

# It's All About the Support Services

**Case Management Services for the 21<sup>st</sup>  
Century Adult Education and Workforce  
Development Programs**

**S. Michele Echols, Research and Evaluation  
Manager**

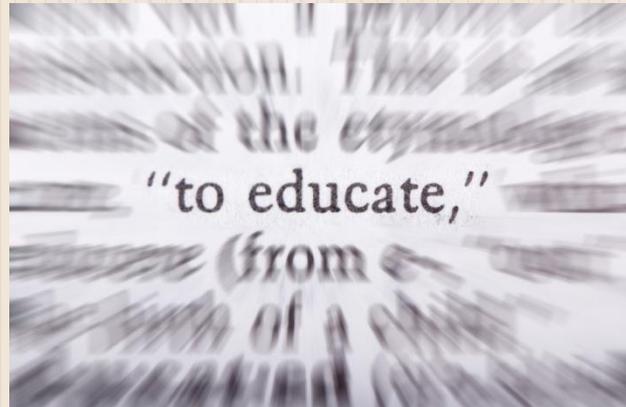
**New York City Regional Adult Education  
Network**

# History of New York State Literacy Zones

- Began in 2009, The Literacy Zone is a reform initiative to close the achievement gap in urban and rural communities of concentrated poverty and high concentrations of families and individuals with limited literacy or English language proficiency. Literacy Zones provide a systemic approach to meeting the literacy needs of these communities characterized by significant poverty and deficits in literacy and English language proficiency.
- Geographically defined as one or more adjacent census tracts using the US Census Bureau data, New York State Education Department has identified 50 Literacy Zones across the State.

# Literacy Zones as Community Hubs for Information and Services

The wise...mentor knows that being aware of what is not known is important in order to begin to learn. To attain true knowledge and wisdom, we must remain open and empty, allowing ideas from other people to rush in. To be empty, to recognize how little we know, is to be abundant. ~ Jerry Lynch The TAO of Giving and Receiving Wisdom



# Case Managers in The Literacy Zones

The case manager's position was designed as a key position to the Literacy Zones.

The case manager assist families and/or individuals in addressing their critical needs to overcome one or more of the ten defined pathways out of poverty.

# Ten Pathways out of Poverty

- The continuum of literacy available from early childhood through adult (i.e. total literacy)
- Assistance and support for at-risk youth to enable them to complete high school and succeed in postsecondary education or advanced training
- Postsecondary transition for out-of-school youth and adults to attain a HSE and succeed in postsecondary education or advanced training
- Programs that enable out-of-school youth and adults who are receiving public assistance or with family incomes less than 200% poverty to become employed and retain employment
- Incarcerated transition for youth and adults returning to the community from incarceration

# Ten Pathways out of Poverty (cont'd)

- Pathways to citizenship and English language proficiency for limited English language adults
- Workforce development programs, including apprenticeship and career pathways
- Support for mature workers and senior citizens to enable them to stay out of poverty
- Support for individuals with disabilities and their families
- Transition support for returning veterans and their families

# Factors Prohibiting Pathways out of Poverty

- ❑ Economic uncertainty has forced the job market to become an employer's market
- ❑ Governmental fiscal restraints
- ❑ The restraints has spawned a reduction in services and challenged resources
  - ❖ Lack of affordable and appropriate housing
  - ❖ Lack of available, affordable child care
  - ❖ Health and social service support cuts
- ❖ High, sustained unemployment or underemployment in areas hit by reduction of full time jobs

# Analyzing Case Scenarios

- Group activity
- Break into small groups to create a plan based on the assigned case scenarios.



# The Process: the 4 R's

- Goal of Case Managers in the Literacy Zones are:
- **Recruit** – play an integral part of the intake process
- **Retain** – ensure students are meeting the program requirements and address any societal issues that may prohibit students from successfully completing the program
- **Refer** – Provide the necessary referrals to outside agencies that can provide the more intensive services
- **Refrain** – refrain from injecting your personal opinion to the student's situation

# Areas of concentration

Health Literacy

Financial Literacy

- ❑ Functional Literacy (including digital literacy)
- ❑ Family Literacy
- ❑ Community Outcomes
- ❑ School Relations
- ❑ Social Services
- ❑ Workforce Readiness
- ❑ Legal Services
- ❑ Citizenship

# Philosophy of Case Management at Literacy Zones

The philosophy is our beliefs about our participants and the process. These beliefs will guide how you regard the people you work with and the approaches you use with them.

