Single Mothers’ Career Readiness & Success

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National College Transition Network
The **NCTN** provides technical assistance and professional development services to community college, adult education, and workforce systems to design accelerated career pathways, comprehensive student support services, and effective multi-stakeholder partnerships that help adults earn a living wage.
NCTN Conference

Annual Conference

College & Career Readiness

Career Pathways

Leadership Development

Student Supports

NOV. 11-13, 2019 | Cambridge, MA @Hyatt Regency

ADVANCING COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS
Preparing Adult Learners for the Digital World
Session Goals

• Describe Single Mothers’ Career Readiness and Success project goals, activities, outcomes.
• Present project findings and recommendations
• Share experiences, observations, program practices that support single mothers
Single Mothers’ Career Readiness and Success Project
Why Single Mothers?

- Heads of 9 mill US families
- 11% of undergrads (2 mill)
- Low-income, few supports
- Lower credential completion rates
- 28% earn PSE credential within 6 years
- Unique challenges and strengths
- Return on investment is multi-generational
- Key to equity and completion agendas
Project Activities

- Literature Review
- Outreach to colleges
- Interviews w/staff and students
- Identify and document
NO MATTER WHAT OBSTACLE IS THROWN MY WAY

Report from the Single Mothers’ Career Readiness and Success Project

Sandy Goodman and Mina Reddy

https://tinyurl.com/No-Matter-What-Obstacle
Strengths and Challenges
Core Program Strategies

- Personal support
- Academic support
- Financial support
- Childcare & Family-Friendly
- Partnerships
Personal Support

Just having people around me that value education, and that have been through kind of some of the things that I’ve been through. Just really being encouraging, like positive, always encouraging, anything you need you just ask. That openness just really makes it like, you know, you wanna come back. I think that's the biggest thing…you just feel welcomed.

I'll look back and know it was because of these programs that... I was able to make it, because just that little bit of help extra. It's somebody there that has that faith in you that you can do it, and that's probably the biggest thing.

(Lisa AHC)
Academic Support
Financial Support

The most disruptive of the challenges, I think are their having to handle the unexpected...could be anything from house apartment repairs to car repairs. Now we say our students are one flat tire away from dropping out...They get a flat tire and can’t afford to get a new one, so I can’t get to work... I just got fired, now I can’t get to school...and everything just unravels very quickly.(ACC)
Child Care and Family Friendly Space
Career Pathways
Leveraging Campus and Community Resources

Because of our community involvement and because there’s a coalition of all the nonprofits working together, when we make a referral, it’s a true referral, meaning that they know who they are going to talk to at housing. They know we’ve already called and said, ‘So-and-so is coming down for such and such services’ and so they’re expecting the person. (Brie - North Arkansas)

I have a family coach, I'm just really learning to set aside my pride and ask for services. I've always known about the resources. My husband supported us and I didn't really need them. Now I need them, and I'm trying to not have pride. Just utilize what's out there for me and then pass it on to other women. (Tiffany – PCC)
Recommendations

- **Build Institutional Capacity**
  - Data collection and analysis
  - Faculty & staff professional development
  - Advocacy
  - Connect to basic needs programs

- **Increase Funding**
  - Diversify and braid funding streams
  - Assess for benefit eligibility
  - Raise flexible funds

- **Advocacy and Policy**
  - Participate in community coalitions
  - Advocate for basic needs & single mothers
  - Raise awareness of cliff effects
Discussion
Family Friendly Campus Toolkit

1. Assemble Task Force
2. Collect Data on Resources; Conduct Rubric for Self-Assessment
3. Collect Data from Institution & Students
4. Analyze Data from All Sources
5. Create an Action Plan
6. Disseminate Results and Advocate for Change

Students with Children

https://www.endicott.edu/family-friendly-campus-toolkit