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Webinar Transcript:

Reaching Youth of Incarcerated Parents and Migrant Workers a SRAE Webinar

August 13, 2020

Connie: Welcome to today's webinar. The objectives for our session today are to summarize some of the characteristics and challenges of underserved populations and their risk. Describe approaches to identify, recruit and engage youth of incarcerated parents and migrant workers. Identify parts of a successful program model to provide sexual risk avoidance education to underserved populations, such as migrant workers children and those with incarcerated parents.

Who are we talking about today? We're talking about youth of incarcerated parents and youth of migrant workers who historically underserved populations. Why are we talking about these youth? They often have the greatest need for pregnancy prevention information, multiple risk behaviors, trauma, neglect, and repeated behavioral problems. How we're going to accomplish these objectives today is through our presenters, Lynette Tannis, who is a faculty member at Harvard, Master of Education School.

Where she developed a program about incarcerated youth. She has been a delegate of education, researching inequalities in education for incarcerated youth across America and in five continents. Our co presenter today is Bill Hancock, co-founder of Faith Bridge Foster Care. He has won several recognitions. The Goulburn National Award for children and family. We also have with us today, two grantees, working for the rich project. Co-executive director, Cathy Tijerina, and Alicia Hernandez. They'll be sharing lessons from the field working with these populations. Thank you.

Bill: Thank you, Connie, for the introduction, and I'm very excited to be here with you today. Thank you for all that you're doing to help raise awareness particularly in the area of sexual health for children and youth. I've spent my entire career working with children and this is one of the most underserved areas. I want to thank you again for being here today. First of all, let me tell you a bit what I want to accomplish in the time that I have today. First, let's take a look at what is an outreach, recruitment and retention of migrant worker youth look like?

So, first, let's begin with a definition. It's easily confused particularly in publications and many of the news articles around the difference between migrant worker youth and immigrant youth. Migrant worker youth fall into a subcategory of immigration and particularly immigrants. And when this subcategory is defined by some very unique characteristics. So, let's first come to working on a definition. Migrant farm worker of the parents of many of the children we serve, these are individuals whose principal employment least 51% of the time is in agriculture on a seasonal basis who have been so employed within the last 24 months.



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The use of these families, one of the best definitions we have to work with and most consistent across the literature is really found in the US Department of Education Title 1 Part C and Part A. And they define migrant child and the term migratory child means a child who is or whose parent or spouse is a migratory agricultural worker. Including a migratory dairy worker or a migratory fisher or who in the preceding 36 months in order to obtain or occupy such a companion with such parent or spouse in order to obtain temporary seasonal employment in the agricultural and fishing work.

The consistent factor you can say with this population is the fact that they are transient and they move frequently on average about every four months and typically follow a circuit. We'll look at that in a moment. Some of the other characteristics is they work to help support the family. Many of the youth we serve, they're doing it because they want to help family. Many times, the way that they migrant workers can increase their income is to have their children working with them in the field. Some of the other characteristics is they have language barriers to overcome and there have limited resources that are strategically designed for this subcategory.

Let's look at moment at their migration pattern. I spent most of my time in the southeast region of the US and I'm most familiar with the migration pattern from Florida up to North Carolina, Michigan, and back. These families and youth follow the seasons as they work in Florida with the citrus, sugarcane, tomatoes, peppers, watermelons. And then about this time as we move into the fall, they'll pack up in the north right around once they've started back into school. Once they're into school and almost settled, it's time for them to leave and follow the work. And they'll move most to next to North Carolina, where they're working to work, the blueberries, sweet potatoes, tomatoes and apples. And, then ultimately up to Michigan where apples, blueberries, onions and watermelons. And then after completion, they'll make their way back to Florida once that season passes as well.

One of the best numbers that's most consistent for this population is really against the Department of Education who has identified at least 302,000 children and youth who are eligible for migrant education services in the States for 2016-2017 school year. According to the recent data for Department of Education. Of those, there's about 28,000 that are out of school. The migrant status of women and children also define some of the unique characteristics of those kids who are migrant workers. They are particularly vulnerable. We'll look even more of those details on the other slide. But one of the points I want to make here is that one study found that only 42% of female migrant farm worker sought prenatal care in the first trimester of pregnancy. Compared with 76% overall. One study found that 66% of migrant farm children migrate with their parents every year.

Youth of migrant workers unique challenges. Migrant farm worker are often an invisible population. That's one of the great challenges of reaching this population is, where are they? Many times, they're isolated in rural areas living in farm workers housing, oftentimes located miles off main roads. 57% of all migrant farm worker live apart from their nuclear family members, and which continues to further intensify this isolation so



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they're not connected in the community in any intentional way. And too to many of them are also isolated from their family. Another challenge is the barrier to education as children move from school system to school system with the growing season. The logistics are a great challenge as they move across system. Systems have different record keeping processes. They have different outreach strategies. But one of the things that is consistent is they have resources. And they are federally mandated through Department of Education, Title 1 to serve this population. As well as other state and federal entities like Department of Education, Department of Children and Family Services and the Department of Community Health.

So, the logistics is a main barrier. And focusing on trying to create ways where children can more seamlessly transition across school districts, across state lines as they move with the seasons. Or with their family for work is one of the greatest challenges for reaching this population. I'll return in a moment and talk more specifically how we can potentially overcome some of these challenges and barriers in a moment. But now, I'm going to toss the presentation over to Lynette.

Lynette: Awesome, thank you so much, Bill. So good afternoon to everyone. We want to sort of test your knowledge on what you know about children with incarcerated parents. So, as you can see on this screen there are five sets of numbers. And so, I just want to ask you to first think about what might these numbers represent? And then I'll give you maybe about 30 seconds if you could just sort of start typing in the chat. For any of these numbers, what do you think any of these numbers represent? So, I'm just going to kind of pause, give you about 30 seconds, and then we'll dive into what these numbers actually represent when you think about children of incarcerated parents here within the United States. Teacher in me is always still wanting to be allow that appropriate wait time. I don't see anything yet in the comments. But we still have about 12 more seconds.

Meghan: Just as a reminder, you can use the chat box and select all panelists to send your response to or you can always leave your response in the Q & A box, either or.

