

NWX-OS-OGC-RKVL (US)

Moderator: Deborah Rose
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1:00 pm CT

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time all participants will be in a listen-only mode. After the presentation we will conduct a question and answer session. To ask a question at that time, please press star 1.

Today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections you may disconnect at this time.

I would now like to turn the meeting over to Mr. Isaac Castillo. You may begin.

Isaac Castillo: Thank you very much and welcome to everyone to this Office of Adolescent Health Webinar, Getting Them to Come Back - Strategies for Retaining and Engaging Participants.

I hope everyone has had a good day up to this point and hopefully we can provide you with some good information and really peak your interest and give you some real word advice on retention strategies for the populations that you're serving.

Now before we start the Webinar itself, I actually wanted to also point everyone to the top upper left tab in gray that says Q&A at the very top.

We are going to be taking questions at the end as you heard from the moderator. And when those - when that time arrives, you can hit star 1. But you can also use this Q&A tab to type questions to us and hopefully I'll be able to implement or include these questions within the flow and the content of the Webinar or the presentation and to address them to some of the speakers as they are appropriate.

So again, it's the Q&A tab that's at the top left-hand side of your screen.

Now let me introduce really briefly the presenters for the Webinar today. There are five total and the first three presenters you're going to see here up on your screen are all from an organization called Child Trends here in Washington, DC.

The first is Selma Caal. Selma Caal is a Research Scientist at Child Trends, and she's a Developmental Psychologist with extensive experience working with minority youth and families in research and program implementation across the nation.

We also have Brigitte Vaughn. Brigitte is a Project Director for the Office of Adolescent Health Website and Communications Contract. She manages the Twitter accounts for both Child Trends and the Office of Adolescent Health, and specializes in the communication of health research and information. And Brigitte is a Senior Research and Policy Analyst at Child Trends.

Finally myself, I am Isaac Castillo. I am a Senior Research Scientist with Child Trends and I have over 15 years of experience in using data and

outcomes to improve program's quality and program services across a variety of different non-profit settings.

So now that you know who we are, let's talk a little bit today about the Webinar itself and what we're hoping to achieve.

We think we have three primary Webinar objectives today. The first is we're going to provide you with tips and strategies to retain and engage program participants according to adolescent age, setting, and target population.

The second objective is to provide an understanding of real-time monitoring and how to effectively apply this practice to improve retention.

And finally our last objective is to really provide you with ideas for how programs can use texting, Facebook, Twitter, and Foursquare to improve retention in adolescent engagement.

And don't worry, if you don't know what those four concepts are or those four applications are we're going to give you a good brief introduction into each of those things and provide you with some guidance on how you can use them to improve retention among your populations.

I also, before we got into the content - the actual content of the Webinar wanted to talk a little bit about where we got this information and where we're drawing this knowledge from, and it's really three primary sources.

The first, other than our own expertise, the first real source of information is we conducted a review of evaluations of various types of youth programs with different types of populations and different target populations.

So we really looked at what research has been done out there on retention strategies for a variety of youth programs in a variety of different settings.

We also are counting on or utilizing preliminary findings from six focus groups that were conducted with Latino youths between the ages of 15 and 17.

And finally we had discussions with select OAH grantees to really pick their brains on what is working in terms of retention at the local levels or in their own programming settings.

And really to kind of emphasize that point I also wanted to at this point bring in our two guest speakers; our two guest grantees who are also going to provide a lot of good, on the ground knowledge of their work in retention.

And I wanted to briefly introduce both of them at this time and have them talk about their work and their organizations. And throughout the Webinar I'm going to bring them in for discussion and questions as we highlight certain concepts in this retention discussion.

So I'd like to first introduce Dr. Suzanne Markoe Hayes who is with Volunteers of America in Greater Los Angeles. Suzanne if I can bring you in now to provide your brief introduction.

Suzanne Markoe Hayes: Sure. I am the VOLA Internal Evaluator. And one of our programs, Girls, Inc. is a part of the study.

We are implementing an after school program one day a week at the site of the school, one and a half hours a week. For middle school we work with sixth and seventh grade girls, and in high school we work with ninth and tenth grade girls.

All of our schools are in the Greater Los Angeles area and are Title I schools.

Isaac Castillo: Great, thank you very much Suzanne. And next I'd like to bring Danette McLaurin Glass who is from More than Conquerors, Inc. Danette...

Danette McLaurin Glass: Thanks Isaac. We're happy to share with you all today. As Isaac stated, I serve as a recruiter for the CHAMPS Project.

The CHAMPS Project is facilitated as an urban school based program primarily in the City of Atlanta. More than Conquerors, Inc. is the agency that offers the CHAMPS Project. It's a non-profit, positive youth development health education agency that serves the State of Georgia.

MTCI primarily partners with school districts, juvenile justice agency, foster care facilities, and a host of other community based agencies.

As a youth development model the CHAMPS Project primarily serves the target population of high school youth. Strategically identify - we strategically identify schools with high multiple risk factors including poverty, delinquency, truancy, violence, illiteracy, and high adolescent rates.

