

Closing the Gaps:

Building Outreach Systems to Anticipate and Respond to Needs

A 90-Minute Interactive Learning Session

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Office of Juvenile Justice
and Delinquency Prevention

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Meet the Presenters



Regina Dix (Archie)

Training & Capacity Building Manager
Regina@youthcollaboratory.org



Dash Togi

Training & Capacity Building Manager
Dahsuri@youthcollaboratory.org

Learning Objectives

1. Identify System-Level Gaps
2. Define Outreach Infrastructure
3. Describe Key System Components
4. Apply Real-World Models
5. Identify Actionable Next Steps

Who's in the Room?



Poll: What best describes your current role in youth services?

1. Case Management / Youth Navigation
2. Outreach / Street Outreach
3. Housing Services (Shelter, RRH, TLP, etc.)
4. Foster Care / Child Welfare
5. Juvenile Justice / Reentry
6. Education / School-Based Support
7. Workforce / Employment Services
8. Behavioral Health / Clinical Services
9. Nonprofit / Program Leadership
10. Government / Policy / Systems Work
11. Research / Data / Evaluation
12. Peer Navigator / Experience of Systems Role
13. Other

Who's in the Room?



Poll: How many years of experience do you bring to this work?

- A. 0–2 years (new to the field)
- B. 3–5 years
- C. 6–10 years
- D. 11–15 years
- E. 16+ years

Examining the Gaps



Maya's Story:

Maya exited foster care at 18 with:

- A housing plan
- A case manager
- Employment goals

Six months later:

- Lost contact with providers
- Couch surfing
- Facing housing instability

Nothing failed all at once — connection eroded over time.



Cracks vs. Gaps

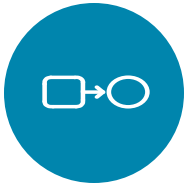
**Youth don't fall through cracks —
they fall through system gaps between services.**



Program Exits



Eligibility Changes



Transition Points



Referral Handoffs

Each gap is a moment where a system assumed someone else was responsible.

Where Gaps Show Up: High-Risk Transition Points Across Systems

Each arrow represents a moment of risk — and an opportunity for proactive outreach.



System Gaps: 14 place youth can disconnect from stability

1.

Transition Ownership

No one owns the
journey

2.

Eligibility Cliff

Support ends
abruptly

3.

Story Repetition Burden

Re-telling trauma
repeatedly

4.

Invisible Housing Instability

Couch surfing goes
uncounted

5.

Relationship Disruption

Trusted adults
disappear

6.

Data Fragmentation

Siloed, disconnected
records

7.

Document Gap

Missing IDs block
access

8.

Identity Theft Exposure

Financial identity at
risk

9.

Workforce Disconnect

Jobs and housing
misaligned

10.

Warm Handoff Failure

Referrals that go cold

11.

Court Exit Drop-off

No plan after
probation ends

12.

Youth Voice Without Power

Consulted, not
included

13.

Neurodiversity Design Gap

Built for the wrong
youth

14.

Hidden Stability Gap

Fragile in reality

Outreach Infrastructure



Why Outreach Must Shift

Traditional Model

- Crisis response only
- Episodic contact
- Program-based support
- Reactive referrals
- Siloed systems

Emerging Model

- Continuous connection
- Relationship-based
- Prevention-focused
- Proactive outreach
- Cross-system accountability



The shift is not about doing more — it's about staying connected differently.

From Reactive Response to Outreach Systems

Responds after
crisis occurs

Reactive

- Shelter and emergency housing
- Crisis intervention services
- Emergency financial assistance
- Acute behavioral health response

Intervenes before
crisis escalates

Prevention

- Flexible funding and rapid resources
- Early identification of at-risk youth
- Diversion from system involvement
- Short-term stabilization supports

Anticipates needs before
they become crises

Outreach Systems

- Relationship continuity across transitions
- System navigation and warm handoffs
- Cross-agency follow-up accountability
- Proactive data-driven identification
- Youth Engagement Structure



Most systems over-invest in the first stage.

