

PropelNext In Action

New Model Helps New Pathways Reach Twice as Many Youth

Work with foster youth can be both rewarding and heartbreaking for adults who help them transition to adulthood without traditional family supports. Then there are the challenges of running organizations tasked with that important work. When Mark Mittelman became Executive Director of New Pathways in 2008, the organization was facing a few trials of its own. New Pathways provided residential, independent living programs for young people in foster care. The programs were valuable, but they served a limited num-

ber of clients and Mittelman wanted to do more to instill self-sufficiency among the youth. "When I got the call from EMCF about PropelNext, I knew it could help us move down that road," he said.

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***- Mark Mittelman
Executive Director,
New Pathways***



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Mittelman and the New Pathways team used the PropelNext opportunity to take apart their program, analyze each component and put it back together differently, finding ways to use resources more effectively and dramatically improve their impact.

The existing residential program was staff intensive, but much of that time was spent monitoring the young people. "One thing became crystal clear—all that checking and monitoring wasn't going to help them become independent adults," said Mittelman.

The New Pathways team realized that in order to develop self-sufficiency they needed to focus on job training and education so that young people could support themselves. They downsized the checking and monitoring program and redeployed the money to build a workforce and career development department.

In addition to their case management and life skills departments, New Pathways now has a director of career development and a team that includes career coaches who work one-on-one with students and a pre-employment trainer.

The shift away from checking and monitoring catalyzed other changes. The career readiness programs would be a boon to youth in the community, not just those in residential programs. New Pathways now serves youth ages 16 to 24 who live in the community. The organization has doubled the number of youth served from 150 to 300.

The redesign also made the organization financially stronger. Maryland's foster care services are now targeting a smaller population of young people who face the greatest challenges. The result is a shrinking population eligible for New Pathways' traditional foster care program. While New Pathways continues to work

with foster youth, it has also found a larger pool of young people to work with and this has opened access to new funding streams.

The transformation is continuing. With the support from PropelNext, New Pathways significantly upgraded its data and outcome measurement system. Staff can now better refine and improve the programming they offer to the youth and young adults they serve. They have found that change is an ongoing process. "The more time we put in to honing our craft, the better off we are. Our quality assurance is light years ahead of where it was before PropelNext," said Mittelman.

IMPACTS

Changed model

TO OPEN UP OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPANDED FUNDING STREAMS

INCREASED NUMBER OF YOUTH SERVED BY

100%

NEW PATHWAYS
National 2015 Cohort
newpathways.org