The program is offered on a weekly basis throughout the entire school year, so we have to have contact hours each week with the young people from August through May.

Isaac Castillo: Great, thank you very much Danette. And we're going to be hearing a lot more from Suzanne and Danette throughout the entirety of the Webinar.

I want to transition next into some really brief discussion about why retention is important, and really why we're focusing on retention with this Webinar. And I think there are two primary concepts we want to focus on, on why retention is important.

The first of these is having a viable participant retention strategy or plan is a key component of any program. It's simply not enough to hope that your participants will come back or assume that they're always going to come back, but there really needs to be a very articulated strategy on how you expect your participants to come back from session to session, day-to-day, week to week, and to really articulate that and be intention with your retention strategy.

Secondly, we also believe that retention rates have very large implications for program success. And quite obviously I think there's a good assumption here that the more frequently that a participant comes to your programming, the more services they access, the more likely it is they're going to achieve good or positive programmatic outcome.

So therefore retention or getting participants to come on a regular basis is really very important to achieving positive outcomes for your population.

As we start talking a little bit about retention, I wanted to really kind of engage Suzanne and Danette really quickly here in this conversation and really have them talk about some of their real life retention challenges and what they are facing with their organizations.

And so Suzanne I think if I can bring you in first and ask you to really respond to two quick questions, and I think those questions are, what are your retentions challenges in your program in your organization, and when and

how did you realize that you had these retention challenges. So Suzanne, can you talk a little bit about that?

Suzanne Markoe Hayes: Sure. The different challenges of course came up at different parts of implementation. Executing when we're trying to recruit, all of us have schools who were doing the study and how many we want to recruit.

And we were finding difficulty especially last year, in getting those numbers so we expanded the recruitment window.

But then what we found out is that down the line through our real-time monitoring, the young ladies who we had recruited early on were the ones who maybe gave us consent forms that never showed up or they would be dropping out faster. So that was one of the challenges that we had as we looked at expanding the window.

Another conflict was that young ladies would forget about sessions after a break. We would have lower attendance after maybe especially Christmas vacations or winter break time.

We also noticed in monitoring of attendance after the end of the year in trying to understand what happened, that there was a drop in attendance after we stopped pizza parties.

We also noticed that during the springtime there's a lot more activities, especially at the high school level, and that we would be losing young ladies quickly to other activities because we would ask as young ladies stopped going to the activities, what were some of the other reasons that they were choosing to leave the program.

And we did all of this through our monitoring and questioning when we would do follow-up calls with young ladies.

Isaac Castillo: Great, thank you very much Suzanne. And I think Danette if I can bring you in now and ask you the same questions, what are some of your retention challenges for your program at your organization, and how did you realize that you had them and when did you realize that you had them.

So Danette, if you can talk about those.

Danette McLaurin Glass: Okay great. Well I guess to best understand our retention strategies, I mean the challenges, I need to just share with you briefly, the CHAMPS Project is currently utilizing the Wyman's Teen Outreach program curriculum for over 500 youth in the Atlanta area.

And so they have to receive weekly youth development sessions in a club style setting at each school during the entire school year.

And what this - one of the challenges was because the TOP curriculum must be offered for the entire school year, the academic calendar, the challenge was to maintain the same roster of students during the entire year.

So the first semester you may have some students, but then second semester there could be a change based on graduation requirements or they're met certain goals or things of that nature.

So to work with the school official to determine what would be the best approach to have the young people to stay in the class for the entire year, especially when you have districts that are working very hard to make sure

that they reach their graduation goals and things of that nature, so that was one of the main challenges.

The second challenge - and I guess I have to say that just as significant were that the schools that we are working with have very high truancy rates and delinquency rates.

So, you know, consider the possibility of trying to get teens to attend school just on a regular basis, and then to participate in a program consistently, really required that we had some strategic planning and special attention to retention.

So both of those, we started working toward at the beginning; at the onset of the program.

Now a third challenge presented itself that we were not aware of and that there was a change of district administrators and principals, and that also presented a challenge that we just were not aware of, and that we realized at the end of year one.

So since then we've of course made some changes, but those were the three distinct challenges - the TOP curriculum having to be offered during the entire school year for the same roster of students, and then the second one; the truancy rates and delinquency rates of those schools that we were serving were extremely high.

Isaac Castillo: Great, thank you very much Danette, I appreciate that.

I also wanted to let everyone and kind of thank the people that are using the Q&A feature and I wanted to take this time to answer some of the more common questions that we've had on the Q&A, and let people know that these

slides will be available on the OAH Web site once the - at a later date so that you can go back and reference these slides.

At this point I'd like to actually transition the Webinar over to Selma Caal who can talk a little bit more about some important retention concepts, so Selma.

Selma Caal: Okay, well thank you very much Isaac, and also thank you Suzanne and Danette.

Hi everyone. Before I go into the other slides I'd like to give you an overview of what I will be covering today. I will be discussing key concepts you may want to consider to help increase retention rates in your programs.

These include transportation participants - transportation for participants to get to and from the program, flexible programming, engaging activities and engaging staff, the use of incentives for retention, and accommodating programs.