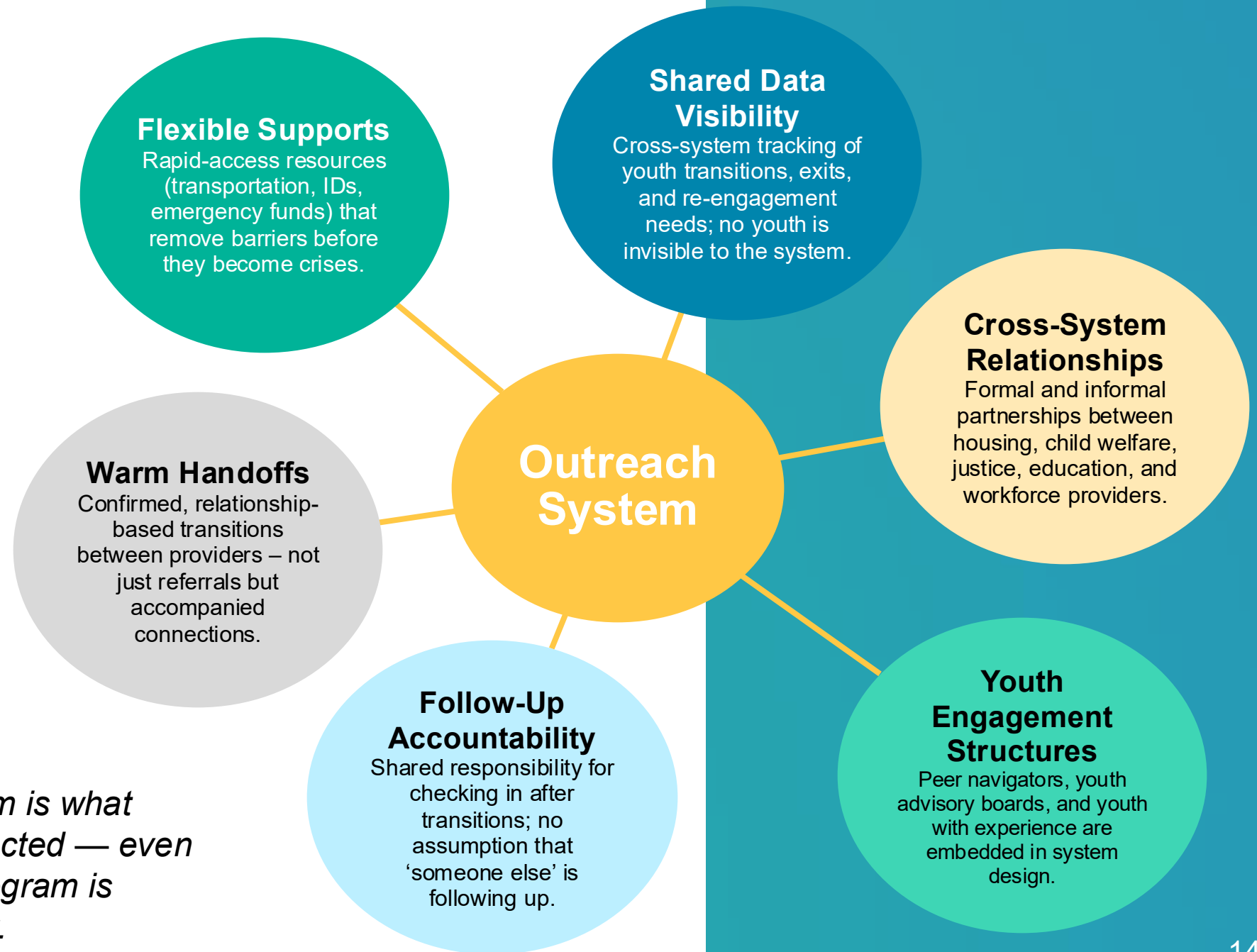
Prevention and Outreach Systems are where lasting change happens.

What is an Outreach System?

Outreach is infrastructure — not a single program or position



An outreach system is what keeps Maya connected — even when no single program is responsible for her.



Where do youth most often disconnect in your community?