Lynette: Thank you Megan. All right, so I don't see anything yet, but I'll go ahead and jump in. Okay, there we go, I do see something. All right, so that first a number which is 5 million. Someone actually I see did type, first number is children, second number is people incarcerated. Okay, so we know the sort of topic about someone's said maybe the hours of work. So, let me just go ahead and share. So, based on a report that was done by the Annie Casey Foundation, more than 5 million children under the age of 18 have experienced parental incarceration at some point in time in their lives. So that sort of that 5 million piece over sort of a course of their lives that someone under 18 would have experienced.

The 1.7 million actually is the number like currently it's estimated that 1.7 million children are at this time like currently have an incarcerated parent. And so also something to keep in mind. Let's see if there's anything else. Okay, I'll just continue on. And again, so there's one comment about migrant workers. I just want to share that these specific



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stats are regarding children of incarcerated parents. The 53 actually represents a percentage. Part of the, I would say the unfortunate thing in these spaces, typically in carceral settings, there's not a lot of consistent research or data sets that are provided. But the Bureau of Justice Statistics in 2010 provided a report that it's estimated 53% of the incarcerated population were parents. So just something to keep in mind.

The 13 is also a percentage. I don't see anything for that. But based on a study that was done by the Annie Casey Foundation in 2016, it's actually a policy report that they put out. The title of it is "A Shared Sentence: The Devastating Toll of Parental Incarceration on Kids, Families and Communities." And we actually have the reference here in the slide for you, because they provide a scope of looking at all of the states. What percentage of the population are actual parents who are incarcerated? And so this 13% actually represents the state of Kentucky, they had the highest percentage.

States like New Jersey actually had the lowest percentage, there's sort of a range of 3% to the low, all the way to 13% to the high. So again, if it's something that you're interested in it's definitely worth checking out that resource later on. And then lastly, six. There's sort of a time next to this six. I'll just go ahead and share, I don't see any comments. But I believe your brain, sort of the neurons are going wild in your brains now. So, in terms of the six, children with parents in prison are six times more likely to be incarcerated.

That's actually a statistic recent in 2020, that was provided. And so, I share that with you, obviously it's important that we know the data, right? So that we can at least think about how we can approach what we do in a positive way to have a positive impact on these populations. The stats that I just shared with you, they're also here for you as your reference. So please feel free to check them out especially if there is something that you're sort of interested in and want to kind of delve deeper.

Connie: Lynette I just want to, I'm sorry to interrupt. I just wanted to tell you folks are using the chat feature. And you did get a lot of responses there. And folks were tracking nicely with the answers. On the drop-down menu, if you'll scroll down, select everyone, then the presenters, panelists, and everyone will be able to see those responses for better engagement. But thank you for your answers, I wish you could have seen them, Lynette.

Lynette: Okay, awesome, awesome. All right, thank you, Connie. I was starting to I was wondering, but it's like, all right, I know the participants are there. So, all right, cool. Actually, am going to be curious to kind of go back and see those and see how well they align. But, again, hopefully to the extent that you are already familiar with this population, perhaps this is just a reminder of the statistics. For those of you sort of new and exploring this population, my hope is that you heard at least something that further triggers something within you to either further investigate or again also to serve as a resource for this population.



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On this slide, again, just shows the data point for the report that I shared with you. The policy report that came out of the Annie Casey Foundation. So again, the link is there, please feel free to check that out. So, something that I think is important for you to know. Again, this is based on the National Institute of Justice that children of incarcerated parents they do face profound, complex threats to their emotional, their physical, their educational and their financial well-being. It is a traumatic experience. I think it's really important that everyone recognizing how traumatic it can be.

The research shows that it does often lead to depression, to PTSD or post-traumatic stress disorders. There are other mental health needs also that end up existing. And in terms of the financial impact when you think about it, if that parent was the sort of breadwinner, as sometimes the term it's termed. Just think about the financial impact that that then has on the family. And so, again, just important for us to understand the impacts that happen for children of incarcerated parents.

Additionally, just a couple other points that I think are really, really important for you to know is these are just some of the ways in which having parents who are incarcerated negatively impact the youth. So, there's one terminology maybe some of you are familiar with this, it's sort of living in two worlds. Some may say maybe they're even living in three worlds for some youth. They want to like keep it to themselves. There's a story of a young man who, at the age of he was a year and a half old, and his father actually murdered his mother.

So, he was without his mother because she died and was without his father because his father was serving 40 years for the crime he committed. And so, he recalls even as a kindergartener, when it was time to make Mother's Day cards or Father's Day cards, he would make two sets. And his classmates, do figure five years old typically in a kindergarten class we're like, why are you making two cards? And, he didn't go into any detail, but he was actually making them for two sets of his grandparents because that's who he spent time with. He recognized even as a five-year-old, he did not want his classmates to know what happened to his mother and where his father was.

And so, you kind of have that where they are trying to, like, go to school, do the right thing or what they believe is like how people want to perceive them or feel like they should be perceived. But then the other world is trying to at least have these interactions with the incarcerated parent on very brief phone calls unfortunately, that happen that are also extremely costly. Or even if they have the opportunity to visit, I think it's also really important that many of you know some parents are thousands of miles away, if not hundreds of miles, some are thousands of miles away. So, there's also that cost factor, travel, all of that. And even through all of that oftentimes, it's just a one hour visit and hopefully they do get a chance and there's not a lock down or anything else that occurred that day, it's just a one-hour visit. And sometimes it's behind the glass.

So, it's not even like, we can reach out and sort of hug and hold one another. And so, they're sort of like juggling those two worlds. In some places, many of the adults don't



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know what's happening with them. And they kind of rather to keep it that way not even realizing that that's further sort of hampering any particular progress that could be made if they perhaps did have counseling or other support. And so unfortunately, that does lead them to struggling in school. There is the work I'm not sure if you're familiar with but a book called "Bandwidth Recovery", which talks about children who have consistent sort of traumatic experiences, it's almost like a bandwidth and many of you especially in this virtual world have perhaps experienced that. If the bandwidth is low, sometimes it's just too much stress on the system. Okay, we got a power down or maybe I won't use my video, I'll just use the audio. It's in the same way when children continue to experience these traumatic events.