In our review of evaluation in our own focus groups with you, we have found that transportation is key to retain program participants, especially those that may benefit the most from the program.

It is important to determine whether young have transportation, and if needed, help your participants find safe transportation. We have also found that the program location is key for retention. Teens need an accessible program and where they don't have to travel long distances.

We have found in our review of evaluations that being flexible to teen's schedules is also important. As teens age, their after school responsibilities

increase such as after school work, and I think someone alluded to this; one of our grantees, such as after school work, extracurricular activities, and family responsibilities.

As such we suggest getting to know your participant's schedule as early as possible, and adjust the dates and times of the program.

In our focus groups we asked older participants how we could get around their work schedules, and some said providing makeup sessions would be helpful. And they also thought that providing sessions during the weekend and week nights might be also helpful.

When considering transportation, location, and program schedules it is important to take into account participant's age and the program setting. For example a young participant who doesn't have a job would be less likely to attend an evening program to let's say an older participant with job responsibilities.

Compared to a provider delivering let's say a program in a community, a provider implementing a program in a school setting may not be as concerned with transportation to the program because the participants are already in the school.

And so again this is the reason why say that we need to consider the age; the program setting also.

Now (unintelligible) in the program is another key component of participant retention. Studies showed that one of the reasons that teens attend out of school programs is to socialize with their peers.

This is not surprising given our understanding of the social development of teens. During adolescence as we all know, youth begin to really look at their peers as their major agents for socialization.

We command program facilitators to encourage engagement between participants. Interestingly a participant in one of our focus groups said that offering chill days would allow group participants to socialize and get to know their - get to know each other.

Smaller groups may facilitate a more intimate social setting for youth to get to know each other and develop those friendships that they may want to develop.

Evaluations also have shown that providing the opportunity for youth to bring one or two friends encourages youth to keep coming back to the program. However, I do suggest not to recruit a larger group of friends because if one of the friends drops out of the program then the rest may also drop out of the program.

Now evaluations in our focus groups suggest that youth do not want or do not enjoy passive activities similar to the ones that they engage in school. They want lively, interactive activities and this keeps them engaged.

Our focus groups with teens have provided some ideas of engaging activities such as bringing guest speakers with real life experiences; also allowing participants to ask questions and engage in dialogue with participants and speakers also facilitates this engagement of youth.

In an overview of the literature in our own work we found that engaging staff are just as powerful as the other key retention components that I have just discussed.

According to youth in our focus groups, staff needs to be genuinely caring and respectful. They need to be responsive to participant's needs and show genuine enjoyment and dedication to their work.

A way in which staff can show this dedication is by participating in the program's activities. A good listener and non-judgmental person also describe an engaging program staff.

A well trained person who is knowledgeable and skillful at managing group dynamics is considered also to be an engaging staff member. (Unintelligible) also suggests that when staff represents youth background and ethnicity youth are more likely to feel comfortable, and this also facilitates interaction between the participant and staff.

Another way that you can engage youth in the program is to get the youth's input on the type of programs facilitator they would like.

The use of incentives -- can everyone see the slide?

Isaac Castillo: Yes, we've got it Selma, it's the one with the pizza on it; yes.

Selma Caal: Okay, I don't have that here.

Isaac Castillo: Pizza is always a good incentive; right?

Selma Caal: The use of incentives has not been given a lot of attention in program evaluations; however there is literature suggesting that incentives can be effective.

We recommend using incentives strategically though and using a range of options to determine the types of incentives you may want to provide. It is important to consider factors such as the setting of your program, the age of your participants, and the size of your program.

For example in our focus groups participants site community and internship hours as incentives for program participation. However this type of incentive may not work for younger youth or for youth who do not need these types of hours for school graduation.

While monetary incentives can be effective, programs needs to determine the appropriate amount that is effective for the target population. A \$5 incentive per week may encourage younger adolescents to attend a weekly session, but this amount might not be - might not encourage an older teen who holds a paying job.

Among certain target populations, food and refreshments or field trips may suffice. Regardless of what type of incentive you choose to provide, it is important to communicate to your participants at the outset the attendance you expect from them and also the type of incentives they will get - they will receive and when they will get it.

Isaac Castillo: Great, thank you very much Selma. I do have a quick series of questions from some of the audience members. And really what some of them are asking are do the incentives that are used in these programs differ by age ranges?

So, would some incentives be more effective let's say for middle school students as opposed to incentives that might be more effective older teens or even young adults - 18, 20, 22-year-olds?

Selma Caal: Is that question geared more for the grantees or for just anyone?

Isaac Castillo: I think just generally. I think in your work and experience have you found that some incentives work better for younger populations than some work for older populations?

Selma Caal: Yes, my understanding is that incentives that are - monetary incentives - large sums of monetary incentives tend to be very helpful for the older population; the older teens, especially those teens that they think that they can actually go out and find a job instead of being in a program.

So, that's one of the reasons why a larger sum of money could be a better incentive for older teens.

