enable LEx participants to provide input and shape the event's content.

**2.3 Clarity on compensation restrictions:** Clear communication regarding compensation restrictions would help avoid misunderstandings and ensure transparency.

**2.4 Workshop duration, facilitation, and descriptions:** Some attendees felt that the workshop duration of 35 minutes was insufficient, and it would be worth considering longer sessions based on participant feedback.

- In the future, Summits will offer multiple facilitation tracks with dedicated staff support. The aim is to provide an inclusive range of learning opportunities and assistance to navigate the day's curriculum. Furthermore, priority will be given to facilitation by current young people in the FosterClub network or individuals not connected to our organization with lived experience. This is meant to support young people learning from their peers and to ensure content discussed is centered around topics that currently affect young people.
- Upcoming Summits will feature workshop descriptions that are more comprehensive, providing detailed information about each session. Furthermore, there will be a focus on incorporating visual maps or diagrams to cater to different learning styles and accommodate a diverse range of participants.

**2.5 Check-in process:** To accommodate potential growth in attendee numbers, improvements to the check-in process, such as additional lanes and organization by last name, would enhance efficiency.

**2.6 Morning prep-time and peer nav involvement:** Providing more time for morning preparation and engaging peer navigators in pre-event tasks would streamline operations and ensure a smoother start.

**2.7 Room set-up and signage:** Efforts to improve room set-up, including early placement of signs and conducting tech checks with workshop leaders, would enhance overall organization and logistics.

**2.8 A/V testing:** Conducting A/V testing a day prior to the summit would mitigate potential technical difficulties and ensure seamless presentations.



**2.9 Staff role clarity:** Enhancing role clarity among staff members would prevent tasks from being overlooked and ensure effective execution.

**2.10 All Staff @ Summit communication:** Establishing effective communication channels with all staff members during the event, including text messages or Slack, would facilitate better coordination and information sharing.

**2.11 Pre-summit preparations:** Initiating necessary tasks, such as collaborating with Oregon-based FC staff, in advance would alleviate last-minute burdens and streamline event preparations.

**2.12 Variety in keynotes:** To increase engagement and offer unique experiences, future summits could incorporate a broader range of keynote presentations, including interactive and creative formats.

**2.13 Outreach/Communication Strategy:** Given more time, we could have and definitely would have developed additional creative communication strategies which FosterClub is known and recognized for. The Summit presents a unique chance to connect with a wide range of youth throughout the state. To cater to diverse environments such as suburban, rural, and urban areas, different strategies would have been implemented accordingly.

**Recommendations for the Future: Based on our observations and feedback from attendees, the following recommendations are proposed for future Mental Health Summits:**

**3.1 Allocate more planning time:** Allowing sufficient planning time will enable the organizing team to secure resources, engage participants, and deliver a more comprehensive event.

**3.2 LEx as emcee:** Consider having a young person serve as the emcee to bring fresh perspectives and resonate with the target audience.

**3.3 LEx as keynote speakers:** Incorporate LEx participants as keynote speakers, providing a platform for them to share their personal experiences and insights.

**3.4 Include LEx in planning:** Involve LEx participants in the planning process, such as selecting workshops and shaping the agenda, through the establishment of an LEx advisory board or similar mechanism.

**3.5 Comprehensive checklist (for all staff & PNs):** Develop a comprehensive checklist based on the current event to ensure all necessary resources, tasks, and considerations are addressed for future summits.

**3.6 Enhanced check-in process:** Improve the check-in process by incorporating more lanes and organizing them by attendees' last names to accommodate potential growth in attendee numbers.



- FosterClub is in the final stages of developing its mobile app that will act as a complete tool for managing all the logistical aspects of the conference. The app will consolidate various features such as the conference agenda, Summit landing page, community updates, room changes, emergency notifications, and conference resources into a single, easily accessible platform within the FosterClub app. The app will be in place for all future Summits’.

**3.7 Interactive main stage speakers:** Include interactive main stage speakers who can engage the audience through dynamic presentations and activities.