And a lot of times, children with incarcerated parents is almost the same kind of trauma they experience if their parents were divorced, or if a parent passed away. And so, there is trauma that's there. And having that is kind of like further impedes on their bandwidth. And so, people like you, organizations, those who are there to support really do provide extra resources needed so that we can sort of free up that bandwidth. So that they can live and be free and learn and do all those other wonderful things. So that's also something to keep in mind. Again, they do lack the needed support just because many people don't really know what's happening. And so, there is no, especially many of them, children aren't really sure how to navigate this world. Don't even know how to ask for whatever resources that might be helpful to them.

There are some incarcerated youth who kind of as they got older realize, wow, I wish someone even forced me to have a therapy session or counseling or that there was someone from the outside providing resources to me. So, something else to keep in mind. And then just lastly, just in terms of increased risky behaviors. So, again, along the lines, even with the trauma, it's just important to understand that many times the symptoms they go, like, largely unrecognized. And this comes from the National Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children.

And what ends up happening is, the child is trying to deal with this traumatic event. And so, it kind of shows up, they are getting involved in like acting out or there's just like having trouble concentrating, following directions, things like that. And so sometimes you might not even realize what's happening unless you truly know what's going on. But according to researchers back in 2007, it was shown that significant trauma definitely is a predictor of delinquency, and involvement in sort of health, risky sexual behaviors. So that's also something to keep in mind. Again, important topic for this population that you all will be serving. And so, I look forward, of course, as we continue this conversation, to be able to share some strategies but at least wanted to provide you with the context for this population.

Connie: Thank you so much for that good information, Lynette. I wanted to tell you that there are some participants having conversation in the chat box. There's mention of imagine a community or a neighborhood where there are several incarcerated parents that said that the impact may be greater than what we think. Douglas says that



incarceration is baggage that some children can't unpack until much later in life. And just as you said, those maladaptive high-risk behaviors for that population.

So, if you would in the chat box, we just like to see, what underserved youth populations are you serving? So, if you would just take this time to drop those in the chat box and let us know. We're going to give just a few minutes for that to take place. And Megan may give some direction on that to those that may still be struggling with that feature. But go ahead and type in, what underserved youth populations are you serving?

Okay, it looks like we have some folks. Justice impact youth, youth in detention centers. Here's a good point, low income youth. Transitional age foster care youth. Looks like we have folks serving some underserved population. One program says that they're based in the public schools and so they're interacting with youth in that space. We'll talk a little bit more about that. Alternative high schools, group home. Thank you so much for your responses. We'll move to the next question. Okay, good. It looks like several folks are serving these underserved populations.

Meghan, could you advance the slide for me please? Talking about low bandwidth. We have some folks serving Native American youth and reservations. And now in the next question, if you would type your answers in the chat box. We'd like to hear, why is it important to reach these youth? Why has your organization chosen to serve these youth, this population? It looks like most staff are serving through the public school. And then we're hearing that because there aren't leaders, they just haven't been given a voice yet. Important skill building for all youth.

Lynette that speaks to the inequality that you talked about in terms of education. Another grantee says, little or no exposure to healthy relationships and allowing them to see that. Okay, decreased teen pregnancy, to break the cycle of prison.

Meghan: So, I see some additional responses about importance to reach youth to help build stronger families. Because children deserve a voice and they have so much potential. And that they are the most vulnerable. So, the next question we'll ask you to type in the chat box is what are some of the most challenging aspects you've experienced when targeting and serving underserved youth in your community? I see that some of those responses are developing trust and low retention rates. We've had that multiple people submitted low retention rates.

Lynette: Yeah, the trust piece is definitely huge. As you are well aware building those relationships, especially because all that they have encountered.

Meghan: We're seeing some responses about school buy ins and family buy ins, parental buy ins. Okay, thank you guys for all of your responses. We'll keep moving forward with today's presentation.

Connie: If you could take over Lynette, my computer screen is frozen, I apologize. I'm having technical difficulties.



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Lynette: No problem. So, based on what you all have shared so far, and I see continuing to share within the chat, which is awesome. So, thinking about, of course, the needs for these populations. Again, children of migrant workers, children of incarcerated parents. Then of course then it's like, well, in terms of programs, clearly there's a need for programs to have this sort of transformational impact on this population. And so that's what we're going to really get into next. And so, this question that we just kind of posed to you all is designed for a difference? How can we make a difference for these underserved youth populations?

So just in thinking about for those of you who have already perhaps started programming for these populations, is there anything in particular that you've done that you feel like works really well that you can also just share in the chat. So that the other participants or your colleagues can also see what you've done? And then we'll get into some specific examples as well. So, is there anyone who has done anything specific to working with children of migrant workers or children of incarcerated parents to sort of help make a difference working with these underserved populations? Megan, I'm not seeing anything come up. So, I'm not sure if--

Megan: Yeah, I'm not seeing any responses to that specific question just yet.

Lynette: Okay, all right. Okay, so I see now providing consistency, authenticity. Meeting them where they are, giving them a confidence boost when it comes to their hopes and their dreams, also very important. Using justice impacted folks to serve justice impacted youth also very important. Just sort of how can we sort of connect with those who have similar shared experiences as we do? Great, please again, feel free to continue posting your comments. We are going to continue on with what we have prepared. I'll just share this sort of last two comments that just came up off my being an ear to listen.

And that connects with someone earlier just saying like the importance of making sure they have a voice. This population has a voice, so that's awesome. Showing up consistently, very important. And then helping to provide resources for the parents. Again, meeting the youth where they are and meeting the whole needs. And giving genuine empathetic guidance. that's also really, really important in terms of the ownership piece and taking initiative that that self-agency, so to speak. All right, thank you all for sharing. Again, please feel free to continue to share as you feel led, and we'll continue on.