Now for younger teens like I said a little while ago, you don't necessarily need a large sum of money. What I - from my understand is that younger adolescents, they will be just as happy to get some kind of trip at the end or maybe some surprise pizza party or just, you know, things that are not as expensive as, you know, we would expect.

Isaac Castillo: Great. Okay, thanks that's very helpful Selma.

At this point I would actually like to bring Suzanne and Danette back into the conversation.

So Suzanne, if I can begin with you and ask you a couple of questions and get your responses to these, I think what I'd like to know is what are the three or four strategies that you have utilized that have helped your program to address some of the challenges that you mentioned earlier or even some of the challenges that Selma has presented and talked about in this Webinar?

So Suzanne, can you talk about sort of three or four strategies that you've found helpful?

Suzanne Markoe Hayes: Yes absolutely. So one of the big things that's very key since it's after school and they've been in school day is they're hungry and it's very important to have food available for the students.

Like I had said in the problems though that we saw that if we stopped bringing pizza there was a huge drop off. But at the same time if they're getting pizza every week it gets old.

So this year what we're doing is we are implementing different types of foods and then use the pizza parties as strategies for during key days when we know that it's especially important. There is really rich material that day that even it's imperative for the other sessions down the line for the ten week sessions.

Another thing that we're doing is the incentive programs. We had a raffle incentive last year and this is one of those situations where group size comes into effect.

When we were doing analyses on our incentives and attendance rates we found that if a group was small and there's a raffle then everyone has a chance of most likely getting something, the raffle was very effective.

But if the group is really big and only three out of 15 girls is most likely going to get something, it's not longer really an effective incentive.

So this year we have teen share incentive programs. We're no longer doing the raffles rather we are connecting our incentives to attendance rates. Young

ladies are being told what they will receive of an incentive based on that day's attendance. And we're creating slowly but surely what you could call a swag bag or a goodie bag.

For example young ladies may get nail polish or a pedicure set for a day of attendance. And at the end when they're doing the post survey, to help also increase attendance rates for the survey, they will receive their swag bag at that day.

Another strategy that we find is really important and effective is texting prior to the day of the session to just remind the young ladies to be there. We also found being present on campus the day of helps with not only reminding young ladies and creating more connection with, but also to find out if there's a special event happening that day that's all of a sudden - if all of a sudden a classroom isn't available, and that way we can take care of things prior to the actual session occurring so there's not a delay in starting.

And last but not least we find that doing follow-up calls on absences really helps to stay connected to the young ladies, let them know they've been missed, as well as find out what's going on and reasons why they may not be able to come.

Isaac Castillo: Great, thank you very much Suzanne. Danette, I'd like to bring you in now and ask the same questions; what are the three or four strategies in your experience have you found helpful to addressing some of these challenges?

Danette McLaurin Glass: Well one of the strategies that the TOP curriculum has a community service learning component, and that component has really engaged all of the participants every year with developing this service learning component and just, you know, working together as a team.

They have a sense of belonging; a sense of competency, a sense of usefulness in developing this project and then to see the changes that have been happening in their community.

So the participants also work together to develop the club and maintain their club throughout the year. So that's one component for the retention strategy that has worked very, very well.

The young people have been so excited about their community service learning project that now we're doing two. We're looking at implementing two per year instead of just doing one during the course of the year.

The second thing as Selma discussed earlier, a dynamic staff is definitely key to success. And the recruitment and retention of qualified and devoted staff is extremely important.

Staff development and training is vital to More than Conquerors. Ensuring that the staff is able to handle truant situations, you know, with care and compassion, you know, situations that are also delinquent.

The staff is encouraged to think outside the box with regards to facilitation techniques and interactive methods to enhance the overall youth development.

The team is vitally important to retention strategies, and I just don't know how to overemphasize that.

We have so many testimonies of participants indicating that the CHAMPS Club and the facilitators assisted them with improving their school performance and also with enhancing relationships with family and friends.

In that one year - the first year that we started the CHAMPS Club we had youth from Juvenile Court that actually cried - I mean they actually cried when the program ended. And this was the direct result of the dedication and the commitment of the frontline team.

So again like Selma said, youth do vote with their feet. And before - a saying said, you know, children don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.

So the team, I think the compassion and the dedication of the team has just been vitally important to retention.

And then last but not least as I stated earlier, developing a strong and valuable partnership with the local school districts and administrators, this has also been very important to ensure that we have prompt and accurate communication of any issues regarding change in administration, semester changes, scheduling planning, and so forth.

We work very diligently with school administration throughout the year to ensure that there are no interruptions in service - in program delivery, you know, once the schedule is finalized.

And sometimes we've had to make changes in the schedules and things of that nature. But because the school and the district administration view the CHAMPS Club as a vital component for their school's annual improvement plan, we work together to get the job done.

And as a result of this several principals and academy leaders have indicated that there has been a reduction in truancy rates, and also a reduction in school

code of conduct violations and those were factors that we weren't even really looking at. But as a result of the clubs being in place, the facilitation of the staff, these were also some areas that have been measured that the schools have benefitted from the program being at their schools.