**3.8 Establish contingency plans:** Develop contingency plans to address unforeseen circumstances, including workshops, sensory needs, keynotes, and LEx participation, ensuring the smooth execution of the event.

**3.9. Better tracking of sensory room or other external spaces:** Create a tracking system to monitor the sensory area or any other designated spaces that are distinct from the main venue of the summit. The sensory room was not included in our formal tracking, and how many people served is unknown, collecting data, i.e. the attendance of the space, would have been beneficial for future summit planning purposes.

### **Conclusion:**

The Mental Health Summit was a significant gathering that successfully addressed various mental health issues and fostered collaboration among stakeholders. While we celebrated many accomplishments, we also identified areas for improvement and provided recommendations for future events. We are grateful for Oregon’s support in making this summit possible and remain committed to advancing mental health initiatives in our community.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A - Full Participant List

See attachment.



## Appendix B - Full Agenda

Time	Room	Description
7:45 am	Holden Conference Center	<b>Arrive at venue-</b> <a href="#">Gladstone Park Conference Center</a> 19500 Oatfield Road, Gladstone OR 97027



Ongoing	Zull Hall	<b>Sensory Room Experience</b> The Oregon Child Welfare Equity, Training and Workforce Development Unit created a sensory room experience for conference attendees. The space was set up to provide a sense of calm and comfort with interactive tools for self-regulation.
Ongoing	Holden Conference Center Lobby	<b>Resource Table</b> Staffed by FosterClub, the resource table will provide QR codes with valuable Oregon resources in 5 primary well-being categories: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Intersectionality for Foster Youth in Mental Health</li> <li>2) Trauma Informed Services and Supports</li> <li>3) Crisis/ Emergency Support</li> <li>4) Self-Advocacy</li> <li>5) Well-Being—Creating a Culture of Self-Care, Healing and Community</li> </ol>
8:15-9:00 am	Holden Conference Center Lobby	<b>Registration + Check-In</b>
9:15-10:00 am	Holden Conference Center, Mt. Hood Room	<b>Opening session- Mandy Davis, Trauma Informed Oregon</b> Mandy discussed her collaboration with organizations to implement trauma-informed strategies. She emphasized the use of HOPE (Health Outcomes of Positive Experiences) as a countermeasure to traumas.
10:15-11:00 am		<b>Workshop Round 1</b> Session Options <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Strengths-Based Suicide Prevention</b> <i>Sources of Strength</i></li> <li>2. <b>Who are your KINDRED? Self-Advocacy for yourself, and your kindred community</b> <i>Kindred Matters</i></li> <li>3. <b>Brave Conversations About Things that Matter</b> <i>Oregon Foster Parent Association</i></li> <li>4. <b>The Key Role of Social Support in Coping and Help-Seeking while in Foster Care</b> <i>Portland State University</i></li> <li>5. <b>Creating a Response Network: The Power of a Continuous Mindset for Social Services</b> <i>Oregon Department of Human Services</i></li> <li>6. <b>Oregon's Foster Children Bill of Rights: History, Present and Future</b> <i>Foster Care Ombudsman, State of Oregon</i></li> </ol>





		<p><b>7. Pod Mapping &amp; Emotional Safety Planning: Accessing Support Networks in Times of Crisis</b> <i>Washington State University</i></p> <p><b>8. Intersectionality and the Native Wellness Institute</b> <i>Native Wellness Institute</i></p>
11:15 am-12:00 pm		<p><b>Workshop Round 2</b> <u>Session Options</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Strengths-Based Suicide Prevention</b> <i>Sources of Strength</i></li> <li><b>2. Who are your KINDRED? Self-Advocacy for yourself, and your kindred community</b> <i>Kindred Matters</i></li> <li><b>3. Brave Conversations About Things that Matter</b> <i>Oregon Foster Parent Association</i></li> <li><b>4. The Key Role of Social Support in Coping and Help-Seeking while in Foster Care</b> <i>Portland State University</i></li> <li><b>5. Creating a Response Network: The Power of a Continuous Mindset for Social Services</b> <i>Oregon Department of Human Services</i></li> <li><b>6. Oregon's Foster Children Bill of Rights: History, Present and Future</b> <i>Foster Care Ombudsman, State of Oregon</i></li> <li><b>7. Pod Mapping &amp; Emotional Safety Planning: Accessing Support Networks in Times of Crisis</b> <i>Washington State University</i></li> <li><b>8. Intersectionality and the Native Wellness Institute</b> <i>Native Wellness Institute</i></li> </ol>
12:00-1:00 pm	Dining Hall	<p><b>Lunch</b> Chipotle!</p>
1:00-1:30 pm	Holden Conference Center, Mt. Hood Room	<p><b>Keynote Speaker- Senator Ron Wyden</b></p> <p>Senator Wyden, who is a steadfast advocate for youth in foster care, possesses the power to affect child welfare laws at the federal level. His concern extends beyond legislation, as he is deeply invested in mental health, the welfare of young people, and peer support.</p>
1:35-2:05 pm	Holden Conference	<p><b>Keynote Speakers- Jillana Goble, Every Child OR + Jennifer Bracken, birth parent</b></p>