So, this was actually similar to what's been shared. As we thought about this presentation with you all today, there's sort of four main pieces that kind of come to mind and how you can make a difference. And one is definitely building the rapport. Like truly demonstrating. Showing obviously, who you are, if there is a specific story that you have in your own personal space. Or sort of what has brought you into this space is really important. And so, them hearing that and knowing perhaps a glimpse of your story and how it might connect with theirs is really important. Just being able to frame a safe space so that people do feel comfortable. There's trust there, that's also really



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important. And along those lines, that cultivating the trust. As someone commented, just even being consistent. So, if in fact you scheduled to be there Tuesday at 10 o'clock that you're there Tuesday at 10 o'clock or every Thursday or whatever it is. Having that consistency, helps to cultivate that trust that they can rely on you, that's really important.

And just being present, being able to put everything aside and people do know when you are present in the moment. And so, it's really important that you are fully present with them whether it's virtually in the current world we live in or in person. Additionally, and this is where you'll also hear from the other team members and presenters on the call. We've identified sort of these awful sort of four main themes that emerge in terms of how else you can make a difference. And so, I'll just start with the first one which is to collaborate with other youth organizations. I would just say some of the stories especially for those of you specific to the children of incarcerated parents, being able to connect with organizations. One is like the Oklahoma Policy Institute or the Connecticut Children with Incarcerated Parents Initiative.

There are others throughout the United States. Being able to connect with these organizations. Many of the websites even provide either a brief video that actually helps you hear the stories of youth who have been impacted by having a parent who is incarcerated. So just being able to if it's not something you've personally experienced, just to be able to like hear these other stories, helps you one, just it helps you. You are further sort of enlightened. And then also perhaps just even in terms of empathy and just a better understanding of some of the experiences that occur. So just being able to go to some of these sites are helpful to kind of either read the stories that are shared or listen to the videos, that's really helpful.

The other thing is just connecting either with the schools. Sometimes, even the guidance counselor or the social worker, case worker will be able to kind of share this and provide this window for you so that you can help and serve in that way. It could be connecting with parent groups depending on the state. So, within the United States, just even in terms of the juvenile justice system. We have approximately 1500 juvenile facilities, residential facilities, but also like group homes and other things. And in some states that falls under the Department of Health and Human Services or the Children Youth Family Services, but in other states it falls under the Office of Juvenile Justice or the Juvenile Justice Department or the Corrections Department or it's sort of its own district.

And so, in thinking about that, you can reach out to the state agency and just even find out where are the group homes or the types of programs that are there and that could be a way to get involved. Another way is just reaching out to churches or even going through the courts to see how you can be helpful to these populations. And then of course, just other risk avoidance programs. So that would be one way in which to meet this sort of first need of collaborating with other youth organizations.

Connie: And now, we'll hear from another panelist



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Alicia: Hi, my name is Alicia Hernandez. So, I'll be answering this, employs culturally sensitive approach to your recruiting efforts. I myself am a former migrant. Understanding, knowing the ins and outs. As you go and approach the migrant families, be sensitive to their culture as you're going into the family or setup. As you're doing your program, don't expect them to be at their school after school. The best thing is probably to go to them, go to the migrant camps go where they're at. Be sensitive to their surroundings, and the culture. As you go, and you're helping the different things that you that they're needing. I guess the first thing I should say, the immediate concern that the families have served are that they're facing is be the sensitive what's going on with the families before you do anything.

A lot of them are concerned about the food, the shelter, the health care. Take care of those needs before anything and be sensitive to their culture. It is amazing. Once you identify their need and then everything else will follow. And then they'll listen to whatever it is that you have to say for your program. One of the things too what right now what the families are facing. I was out there at the camps yesterday. The fear of harassment of the locals don't want them here. They thinking they're taking their jobs. Lots of fear as where the kids, they want to work. They're just here with their families to work. Nothing else, they're just here to work. They just want to... I'm sorry, I think it came off here.

All the families want the kids all they want to do is just be accepted into the community. And as we are going to these families, these migrant workers, all they want is to be heard. They just want to be accepted in the community. They just want to be accepted as they go from school district to school district. A lot of these kids, some of them have found by the time they come home from south to north, they've gone already to some of them, to 21 school districts before they even go home. And they're dealing with so many things with their peers. Thank you.

Megan: Thank you, Alicia.

Alicia: I can't, I was having trouble, I'm sorry.

Meghan: Okay, and our next presenter for this section, believe I don't know if we have Catherine on. There she is, go ahead, Catherine.

Catherine: Yeah. Thanks Megan, thanks Alicia. I do want to just do a quick follow up on some things that Alicia said, I could see that she was having some technology issues, but I happen to know the work that she does. And so, one of the things she does that's culturally sensitive approach to recruiting is she goes to the kids, she takes a tent, she takes a cooler full of water on their lunch break. Gets the parents, gets the kids shares with what she's going to do, and literally makes it so it fits in their schedule, so that she's not taking them away from things that they normally do in their day.

And that's something that I've seen. And I wanted to share because I think it's important to recognize that sometimes you have to go to where they are. And so, let's talk a little bit about making programs relevant to the population you serve. I'm specifically really



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going to talk about children of incarcerated parents. Because they don't self-identify and it's not like with our migrant youth, we typically are going to find them with this family, we'd find them actually on the farm and doing the work. And so, if we think about how are we going to identify children with incarcerated parents. They don't always just stand out just because a child is struggling in school, doesn't mean they're a child of incarcerated parents. Just because they're acting up or truant, or just because they're a straight A student doesn't mean that they don't have a parent that's in prison. They could be struggling in another way.

And so, you're going to have children that have incarcerated parents. If you serve in public schools or any school, you are going to be serving children of incarcerated parents. The important thing to know is that they will benefit tremendously from an extra infusion of help and hope. That often they get kind of caught up in these cycles of destruction where they're going between shock and denial, anger, grief, and then around they go again. And they don't know what to do with these feelings because we're as a society, not giving them permission to grieve, not giving them permission to share and be accepted.

So, what we decided to do it with our models, and so we're thinking we really want to make it relevant to the children of incarcerated parents in a deeper way to really connect with them. So, we began serving the kids with the incarcerated parents at the jail during the visits. And connecting with them there and then building that bridge back into school and community. And of course, not identifying them as oh, "hey, Bobby, yeah, it was great to see you last week in the prison with your dad." But instead covering and protecting them and then giving them that ally that advocates that they know that not only is Miss Cathy going to be there in the prison, helping my dad, help me with homework and building that family connection. It's just kind of helping bridge those two worlds that Lynette talked about earlier.