Two schools in particular I'd like to add had several arrests - weekly police officers on campus on a weekly basis and daily basis, and they indicated that the overall behavior and school attendance improved drastically as a result of the CHAMPS Club.

And some of the participants came to school for CHAMPS period, for that time period, and then eventually they gradually started attending all of their classes.

So again I would say that the partnership with the school, principals, and administration is also vital.

Isaac Castillo: Great, thank you Danette. I wanted to actually follow up with a direct question for you Danette because I think there's a couple of questions coming from the audience that ask about strategies to take to improve retention when incentives are not available or there's no funding for them or they're not even allowed by the grant.

And I think some of what you've just talked about speaks about some of the strategies. It's about creating a relationship and having staff engage the youth to motivate them to come back. So can you talk a little bit more about that?

Danette McLaurin Glass: Absolutely. We actually do not have incentives that can be used for our program. So number one, as we stated earlier is the compassion and the

dedication of the staff that encourages the young people to come back and to participate.

And then we, as we stated also, we actually listen to the young people - I know you probably say wow, you listen; but we actually listen to them and find out the things that they're interested in and how they would like to create the club.

Now we can partner with other outside agencies to assist in filling the gap where of course we can't do that. And More than Conquerors has been very effective in bridging the gap with other partnerships.

So if there are some needs the children have that of course we can't fill because of our obligations to this particular agreement, we are able to identify other agencies and resources that can do that. So, that's kind of how we've done it and it's been very, very effective.

Isaac Castillo: Great. Thanks Danette. And Suzanne I have a question also for you from the crowd. It seems that the swag bag idea has gotten a lot of interest from some of the people who are attending the Webinar, and I think some of the questions are, you know, at what point do people earn their incentive items. And then, when do you actually give them those items?

I think you talked a little bit about that but, I'd love to hear a little bit more expansion of how they earn these things that go into their swag bag and when do they actually get them? And is there a minimum amount of time they have to attend to get the items?

Suzanne Markoe Hayes: We try to be really - I mean all of us are on budgets and we're trying to make the most of our budgets and reach as many young ladies as possible.

And like I said, we also are addressing sixth and seventh grade girls versus ninth and tenth grade girls. So you're trying to create these swag bags and also make the incentives appropriate for the different age groups.

What we've found is just different personal needs such as beauty care seems to be something that we think would be good across ages and be effective in drawing them in.

What we're doing is that the young ladies have an attendance chart that they see each week, and we put a marker on the week; the days that they have attended.

And then they know what will be going into their swag bag because each attendance week is connected to a particular item such as lip gloss or a bath puff or the pedicure kit.

And then these items will be in the swag bag and they do not receive these items until survey day. So we are hoping that even though they're not necessarily getting the items immediately into their hands, they are seeing what they're earning. It's a ten week session program and at the end of the ten weeks at the post survey where we do the post survey and a party at the end, the young ladies receive the incentive.

We base this on knowing that talking to our young ladies after the program, they said they like the incentives but, we had to try to create a way to make it connected to attendance. So hopefully that makes it more clear.

Isaac Castillo: Great, thanks Suzanne I appreciate that. So, I'd like to actually turn it back over to Selma really quickly who's going to cover a couple of more concepts. So Selma.

Selma Caal: Well throughout my presentation I have discussed different concepts to consider to improve your retention rates. My hope is that in my discussion, and I think that also the discussion that our grantees have led, we have conveyed to you that responding to the needs of your target population is key to program retention.

Because the needs of your target population may change over time, retention strategies also need to be dynamic. One way to get an insight of your participant's needs is to conduct real-time monitoring of your program, and one of our grantees was talking about that.

One of the things that you can use is attendance records. These attendance records hold a wealth of information on the factors that may be influencing participant's attendance.

By looking at your records you can identify patterns in participant's attendance and may discover the key to your retention challenges. For example, if you identify that your attendance drops when you have a certain activity, you can deduce that this type of activity might not be well liked and may need to change course.

Or you may find that your attendance increases when you have a specific facilitator which might suggest that this is an engaging facilitator and that you may want to keep inviting him back.

Obtaining information from program participants can also give you good information for your drops in attendance. We suggest calling participants immediately after a missed session and in a non-judgmental way ask the reasons for the participant's absence.

Identifying patterns of what they tell you, you can use this information to overcome your retention challenges. If they're saying that it is the day or time that is really making it hard for them to show up, then you can make adjustments for that.

So as I discussed before, once you obtain the information you need to understand your retention challenges, just be open to make adjustments.

And having said that, I did want to just bring up really quickly the idea that incentives - research on incentives has not been widely researched if you will. So what I would suggest is, you know, try different strategies. Try different types of incentives and I think that this one of the reasons why I wanted to talk to you about that there are different types.

You don't necessarily have to spend so much money for the incentives. Providing popcorn night with a movie, that can be an incentive for some participants because not only are they doing an activity that they enjoy, but they're also interacting with their peers which we know is something that they really enjoy.

But now I would like to give the floor to Brigitte who will be discussing the use of other innovative strategies for participant retention. Brigitte...