	Center, Mt. Hood Room	Jillana and Jennifer represent an adoptive parent and a birth parent, respectively, who diligently fostered a relationship and collaborated to ensure their child's well-being. They accomplished this despite the significant challenges posed by the child welfare system. Their shared narrative offers a unique perspective among the diverse stories illustrating what well-being signifies for families navigating the child welfare system.
2:15-3:15 pm	Holden Conference Center, Mt. Hood Room	<p><b>Discussion-</b> Well-Being Solutions at the Individual, Community, and System Levels</p> <p>Youth-Adult Partnership Roundtable Discussions on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intersectionality for Foster Youth in Mental Health</li> <li>• Trauma Informed Services and Supports</li> <li>• Crisis/ Emergency Support</li> <li>• Self-Advocacy</li> <li>• Well-Being—Creating a Culture of Self-Care, Healing and Community</li> </ul>
3:30- 4:00 pm	Holden Conference Center, Mt. Hood Room	<p><b>Closing Session-</b> <i>Sources of Strength and Oregon Health Authority</i></p> <p>The presenters, consisting of both adult workers and youth with personal experience in foster care, will impart knowledge on a strengths-based approach to suicide prevention during this session.</p>
4:00-4:30 pm	Holden Conference Center, Mt. Hood Room	<p><b>Raffle</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draw and announce winners!</li> </ul>