We hear that all the time. I'm living my life in two worlds. I have the world here with my dad or my mom in prison, and then I have that outside world and I have to pretend like I'm like everybody else. But that real deep feeling of being a misfit, being discarded and so helping to bridge that. And helping them understand that their parents' mistakes do not define their parents, let alone them. And that even their own mistakes their past doesn't define them. It can actually qualify them for the future. And so, we really help them focus on the future instead of the current situation. And I think that in making it relevant to them, like wow, I'm still Johnny, who wants to play football. I'm not Johnny, the son of Joe, the Dragon Slayer, who's in prison, right?

And so, I think as you think about really reaching the population understanding, first of all, they're going to be in your classes if you're in the school. Second of all, if you want to take it deeper, then for both the populations we're talking about today you need to find ways and inroads to go to them. Whether that's going to the farm and setting up tents, whether that's going to the institutions and requesting that you have opportunities to recruit and to share during visits or set up special family visits. Where you're literally targeting youth of a certain age, 11 - 17 and providing information for the young people



and for the parents. And so, I think that oftentimes, we discard the idea of having specific outreaches to specific demographics. And really overlook incredible opportunities to really throw ourselves in front of somebody, a young person who might otherwise just be marching out the cliff.

And if it's as simple as us going and showing up to where they are and throwing that lifeline and saying, hey, here's a better opportunity for you. You're full of potential. And we've got some information, some skills and some things that you can apply to your life and some resources that will really help you propel your life so that you can reach your dreams. I mean, there's so excited and I'm going to say that both those demographics as we've served them, have been probably the most grateful for the opportunity to realize their dreams, and their potential and understand how to avoid some of the pitfalls that either maybe they fallen in the past or their parents have. And so, I think that those are really important aspects of reaching these demographics. So, thanks, Megan.

Meghan: Thank you, Catherine.

Bill: I want to highlight a couple of things particularly Alicia, and Catherine just mentioned as I respond to use a model that also engages parents and caregivers in the program that you're using, your strategy for outreach. One, first, let me, I'll do three things here to address this. One, the chat box raised three questions I want to respond to that. B, I want to talk about a very practical strategy of how you can identify resources in your community and gain access on behalf of migrant workers families and youth. And then I'll wrap up this part with some very specific activities that can be used across state lines, across cultures. We see some very successful models that are doing outreach, recruitment and retention.

So, we start with the chat box questions first. Alicia, she was absolutely spot on when she talks about going to the camps where our youth and their families or their caregivers where they live, work, they do everything on those camps. And on those children that are still school aged 15 and under who are compelled by compulsory rules to be in school. They are in school, but they are most comfortable when they're with their family. Migrant families are very and we mentioned earlier that they were isolated. There's a detachment that they have with the local community. And their culture is very, very strong promoter of family and community.

And so, the idea that they go to strategy that Alicia was mentioning and Cathy reinforced going to them with. That is where we see across the board, effective connection, and trust building and being present, is to go to them. So first, use a model that has a go to strategy instead of a come to us strategy. That's the first thing. Secondly, when you think about the go to strategy, when you go to them, you begin to immediately connect with the people in that community. And one of the keys to reaching our migrant workers youth is connecting with the family. That is one of the core values of the culture, is family. Many of them are very sacrificial in service to their family. It's why they're working so hard, very long hours and very difficult jobs for little pay. So, families got to be a central part.



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And when you do a go to strategy and you go in, don't lead with a service. Or a transaction, lead with compassion with a sense of care. I would totally agree with Alicia and Cathy here that migrant worker families are some of the most grateful for people coming out and showing compassion and support for them. Than I've experienced in my career working with vulnerable and underserved community. I couldn't highlight that even more as you go out to do your outreach, make it a go to. Secondly, when we talk about access to services like care, different family services, health care needs, educational services and the Internet. To be able to have access to internet, any of those types of services.

First thing, models that are being highly effective they're also using a research approach. They're really doing a simple environmental study of the community where the camp is in proximity located to the school district primarily and to look at what other tax-exempt corporations, nonprofit companies that are in the community, that are providing services that may not be targeted at these underserved populations. They could be goods and services that are available in community that you could be a catalyst for to redirect those goods and services towards this underserved population.

So, you'd be going to them to build the trust and to establish a presence. But also, on their behalf researching the continuum of goods and services being provided by the tax-exempt companies in the community. The study can represent both not up to just the folks that are providing services within the public sector, but also the private and faith-based community sector. I would strongly encourage you to look at three models that have been very effective and that one is Lutheran services. So, look to their model in your community see what they're doing.

Catholic services, Catholic Charities, and also several local Protestant organizations are doing also doing a very good job. They're leading with go to strategies. They're going into communities. They're connecting on basic services and goods that families need. Housing, making sure that they have some extra things in their house. The extra measure that they maybe couldn't or wouldn't choose to purchase. Healthy foods to just provide healthy foods. Being able to go in and make sure that they have access to health care, as well as the educational services are entitled to.

Lastly, let me just say, once you go in and identify the goods and services and where they are. One of the challenges oftentimes is the community has the resources, but they're lacking a tactical strategy to get those services and those goods and services connected to the migrant worker camps and communities. Speaking with Alicia and getting to know her a little bit they're really finding the resources and figuring out ways to get them there. Once you lead with those basic felt needs, and you're helping provide those extra added things.

Coming with the educational piece is something that becomes a very natural. Most of the families I've worked with one thing we all agree on is they want an education for their children. They would like to see them work out of the fields and not have to do generationally what they've done. So, let me just highlight with a couple of slides some



very specific tactical approaches you can use. Use a model that engages parents and caregivers in your efforts.

Once you're identifying goods and services and resources in your community, maybe some of the nonprofits are actually have outreaches, particularly if you're working with some of the school district, the community health, faith-based organizations, they might have some strategies. Partnering with them and community building is very sustainable as you think about how you can continue those services not just for the season, but as they follow the circuit, you can continue to build on those relationships as they return year after year. So, use a model that engages parents.