Brigitte Vaughn: Yes hi everyone. Thanks Selma. I am Brigitte Vaughn and in this portion of the Webinar I'll be talking with you about how you can meet teens and youth

where they are. So, in other words, on their cell phones and online to increase retention rates.

We'll look at teen's access to these mediums, and then we'll look at what you can learn from other adolescent programs, use of texting and social media.

For the first objective there, our functionality isn't going to allow us to poll you as to your use of texting and social media, but we plan to follow-up with the grantees after this call to find out how many of you are using text and social media strategies for retention purposes.

So just a couple of important things to keep in mind for those of you who might be more leery of social media, if social media was so hard it wouldn't be so popular. So we just encourage you to dive in. There's a steep learning curve but it's really rapid.

Also social and mobile media is not a trend. It will only become more engrained in people's lives and this is especially true for the lives of youth.

At the same time the networks being used do change. For instance we're seeing an increase of teens on Instagram and Tumbler, so our advice is to be flexible on which networks you use to retain and engage teens.

However the same basic principles that we'll talk about today do apply across different networks.

Next, listen first before you talk back. Listening is still crucial as Danette was emphasizing earlier. Because to be engaged means that you're honestly interested in what your participants have to say.

And finally, just be yourself. You don't need to create a new online persona or try to be anyone else for your activities on social media. Authenticity, especially when you're dealing with teens, is critical.

Though we can't convey everything that you need to know in one presentation here, therefore to help you dive in and navigate social media we're sharing four tip sheets that we put together that you can download and apply to your own organization.

So if you look on the upper right-hand side of the screen you should see a handout button; three pieces of paper there. And if you click that you should see some - four tip sheets that you'll be able to download. And all of these are targeted one-page tip sheets so, really to digest.

We have rules to live by using social media to engage youth, create a social media policy in ten steps; this will really help you institutionalize social media in your organization. Number three, best practices so, concrete tips for both Facebook and Twitter, and finally getting started on Foursquare.

And so this is what we will follow-up with you after the Webinar and get a sense of how many PTC grantees are using texting and social media.

And now let's look at access. So if your program is using texting or social media to engage teens, you want to know that they're getting the message.

So youth Internet availability, more than ever teens are online. This may not be a surprise. In fact 95% of them are. However looking demographically we find that Hispanic adolescents are slightly less likely to be online than other White and Black peers.

Interestingly enough internet access is high regardless of income, whereas almost all higher income teens are online. Of those living in households making less than \$30,000, still more than nine out of ten of those teens are online as well.

Now we are going to look at teen cell phone availability, and this has obvious implications on whether they can receive your text messages.

So a March 2012 survey revealed that more than three in four adolescents have a mobile phone. This is more true for older teens. Also a quarter of teens - of all teens have smartphones. Older teens and youth from higher income more educated households are more likely to have smartphones.

And then finally, just under a quarter of teens don't have a cell phone at all.

So interestingly enough, smartphones have kind of an Internet equalizer for lower income adolescents, and this is likely a result of the tradeoff with having a computer in the home.

So we see from this pew in our Internet survey that teens living in households and making under \$30,000 are the most likely to go online with a cell phone and the least likely to have a computer in their home.

So let's talk more text. So the volume of texting among adolescents is up, while their time talking on the phone has actually gone down. Texting among teens rose from 50 texts a day in 2009 to 60 in 2011 for just the median teen text user. Older teens, boys, and African Americans are leading that increase.

And when you text with teens it's really an extension of engagement, just another way to show them that you're paying attention to and care about them.

And Suzanne was saying how her program they remind teens by texting them the day before that they have somewhere to be the next day which is a great use of texting.

So I'm going to talk about two experience of adolescent serving organizations that gave us these lessons learned when it came to using text messaging to engage adolescents.

The executive director of Crimson based adolescent health education organization said this about texting with teens. "They use their cell phones for everything. Email is an outdated mode of communication with this group."

She found that texting is one of the strongest communications tools to privately and directly remind teens about when they need to be somewhere.

And finally texting enforces positive habit. An article that just came out this month detailed the University of Arizona's study of adolescents ages 12 to 18 enrolled in youth programs, and it found that text messages worked to improve teen's nutritional and physical habits when they received text reminders.

So here are some takeaways for your own programs. The University of Arizona survey I just spoke about found that behavior changed, you know, increased engagement came from text that used an active voice, that recommended specific actions, and that came from a reputable source. Teens also didn't like receiving more than two texts a day.

Next, you can use text messaging to support and remind teens about where and when they have to be somewhere. An important thing to remember is the tone of the text message which Selma addressed earlier.

You don't want to be accusatory or nagging with your texts, rather just like your checking in because these teens are an important part of your program. So less why didn't you show up yesterday, and more, we missed you yesterday; the next class is Tuesday at 6:00. Let me know if you need help with getting there.

Next, use texting to increase engagement by having teens text you questions that they might not be comfortable asking in a classroom setting. And you can leverage additional texting resources by letting teens know about tools like Planned Parenthood's In Case You're Curious texting line for sexual health questions.

They can text a question, it's a free service and they'll get a response with 24 hours.