- A. 🏠 Housing Systems
- B. 🎓 Education Systems
- C. ⚖️ Justice Systems
- D. 💼 Workforce Systems
- E. 🔗 Case management

Let's hear from you!



*Share your answer in the chat —
and tell us WHY.*

Key Components



Key Component: Data Tracking

Knowing who is missing — before they disappear:

-  Identifying Who Is Missing
-  Tracking Transition Points
-  Cross-System Visibility
-  Shared Accountability Metrics



The data exists. The problem is fragmentation — not absence of information.

Shared Data Visibility

Cross-system tracking of youth transitions, exits, and re-engagement needs; no youth is invisible to the system.

Key Component: Youth-Centered Engagement

People, not programs, maintain connection.

-  Peer Navigators
-  Relationship-Based Outreach
-  Youth Advisory Input
-  Case Conferencing Models
-  Youth with Experience of Systems



One trusted adult who stays connected can change the trajectory of a young person's life.

Youth Engagement Structures

Peer navigators, youth advisory boards, and youth with experience are embedded in system design.

Key Component: Cross-System Coordination

No single system owns the full journey



Housing Providers



Child Welfare



Juvenile Justice



Education Systems



Workforce Programs



Behavioral Health



Coordination is not a meeting; it's a shared commitment to follow a young person through every door they walk through.

Cross-System Relationships

Formal and informal partnerships between housing, child welfare, justice, education, and workforce providers.

Employment Navigation & Financial Literacy

Employment & Career Development

- Career interest & strength exploration
- Create Resumes & cover letters
- Interview preparation support
- Share local job opportunities
- Provide resource referrals
- Explore workforce development programs
- Identify employment barriers
- Make warm handoffs
- Follow up and reinforce connections

Financial Literacy

- Discuss financial goals
- Share money management tips
- Connect to banking resources
- Identify financial barriers
- Provide resource referrals
- Make warm handoffs
- Follow up and encourage progress

Follow-Up Accountability

Shared responsibility for checking in after transitions; no assumption that 'someone else' is following up.



Employment and financial literacy are interconnected. Economic stability is built through consistent follow-ups beyond warm handoffs, and access to resources — not a single intervention.

Key Component: Flexible Supports

Small barriers create large crises:

\$65 Transportation

\$25-\$100 IDs & Documentation

\$75 Work Clothing

\$25-\$75 Application Fees

\$200-\$500 Emergency Housing



*The ROI of flexible supports is extraordinary:
small investments prevent costly crises.*

Flexible Supports

Rapid-access resources
(transportation, IDs,
emergency funds) that
remove barriers before
they become crises.

Key Component: Restorative Engagement

From compliance to connection:

Punitive / Compliance Model

- Surveillance over support
- Youth as problem to manage
- Fear-driven engagement
- Success = rule-following

Restorative / Relational Model

- Connection over compliance
- Youth as partner in their plan
- Trust-driven engagement
- Success = stability & self-determination

Warm Handoffs

Confirmed, relationship-based transitions between providers – not just referrals but accompanied connections.



*Restorative engagement is not soft — it's strategic.
It produces better outcomes at lower cost.*

Model Spotlights



Model Spotlight: FLITE HOPE Court

Transforming legal engagement from adversarial to relational.

- Youth-Centered Court Practices
- Circle-Based Hearings
- Consistent Engagement Every 6 Weeks
- Mentorship and Service Linkage
- Focus on Long-Term Stability



HOPE Court demonstrates that consistency of contact is itself a protective factor.

Learn more: www.hopeprojectfl.org

Model Spotlight: Christian City

A community-based continuum of support across life stages

- Early Learning Integration
- Youth Leadership Structures
- Workforce Certifications and Training
- Resource Navigation Support
- Housing Expansion



Christian City demonstrates that a continuum of support, not isolated programs, produces lasting community change.

Identifying Next Steps



Where do you see the biggest disconnect in your system?

- Housing
- Education Systems
- Workforce
- Justice
- Cross-System Coordination

Let's hear from you!



React with the emoji that matches your answer — then share WHY in the chat.