Parents are key to help motivate and inspire their kids to learn and to grow. And being part of helping them do that is help them through education, help them look at learning English, or maybe organizing things where they would have events where they could actually work towards their GED and high school equivalency. Connect and listen to parents and focus on their strengths. Try to find a strength-based connection that you can share and give them a chance to succeed early. Some early wins with the family will build trust. Encourage parents and talk about their hopes and dreams for the youth as I said earlier. I don't know of any family that would, if you let them just dream and you give them a safe place to sit and just talk about their children's education is something that's very important to them.

Giving them a chance to talk and talk about their children will give them a chance to renew their hope and dream that perhaps their children can get a good education and move forward out of the fields perhaps. Offer information that will help families understand and listen to their youth's behavior. Youth are challenged sometime as they go school district to school district. All the complications and sometimes they fall behind and actually some of the students will even say, I have already studied that. So you can help them listen to their kids with all the momentum and the movement really keeps our youth frustrated with it's not that they don't want to learn oftentimes, they just struggle with social relationships, finding stable peer relationships outside the camps, and connecting in some of the school environments or in some of the social community environments outside of camps.

And so, coming in and bringing in even other organizations that are youth centered and family centered that you can come in and create opportunities for people to connect together. And by doing so, work with parents to listen to their kids' behaviors as they struggle with so many changes consistently. Help parents cope with some of the challenging behaviors. Parents struggle with kids that at times have some challenging behaviors that are out of their frustration. But make sure if you're listening and you're thinking of bringing in services that are specifically behavioral and parentally focused and challenging the parenting styles that you're culturally sensitive to discipline and communication.

And that's why I would say really connect with community organizations that have bilingual workers. That can come in and work and perhaps they have some resources



that you can partner with in order to build those relationships. Help parents understand the impact of traumatic stress on themselves and their youth. They live a very challenging lifestyle. It's hard work. Stability is a challenge to find. And some of the conditions they find themselves in puts a lot of stress on the family. So, look at how you can help maybe relieve some of those pressures, just the physical environment that they're working and living and eating in.

Talk about the youth's needs and concerns that you can help with outside of your subject matter expertise and SRAE. But look at other ways that you can partner with others to bring in so that you can provide an array of services which would include SRAE as part of a comprehensive model program approach to reaching and recruiting and retaining this group. And with that, I'm going to turn this back over to Connie.

Connie: Thank you, Bill. This time, we're going to open it up for panel discussion. And we're going to talk about additional strategies. I again would apologize for the technical difficulty, I keep having some freezing up. So, I may ask Bill or Lynette to jump in and provide support if they would please.

Bill: Happy to help, Connie.

Connie: Thank you. All right, Bill, I think we have this time set aside to ask questions. So, if we could take some questions at this point, we'll have some panel discussion. You have some experts in front of you that have worked in this space and we wanted to include some time for discussion. So, I would leave this time open for questions from participants or if the presenters have additional information around strategies that they would like to share. We'll just use this time to engage actively around strategies to serve this very important underserved population.

Bill: That's an excellent idea.

Meghan: So as a reminder, feel free to submit your questions either using that chat box to all panelists or in the Q & A box. Also, I believe that we have we still have a Alicia and Catherine out there, they are. So, we have their knowledge and expertise here today, too. We did get one question it says, what geographic zones would you say are most hit in the United States?

Bill: Well, I'll jump in on and Cathy and Alicia, please add to this. But all 50 states have some migrant seasonal work. But the top states that are impacted the most is the West Coast California, we see heavy population there. Border states are Texas and the South East, Northeast circuit that I mentioned earlier. But whatever state you're in, you will have a percentage of migrant workers. Because keep in mind that they may be not just working in the agricultural but maybe fishery. And then you also may find some that are working in meat processing as well.

Lynette: I hope I'm unmuted, okay. And I would just add to that, in terms of the incarcerated parents it's sort of mixed but a lot in the Midwest region. So again, just kind



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of going back to that policy report that the Anne Casey Foundation put together. Some of the top states, as I mentioned earlier, as Kentucky 13% of the population are incarcerated parents. Other states like Alaska, New Mexico, Indiana, Tennessee, Ohio, Oklahoma, those states are 10 and 11%. And so those would be the highest.

Bill: I would add one resource to that. You could go to the Department of Labor, US Department of Labor. They have a geographical National Map there that you can find your state and you can drill down on that state. And you'll be able to see what the agricultural industries are, what the population that's serving there. I will tell you that much of that data is really dated. But it's at least a starting point that you can use so that you can get an idea of what the industry looks like in your state.

Meghan: I've had a question in the chat box that is geared specifically towards Cathy, if Cathy is still on. The question is how does a grantee who is brand new to servicing the population of youth of incarcerated parents. Where's the starting point? How did they begin to access those youth outside of the school?

Catherine: That's a great question. And so, I would look around in your community and whatever your geographic areas, whatever counties you serve. And see if there are county jails, correctional treatment facilities, prisons. Anything like that this is actually connected to the prison system and reach out to them. Almost all now, thankfully, 30 years ago, family reunification was not a priority for reentry. As people went into prison, but now it is. Almost every state has in one of their objectives is that part of the reunification part of the imprisonment is that we're going to try to reunify the family and connect the family because they know that that reduces recidivism.

So most of the time, those institutions are really glad to hear from somebody that can offer programming this design and help stabilize the family in ways that they're not addressing. So, I would start there by which nothing happens. It's really great positive youth development program. That is risk avoidance education. And we'd really like to access the young people on your residence and I'd like to discuss with you how that can happen. I think that's a great first step.

Bill: And I would just say if you're wanting to target youth of migrant workers, one of the groups that particularly if you've going to move outside of the school setting, is contact your local department Children and Family Services and get a good sense. They know where those camps are, they know where the children that may be at risk of neglect. And may have to have some type of intervention and family stabilization. And if that's the case, if you go and share that you have connection and resources to help, they're often very welcoming to have someone that's particularly local that willing to be part of a solution that you can be part of. And there again, and they're very engaged in outreach to the kids. So, there's a very natural way to be engaged in the migrant camps.