- Case Management for adult education providers is a **participant – centered** (student) rather than a **program- centered** approach.
- Students are capable of **taking more control of their lives**.
- Students have **strengths and resources** as well as **weakness and barriers**.
- Case Management process should be a **shared partnership** between the student and Case Manager.

# Philosophy and Case Management cont'd

- Case Management should actively involve students in all phases of the process
  - ~ assessment, planning, problem solving, and finding resources.
- Case Management seeks to have an active – not a passive- student.
- Students are responsible for the outcomes: you are responsible for the process.

# Factors Impacting Case Management Services

- Previously the mission of the CM was to move families / individuals off of public benefits
- Today the current economic climate we are forced to think outside the box
- Develop strategies to empower the most vulnerable populations on how to maintain public benefits
- Increase their learning opportunities to create a seamless transition

# Difference between Case Manager and Social Worker

- While working in a case management program it is important not only to assess the student and customer/client's needs but to make suggestions and provide concrete referrals for services. The role of the case manager is to be resourceful and knowledgeable in regards to community based programs in the particular community served. In case management there is particular attention paid to the “presenting problem.”
- A social worker would take more of a “systems” approach to addressing a particular individual's problem, often times interacting with family, and outside entities such as court or the local social service office on clients behalf. Social workers are trained to pay attention to what is called the “biopsychosocial” aspect of assisting individuals.

# Meeting their Needs

- Exercising good listening skills will help when referring and/or counseling each student.
- Demonstrating a plan of action is the ultimate lesson.
- Offer realistic prospective with case by case situations
- Develop a plan that will help someone reach their goals
- Set up several follow up appointments to follow through

# Case Examples Role of Case Manager and the Role of the Social Worker in assisting students

- An individual has just received an eviction notice from their landlord.
- ***The role of the case manager would be to...***
- 1) Refer the student to an eviction prevention program, perhaps a community based organization with legal services (often can pay back rent)
- 2) Advise them on what is needed and where to go to apply for an HRA (local DSS) one shot deal if eligible.
- ***The role of the social worker would be...***
- 1) Perhaps include going to court with the student and/or speaking with the management office
- 2) Speaking with legal entities on behalf of the student to assist with housing court case.
- This role is less of community based referrals and more “hands on” throughout the entire process.

# Case Managers as Change Agents

- Assist students to get ready for change:
- Identify their own motivation for change.
- Help them identify their own goals.
- Help them assess their strengths and own resources to support goals.
- Help them identify their own barriers.
- Provide them with resources available.



# The Effects of W.I.O.A on Case Management

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), signed into law by President Obama on July 22, 2014 focuses on: Building a Skilled Workforce.

- Required Partners:
- Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth (Title I)
- Adult Education and Literacy (Title II)
- Wagner Peyser (Title III)
- Rehabilitation Act (ACCES-VR) (Title IV)
- Older Americans (Title V)
- Career & Technical Education (Carl D. Perkins Act)

# System Alignment Opportunities #1

1. Unified State plan must address education and skill needs of the workforce and strategies for aligning core programs

2. One Stop partner programs include the core programs and postsecondary career and technical education.

# System Alignment Opportunities #2

Workforce preparation activities: "activities, programs, or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training and employment."

# System Alignment Opportunities #3

Ability to serve individuals whose reading, writing, math skills are less than grade 13 level for purposes of postsecondary transition: "Nothing in this title shall be construed to prohibit or discourage the use of funds provided under this title for adult education and literacy activities that help eligible individuals transition to postsecondary education and training or employment"

# The Effects of W.I.O.A. on Case Manager's Work

- Adding/keeping career counseling as part of the Case Manager's job description
- Develop strategies to empower the most vulnerable populations on how to maintain public benefits
- Increase their learning opportunities to create a seamless transition to postsecondary education or training

# The Effects of W.I.O.A. on Case Manager's Work cont'd

- Develop deep relationships with local One Stop providers who can assist your students in moving into employment or training
- Provide support, encourage, and create opportunities for them to exercise greater control over decisions that affect their employment & training options

# Partnerships are Essential for all Adult Education Programs with Case Managers

Partnerships are integral to the success of Literacy Zones

Some of the Key Partners Include:

- Workforce One
- Community based Organizations ie: legal and domestic violence prevention
- Federal, State and City government agencies ie: local DSS, Housing and SSI
- Schools

# Questions and Answers



thank  
you!