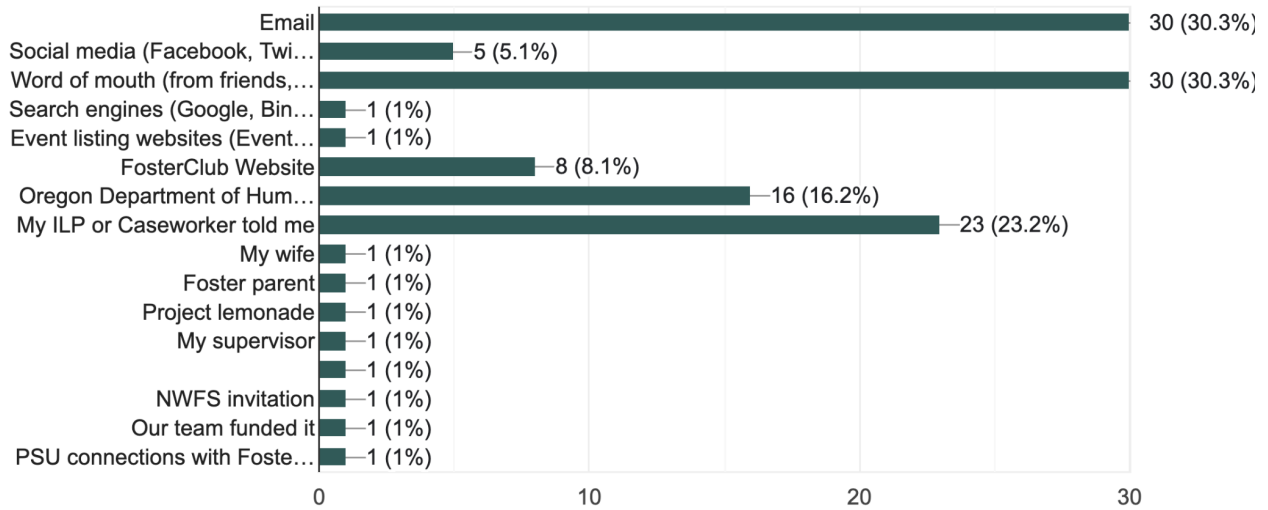


Appendix C - Participant Evaluation Summary  
Summit Evaluation



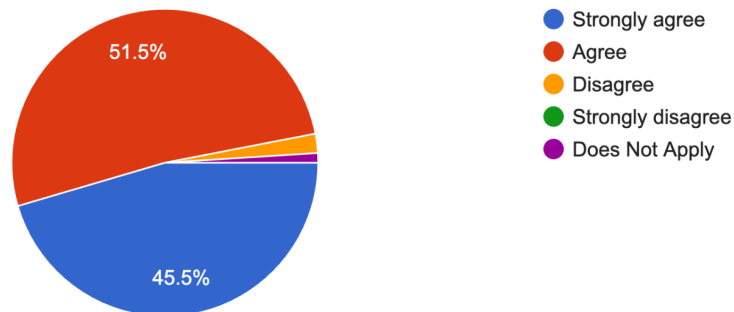
### How did you hear about the Summit?

99 responses



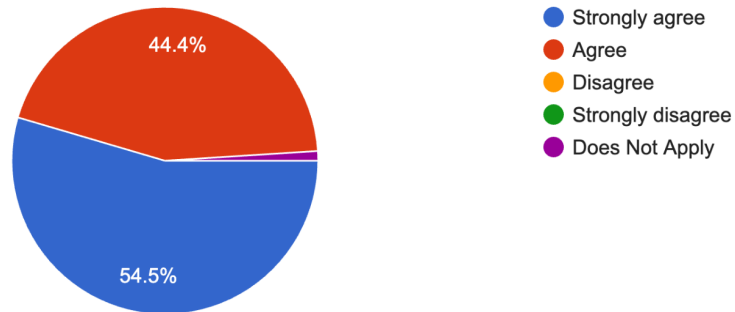
### The Summit met my expectations

99 responses



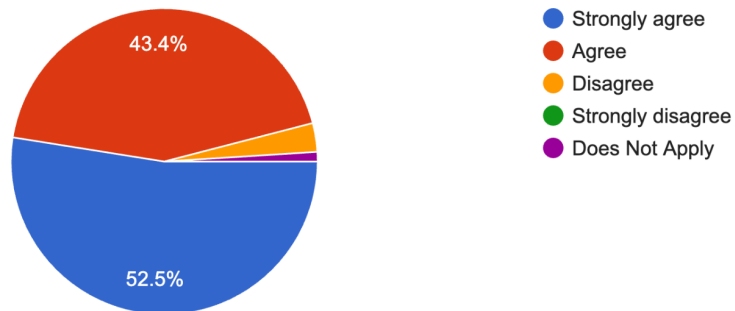
### The Summit provided useful and relevant content

99 responses



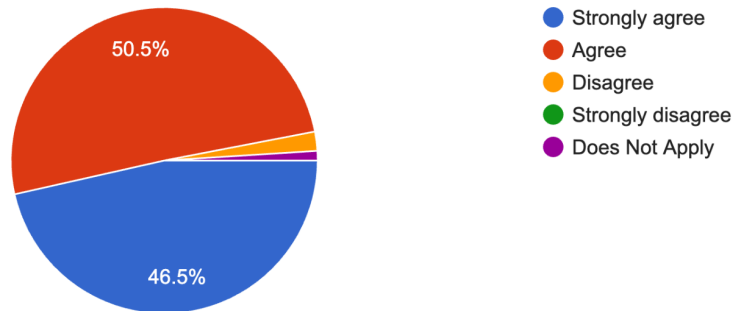
### I believe I will be able to use the information and discussion from this Summit in my own work and/or life