Meghan: A follow up question to the question for Cathy is along the line of helping address the family needs, what type of family support or family engagement do you get

for the youth of incarcerated parents? How would we target the youth that are engaged for the parents of the youth for engagement?

Catherine: That's another really great question. We have found that the parents are so hungry because they're experiencing this pain, they don't want to see their kids experienced the same thing. They're not really sure how-to kind of cut that off. And so, having resources again, we do classes with the parents, are actually engaged and involved. We do core communication classes for the parental involvement, so that they really can understand how to communicate effectively in a healthy way with their teenagers especially. But also, with young children.

We also have provided in the past that we do these, like family activities around the learning objective. And so, we've engaged the entire family in something that is, appears to initially be kind of fun. Because it's an opportunity for them to get together, maybe play a game. But then we have different topics so they have in a jar kind of topics to pull out and kind of talk about. And so, the parents then have access to resources that help them become a better parent like poor communication. They can go through the entire youth program with their child, with their teen in a prison visit and setting.

We also then have separate programs that we adjust the needs specifically of the parents to job skills, placement. And a network that we have a referral for whether it's housing, food, whatever other needs. Because if we don't address some of those other social needs, then it's really hard for anybody to learn anything new, if they're hungry, and they're homeless. And they're stressed about losing a job. So, we do the best we can to help. If we can't address those extra needs, then we make referrals around those things. And then we provide that supportive system for them to be better parents and help them parents their children. I hope I answered your question.

Connie: Yes, we have several--

Lynette: And Cathy, oh, I'm sorry, Connie. I was just going to add further add to what Cathy shared. Yeah, so Cathy, I appreciate you sharing that. And even as you were saying that I was also just reminded of when I would spend time in like Union County Jail in Elizabeth, New Jersey or Delaney Hall in New York with the women who really were very concerned about their children. And, I think one is, even kind of seeing that avenue of either going to or inquiring about either within a church. I know we can about sort of churches involvement earlier. But whether it is like a prison ministry team or something like that, that can kind of have this other outreach or like how we can now support the children of those parents who are incarcerated.

And then as you were talking, I also thought about organizations like Angel Tree, for anyone who may not be aware. There's this overall sort of prison fellowship for children of incarcerated parents who they then provide the sort of like extra sort of emotional support, actual physical support, spiritual support. So there are definitely some organizations. But sometimes it might actually take starting with the adults, the parents



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who are incarcerated. And then again, building that trust and being able to share what it is that you have to offer for their children.

Catherine: Yeah, great input, Lynette.

Connie: That is fantastic. And that's right, where I was going with the next question. Just to extend upon that with some of the questions that we're getting better around very practical ways to access resources. Now Lynette, I just heard you mentioned a resource. And then Cathy mentioned a resource. So, folks are really wanting to know where they can access those resources. There's also a question about, is anyone familiar with a resource to help a nonprofit learn Spanish if they're going to target a population? So, does the panel have any response to those questions?

Catherine: Well, I would say this. First of all, absolutely. You want to learn the language the best you can. But you're going to have the outcome by hiring somebody who is fluent already in that language.

Connie: Great tip. And then Lynette, can you share the resource that you mentioned Angel? I didn't catch the rest of that.

Lynette: Yes, so I actually just put it in the chat. I put it to all attendees. I'm not sure if that's the correct sort of chat box. I put all attendees. Hopefully that's the case. If not, I'll just click to all panelists. I put it in there as the website. And I would just say just even doing a search or just programs for children of incarcerated parents. Just kind of even just putting that into your Google search or Yahoo search or AOL, whatever search engine, you use. Bing, whatever your search engine, you can just put in, programs for children of incarcerated parents. That could be one way in which you kind of come across those. But also, as was mentioned earlier, just sometimes just in reaching out to sort of the health and human services agencies or just going to their websites.

It will take some phone conversations as Bill kind of said earlier. Unfortunately, a lot of data in these spaces is sort of not up to date as we would like, as one would hope when one needs. Some of these programs unless they've been around for a while, it's possible that you might not know about something that could be happening even just a few blocks down from you. And so, until there's this sort of like, what works clearinghouse for this population, part of it is like, yeah, you're going to just have to do the sort of due diligence, the homework to make this happen. But as you start to kind of find out things just even phone calls into local churches, organizations, synagogues, and anywhere and just ask them, are they involved with prison ministries?

And that could also just be an avenue where they're learning a bit more about you, the programs you have to offer. And again, a huge piece of this is building relationships. So, if in fact, you are someone who comes across as authentic, with a product, a process, a program, that you can demonstrate how this can benefit others. People will want to tap into that resource. And so, part of that is just making sure how you present yourself is in



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a way that's like you're basically selling yourself. And like, oh, yeah, we need and this is free, absolutely, let's go for it.

So that's the one piece. But the other piece is, of course, making sure that maybe you call up make sure that that program is still around and just making yourself known. You're trying to get to know the organizations as much as you want them to know you. That's really how the partnership starts. So again, part of it is just kind of doing a search. Others is actually just following up with a phone call to see how you can get involved.

Connie: We have another question that Bill, I think might be one that you would field is, now that you've stimulated the conversation about partnerships within the communities and we've talked about resources. And I received the question in the chat box about scaling. That you reach out to community partners and you begin to have those conversations, how do you scale? Can you give quick tips where grantees have been scaled to meet that need?

Bill: Yes, boy, what a great question. And thanks for asking that one. The key to scalability is thinking systemically think systems, not products and programs solely. But know your product, know your program, know your value. Then know your community's continuum of care. Figure out where you fit in there and where your strengths in that system are. Know what you deliver, and then understand the current system. And that's just doing as Lynette has said, a simple internet search on outreach to migrant workers children youth. And you can put in your state and county and you will find what's there. And reaching out again to the Department of Education, reaching out Department of Community Health and reaching out to department of Children Family Services. They are key, they have local data, that could be very helpful. But more importantly, that's an opportunity for you to build peer to peer relationships within the service delivery system, and be able to advocate for the population and your services at the same time and the impact there.