Finally, be careful of cost considerations. Though many teens have unlimited plans some do not, and you don't want to burden them with additional expenses. An easy way to do this is just to poll them and find out.

So now Facebook - 93% of all teen social media users are on Facebook and it's the most used social networking site in the world.

You can use Facebook to find out what youth want to learn about. You can ask interactive questions and listen to the answers. So again as Danette was saying, listening is just - you know social media gives you another outlet to ask participants what they need and listen to the answers.

You can also communicate key messages and they will resonate. A 2012 study found that public health messages on Facebook can encourage teens to make healthier sexual choices.

The University of Colorado's study put (unintelligible) into two groups on Facebook. One group liked the sexual health Facebook page as it shared information about STD testing and condom use, while the other group subscribed to a page that provided just general news items.

Two months later researchers found that 68% of teens subscribing to the sexual health page used condoms during their last sexual experience. This is over ten points than the young adults who were subscribed to the other group.

The next takeaway is to really keep content fresh and use to help you do it. Here is an example.

The Boston Public Health Commission had a youth initiative to reduce violence. To make the Facebook page relevant to the youth it was trying to reach, the city enlisted a group of youths in their target group and these youth managed the Facebook and kept the posts vibrant and interactive.

They posted videos and encouraged other youths to interact on the page. And this is just an example of how programs are using the youth that they're serving to help them with their social media efforts. And they're really just such an invaluable resource.

So next, Twitter. So a smaller proportion of teens use Twitter than do older adults, but this is definitely changing. From 2009 to 2011 Twitter use doubled to 16% of all online teens, and that's only going up.

So looking at how adolescent serve organizations are using Twitter, we have some lessons learned for your own programs.

You can use it as a message board. Many universities have internal email systems and message boards, but they realized that getting students to routinely check these systems for updates was a chore. So this goes back to the whole concept of the email being outdated.

You can engage teens. You can have them tweet you questions and then support learning by tweeting main points from your discussion.

You can tag the students and tweet to make sure they see them. And you'll find more information about how to do that in the handout that I shared earlier.

Also Twitter chats - you may have seen in the grantee digest that OAH participates in a lot of Twitter chats to raise awareness and disseminate best practices around adolescent health issues.

You can host your own Twitter chats to increase youth engagement by bringing in a guest speaker or just by encouraging participants to talk about an issue like what makes a healthier relationship via a Twitter chat.

Please know that there are privacy concerns and that Twitter is an open medium. But, you know, there are direct messaging features so you can privately send messages to users as well.

So what is Foursquare? This may be the social media tool we're talking about today that you'll be least familiar with, but it does have specific retention applications.

So Foursquare is a mobile application that allows users to check in, quote, unquote, at locations in order to explore a new city, link up with friends, etcetera. There is also a competitive nature to the application that offers badges and titles to individuals that visit a spot the most times.

So you can use Twitter for your own programs to reward consistency. The participant that checks in the most is the mayor of your venue; that's the terminology they use.

You can set the rewards as the incentives rather, associated with becoming the mayor for checking in ten times or whatever milestone you want to establish. This can be part of your incentive strategy that Selma was referencing earlier.

You can also use Foursquare to augment your program records. Foursquare keeps excellent track of the time student's check in, who checks in the most frequently, etcetera.

There are privacy concerns. For youth affected by intimate partner violence it's not a good idea to identify their whereabouts. A lot of times you should be considerate of those issues.

And then also older teens, ages 14 to 17 are the most likely to use Foursquare, and younger teens are less likely to use location based services.

So just some reflections on using texting and social media for retention; some main takeaways, and just getting a system in place when it comes to social

medial and texting is really important. You can use the handouts on top - you can download here.

Next, just go for it. You will figure it out. Again the learning curve is steep, but the best way to figure out how to use these systems is really just to try them.

Next, appeal to your participants. It's such a good idea what we saw with the Boston Public Health Commission is that the students really felt empowered and a critical part of the program and this helped with engagement.

And on the other hand you'll receive cutting edge help in your retention strategies, so it's really a win/win.

And then again, while social media tools do help, quote -- and this is what we heard from an adolescent health program -- "make health advocates relevant and important to young people."

The tactics for engaging youth must constantly involve to ensure their attention doesn't drop off. We heard that you have to keep the discussion going and you need to keep it fresh.

You can't hope that, you know, if you just put something up on Twitter or Facebook or establish a Facebook page and walk away that it will just maintain yourself. You do have to pay attention to it and use the youth that you work to help you do that and to engage in conversations on these mediums.

You can try a video chat or an online forum. Just if you're creative with it and you engage with it and you show teens that you're using these mediums to really listen to them, then it will really work out in your favor.

Next, just good luck and please let us know any questions that you have for these. And I will turn things back over to Isaac.

Isaac Castillo: Great, thank you very much Brigitte. I think operator, we're going to have time for two questions from the audience.

But while we're getting that set up, Brigitte I did have one question from an audience member that I thought it would be good for you to sort of speak to and that's, how do you deal with accountability issues when using these social media applications?