99 responses



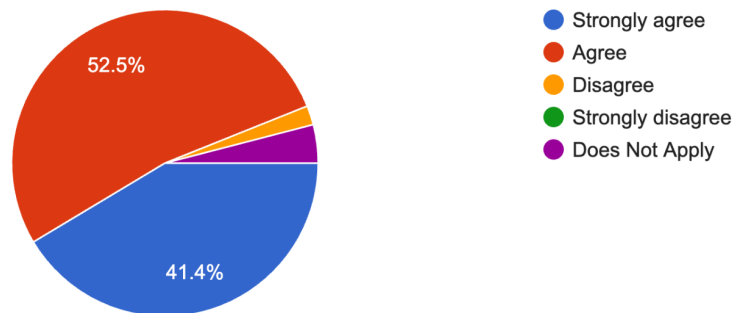
As a result of this Summit, I strengthened my understanding of how to work in partnership to improve youth well-being

99 responses



I have new tools that will help me to support youth well-being

99 responses



#### Narratives from participants:

- Awesome!
- It was amazing
- More bathroom breaks
- Thank you
- I really appreciate everything that everyone did during this session today :) Thank you for genuinely hearing me out!
- Excited for next year!
- Great location and conference.
- Thankyou



- Wonderful touch by adding the sensory space for those struggling
- You guys are great and I enjoyed our time together
- Great event to bring the foster care community together
- It was amazing and everyone spoke greatly!
- I loved every key note speaker.
- Better accommodations and compensation for youth and expanding age
- There were so many interesting workshops offered, it would have been great to have the opportunity to go to more than 2!
- Awesome experience!
- Would like some new techniques
- Very organized, engaging, and informative
- This was so great and hoping to see more foster youth sharing with each other at the next one!
- Pls have soda next time, specifically coke <3
- Hoping this will be an annual event!
- I feel like the summit was helpful in opening my eyes on how the youth in our communities are being treated and how I can better help them.
- I think y'all did a good job with providing new tools for people to use.
- More breaks, shorter sessions after lunch, hard to keep focus after spending all day learning.
- Thanks it was really good!
- It would have nice to see more involvement from CASA.
- It was nice to see people making space for those with lived experience to talk.
- Great job!
- It would be great to have more partnership with youth in the workshops.
- Great source of information group sessions for great size trainings class
- It was cool having adults and youth all intermingled
- Key note speakers were very very very good!
- This was great. Thank you for the wonderful information.
- I wanted to hug everyone who came on stage but I couldn't.
- Great sensory room
- certificate of participation
- I really liked all the subjects we talked about im not a person to explain my emotions but keep them all in and to cope by myself and really am lost in how to express my emotions as I wasn't able to in my childhood I'm confused on how to know but some of the resource we talked about help me



- Would like badges to have where everyone comes from. I think that would help networking and partnering
- I enjoyed hearing from the youth and ways to help support the youth. I did the workshop Brave about conversations and didn't think It gave info to youth like I thought it would. Maybe have an info portion attached to the title of the work shop.
- Visuals or soft music during transitions
- I'm excited to see some of these tools and programs in Josephine and Jackson County.
- i would like to share that this is a great thing you guys do by help kids and people in foster and help them learn more about stuff in foster care and i would like to say thank you
- You guys are amazing thank you for the iPad!
- I had an amazing time here today with everyone and I feel like some of the things that were discussed really helped me to become more aware of a lot of things and I really feel like I'll be able to more resilient after this experience!
- Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this summit.
- Would love to see workshops specifically for youth/young people, a couple of breakouts just for them. More fruit or veggies for snacks. Overall, nice job!
- A great opportunity for youth and supportive adults to attend a conference together for learning methods of collaboration.
- It was a lot emotionally and mentally. It was hard to be there mentally
- Since we were presenting a workshop we didn't really get to hear/see the other workshops! That's why I put "does not apply" in the area of having new tools to help support youth well-being. I think generally it was good to share what's already working together and in our conversations in our workshop, talk about what we as service providers can do differently to support youth in care that are help-seeking.