Key Takeaways:

What we know — and what we must do



Outreach Is Infrastructure,
Not a Program



Prevention Starts Before
Crisis



Relationships Are
Protective Factors



Data Should Be Shared
Across Systems



Flexibility Prevents
Escalation



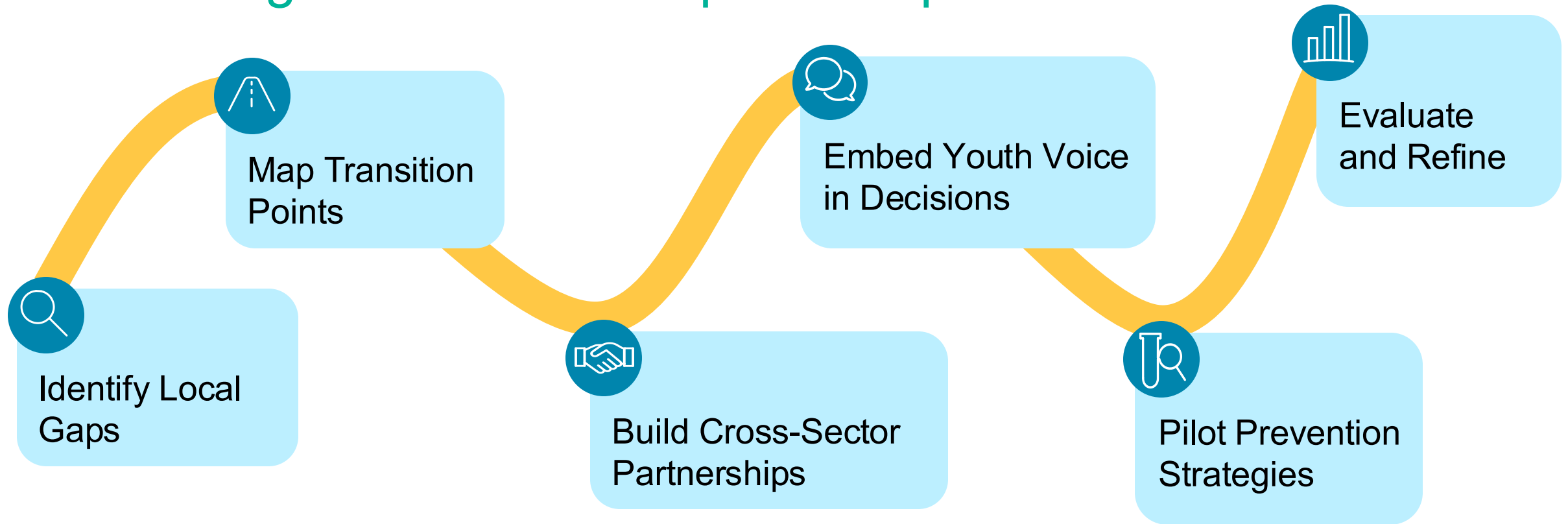
Youth Experience Reflects
System Design



*The question is not whether we can build better outreach systems.
The question is whether we will.*

Implementation Roadmap

From insight to action — a practical path forward



Your 30-Day Challenge: Identify *ONE* change you can make within 30 days.

Tools & Resources to Consider

Focus Area	Resource	Action to Consider
Housing Stability	Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Housing Voucher Program	Partner with your local Public Housing Authority to identify eligible youth before they exit care.
Family & Housing Stability	Family Unification Program (FUP)	Explore how FUP can support youth and families experiencing housing instability.
Homelessness Prevention	Host Homes & Diversion Implementation Resources	Identify prevention strategies that can reduce housing crises before they occur.
Cross System Collaboration	Youth Homelessness Prevention Research	Review prevention strategies that strengthen partnerships across child welfare, housing, education, and RHY programs.
Outreach & System Coordination	Outreach and Youth Engagement Resources	Strengthen referral pathways and partnerships with organizations serving transition age youth.
Strengthening Youth Development	HOPE Framework Resources	Consider how relationships, belonging, and supportive environments strengthen engagement.
Transition Planning	Transition to Adulthood Planning Resources	Identify opportunities to strengthen housing, employment, education, and permanent connections before youth exit care.

Thank You