The last thing I would say about that is build relationships, build relationships, build relationships, go everywhere you can where these key stakeholders gather and talk about their community, the county level you're in. And know that you're part of a community system of care and begin to think systemically, how do I fit in that space? What is our space, and how do we add value to all the other caregivers, and service providers, and SRAE are very unique? And what you bring is unique and it's needed. And I love the Lynette's part on it, and it's free. So, you're able to bring it in. And you're like we're funded, we just want to bring this in. We just want to be part of serving this community. So those two things, do your research. Think systemically, build relationships.

Connie: Another question we have before I open it up, again, to just say general questions, if any grantees have those please drop those in the chat box or the Q & A. Again, I received another one privately here that is around one of the bullet points about respecting the culture and physical context, not just migrant families but all underserved populations that you serve. So is there a panelist that could speak to that. What are



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some good tips for really respecting the culture and learning about that from a relational sense?

Lynette: So, I'll just jump in real quick. I would just say, especially if it's a population that you're serving, that you really have no knowledge about all you know perhaps is like, in your heart, you want to serve as population. That's necessary, that's very important. But if you don't really know much about that population, just being able, again, especially now, with the internet and just having so many resources.

There's so many even just short videos, you can just listen in to the stories of these populations so that you just have a sense. Again, it's very important that we don't make assumptions that like every person of color thinks this way, talks this way. That is how they experience it in the same way of like, oh, well, they're from Oklahoma this must be their experience. It's important that we don't box anyone in kind of check our own sort of biases implicitly or not.

But I would say one way is just to see how you can just again, read some articles about this particular population, these populations. The more stories you can learn before you enter will be helpful so that you don't end up sort of like tripping up yourself, just because it's just something you've never experienced before. Your intentions may be genuine and pure. But if your actions don't match, it's going to be a stumbling block, and it's hard. You can always recover from a stumble but it's really hard if you don't set the right foundation upfront. Those are sort of my two cents on that.

Bill: Can I add just one thing to that, Connie? That is so profound, the idea that we come in to the community as a learner and you start doing the search and your due diligence. Just around knowing who are the stakeholders? Who are the people that are engaged in that population you want to serve? Knowing who they are, and then identifying. And then going to them, and listening, ask great questions. Go with them with a list of questions to learn about how they're serving the population, how they're reaching them. Some of the challenges, some of the questions were actually raised here. Go ask them how they are, what are some of the challenges, what are some of the barriers.

And by listening, you're learning but also as you become a citizen researcher, and you're really authentic in wanting to understand. That lends a lot of credibility to people who are working with that population. You gain a lot of trust, just by coming in and showing a genuine interest in what they're doing. And that also promotes good relations. And I just saw someone post relationship building is key on all levels across the spectrum of services. It is absolutely the key, start with relationships, be a learner. Don't loosen to the heart, the mission and vision of your organization and what you bring in value.

Connie: I would tag on to that Bill. If Alicia is still with us. I know she was having some technological difficulty, as was I in being able to communicate that I've heard Alicia talk about going to where the migrant workers are and engaging with them socially, first to



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build trust and relationship before bringing the program in. I've heard her talk about bringing bottled water and different things like that to engage from a relationship standpoint first. And so that's a great strategy and then making those connections that way being a learner within that community. Did I get that right, Alicia?

Alicia: Yeah, absolutely. You got to understand and sit and eat with them. And also, go to the dad, hey, is it okay? Who's the boss there? If it's grandma or dad, get some lessons and go from there.

Connie: And that's a very important point as we're dealing with youth. There's always getting those appropriate permissions and making sure that access is with parental consent. So that's good. We have just a moment or two left if folks would go ahead and like to continue to ask questions. Panelists, I would just thank you for your willingness to have an open forum like this so that folks can get their questions answered. I think this is valuable networking time with experts.

Cathy, this question is geared more towards you but I would say that any of the panelists could answer. And I suspected we might get this one given the current situation that we're in with COVID-19. There's a private question in the private chat here. How do we access during this virtual environment and particularly with migrant workers that may not be making the move across the country geographically? How do we access virtually?

Catherine: That's a great question. So, Alicia, primarily works with the migrant workers. But I can talk a little bit about technology, and especially the fact that the gap is getting larger because of the technology. So, before it was like, everybody was going to school and so there was still the gap. But now, it's been exasperated by the lack of technology and internet access. So, for children of incarcerated parents, we're using the technology to the institutions to reach out to the parents and let the incarcerated parent know, hey, we've got all these resources that can really help your son, your daughter throughout this. And then we're connecting with private foundations and donors, corporations. So, if we have 10 dads and seven moms that say, hey, I really want and my child would be very interested in connecting but they don't have internet access or they don't have a computer and don't have any way to access.

We first say, okay, what school district are they in? We check and see, okay, this is the school district, is somebody doing something there to get them this technology? If not, then we say okay, let's reach out to one of our donors and say, hey, you know what, we need a hotspot, we need a computer, we need a prepaid hotspot for next six months. And that way we can get this child engaged in learning even though that they don't really have the necessary equipment on their own and they're not in school. Those are resources and things that we've done. As far as the migrant community, they're out there. I mean, at least here at the camp, COVID is not locking them down. These kids, these families are there. So, Alicia you want to talk about whether you've had to change anything with COVID in reaching the families.



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Alicia: Here in Ohio, we have the Ohio Migrant Education. So, we collaborate with the recruiters and they're providing the hotspot the internet for them. So, we're making it happen.

Connie: Thank you so much for sharing, we are out of time. And we would say thank you to all the participants that stuck with us through a few of the technological glitches that we had. I'm sure you don't have that in your programs as you're trying to implement virtually. Seems to be the new world but we really appreciate you participating. And I just want to say thank you, again to our presenters and our grantees that shared so openly about their programs and gave tips and strategies. We hope you found it valuable. There will be the post webinar survey we would encourage you to complete that. Here is the contact information for the presenters and again, we thank you. Any closing words Megan?

Meghan: No, Connie, I think you covered everything. Again, just a thank you to our presenters. And thank you all to our attendees for hanging in there with us today. We hope you got some great content out of this webinar. And we look forward to talking to you soon. Hope you have a great rest of your day. Thank you, guys.