## Appendix D - Workshop Descriptions





Workshop Titles	Description
Strengths-Based Suicide Prevention	This session is an opportunity to engage with Sources of Strength, a best practice youth suicide prevention program designed to harness the power of peer social networks to create school cultures of belonging; ultimately preventing suicide, bullying, and substance abuse. This innovative model strengthens multiple sources of support (protective factors) around young people so when times get hard they have already identified strengths to rely on. Participants will learn about the Sources of Strength model, practice wellness strategies, experience connection, and learn tools that can be brought back to their workplaces, homes, and communities to have strengths-based conversations about mental health and connecting to help.
Who are your KINDRED? Self-Advocacy for yourself, and your kindred community	Finding yourself or your kindred is not how it works. You are not a 10-dollar bill lost in a winter coat pocket. You are also not lost! Finding yourself is actually returning to yourself. An unlearning. It is about discovering who you are and what you need before the world got its hands on you. Your true self is right there. Workshop will focus on individual self-exploration through activities, defining what kindred means to you, and the importance of self-advocacy, developing a kindred community, and sibling advocacy.
Brave Conversations About Things that Matter	Do you wonder about your future? How to be true to yourself when you aren't yet quite sure who that is? How to avoid the risks you see others experience? Join this safe, interactive space to talk about issues that concern you. Success, options, personal agency, hopes, and dreams - bring your questions, even the hard ones. Walk away with practical ways to choose your best options for the life you desire. Facilitated by someone with lived experience as a homeless youth, in foster care, and aging out without support. As a constant 'outsider', Jessica swore she would never forget her four years as a teen on the street and later foster care experiences and she never has. Now, as an elder, she advocates for all youth but has a special soft spot for those outside the margins. She not only survived but crafted a rewarding life. You can too. Let's talk.
The Key Role of Social Support in Coping and Help-Seeking while in Foster Care	It's important to understand what might be going on internally when young people are encouraged to use typical coping strategies, given the unique foster care-related barriers they may face. For example, solving a problem or doing common self-



	<p>care activities may require resources that are harder to access while in care, and asking for help depends on what support you need, who is available to ask, and whether you've felt supported in the past when in a similar scenario. This workshop reflects recent program development efforts with young people with lived experience, and will explore lessons learned about the importance of different types and sources of social support for youth in care, focusing on how readiness to ask for help is impacted by past experiences, and brainstorming how young people, adult supporters, and trauma-informed systems can think more flexibly about coping and support-seeking while in foster care and into young adulthood.</p>
Creating a Response Network: The Power of a Continuous Mindset for Social Services	<p>Child Welfare implemented a pilot project in 2021 called Response and Support Network (RSN) in the Portland Metro area. RSN, a partnership between CareOregon and Child Welfare, is a 24/7 Resource Family mobile support services that includes non-clinical and clinical supports. The service is delivered in home, wholistic in support to the entire family, and highly effective. Along the way, a method of implementation for social services crystalized; the continuous mindset can help better address the client needs for vast array of social service supports. I will describe unique implementation strategies that made RSN possible.</p>
Oregon's Foster Children Bill of Rights: History, Present and Future	<p>The Foster Care Ombudsman will discuss the history and "why" of the Foster Children's Bill of Rights as well as discuss the current status of advocating for these Rights to be adhered today across Oregon.</p>
Pod Mapping & Emotional Safety Planning: Accessing Support Networks in Times of Crisis	<p>This session will introduce Pod Mapping, its origins, and uses. A "pod" describes the individuals and organizations someone can turn to in their community for support. Participants can fill in their own Pod Map(s) worksheet by identifying people and supports they can turn to when experiencing a mental health or other crisis. The session will then explore emotional safety planning (identifying warning signs, de-escalating with self or others, etc.) and potential situations to consider making one for (panic attacks, dissociation, suicidal ideation, gender dysphoria, etc.). Participants are then invited to workshop their own safety plans; a list of potential strategies will be provided. The presenter will then discuss integrating these two tools by sharing safety plans with individuals in your pod, accessing institutional</p>



	supports, and how to build your pod. Presented by a disabled, neuroqueer enby with lived experience in the foster system.
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