And what's meant by that is how do you know or how can you keep tabs on the staff person that's using Facebook for a programmatic or retention purposes rather than checking and updating their own personal Facebook status. Any tips on that?

Brigitte Vaughn: Yes, so the handout that we shared about setting up a social media policy does have guidance on how to establish those permissions, and it is something you should work out in advance who does have the authority to respond to questions. Or maybe some people can respond to some questions, but others are, you know, may need to have more of a collaborative effort to answer them.

And so it's important to - you know, we encourage you to have an organization Facebook page rather than using personal accounts to advance the retention practices of your program.

So if you set up an organization Facebook page and then figure out who has the authority to respond and to post, just getting those systems in place will really benefit you down the road.

Isaac Castillo: Great, thank you very much Brigitte. Operator, do we have a couple of voice questions available or if not, I can go back to the Web Q&A.

Coordinator: Not right at this time. But, once again just a reminder, if you'd like to ask a question please press star 1. One moment

We do have a question from (Frances Coyne Davis). Your line is open.

(Frances Coyne Davis): My question is, when I tried to sign up for this ahead of time, it wouldn't allow me to do it, and we're supposed to be signing up for follow-up calls. So I was wonder what we need to do to make sure that we can do that.

Brigitte Vaughn: Yes, and Isaac is -- this is Brigitte speaking. Isaac is going to address the follow-up calls right after the Q&A period. For this Webinar you didn't need to sign up, just for the follow-up calls registration is required because space is limited. And so we'll be reviewing that process in just a minute.

(Frances Coyne Davis): Okay, thank you.

Brigitte Vaughn: Thank you.

Coordinator: We have another question from (Julie Soderburg). Your line is open.

(Julie Soderburg): Hi, thank you. I'm the new Director here is (unintelligible) county. The - I'm sorry, I was a little bit late getting on so you may have covered this.

The previous grant cycle I was working with, we were required to track the number of posts and followers that we had on Facebook. Will you guys be looking at having us report on that feedback from our Facebook users or other social media?

Brigitte Vaughn: I can address that. So we would recommend checking in with your project officer at OAH about reporting - specific reporting requirements. We usually can't speak to what those might be so, if you follow up with them I'm sure they'll have the answers.

(Julie Soderburg): Okay, thank you.

Brigitte Vaughn: Thank you.

Isaac Castillo: Any more questions? Again it's star 1, and we've got time for maybe one or two more if they're short.

Coordinator: We do have another question from (Victoria Bellard). Your line is open.

(Victoria Bellard): Yes hello. We have a program for teen parent's that's school based, and we have and utilized for quite some time, a lot of the incentives you were talking about. But we still have difficulty consistently getting students to attend our lunchtime workshops. Do you have any suggestions?

Isaac Castillo: Selma, or one of the guest grantees; anyone have thoughts?

Selma Caal: Yes, I guess my first question would be have you asked what, you know, what circumstances the teens might be coming across during that timeframe. Do you have an idea of, you know, the circumstances during that time?

Why precisely at that time that you're having difficulties? Do you have a sense?

(Victoria Bellard): Well that's a good plan. I know that some of it, we didn't get our money loaded, and so we used (unintelligible) and that has had an impact.

Selma Caal: Yes, what I would suggest for you to do is to get back to the teens and just ask questions. Ask them, you know, what is it about that timeframe? What is it about those days? What is it about what, you know, what you're doing or what would work best for them?

You know just taking polls; taking their feedback and taking that into consideration, that is what, you know, what we were talking about when it comes to real-time monitoring.

It's so important to get their feedback because it really - teens, especially if we're talking about parenting teens, they have a lot on their plate. And so I think that the flexibility and also the information that you would get from them would be very important.

(Victoria Bellard): All right, thank you very much.

Selma Caal: Sure.

Isaac Castillo: And thank you very much Selma. I wanted to go ahead and move on and start to wrap up this Webinar, and also let people know that if you have a question that you asked through the Q&A feature through the Webinar software; that Q&A tab at the very top, that we did not get to, we are recording those and

chronicling them and they will be followed up and discussed and answered through the follow up sessions that are going to take place in the next week.

So I wanted to give everyone first an opportunity to really if there's a question that we have - that you have now that we have not covered, to please put it in the Q&A at this time so that we have those for the sessions next week.

And with that I actually wanted to go on to sort of wrap up the presentation and really talk about these setting specific calls that are going to occur.

Next week OAH's TPG grantees will have the opportunity to talk with each other about retention challenges that they're currently facing on four setting specific calls.

So there's going to be one call each for school based, community based, clinic based, and after school programs.

Registration links for each of these sessions can be found in yesterday's Grantee Digest. It's important to note though that space is going to be limited to these calls to ensure that there is productive discussion and that we can answer everyone's questions.

So if you're unable to register for your call because your call is full, please email Brigitte to be put on the waitlist for these calls. And Brigitte's email - we saw the past slide but I'm going to repeat it now, is bvaughn, so b-v-a-u-g-h-n, bvaughn@childtrends.org - c-h-i-l-d-t-r-e-n-d-s dot org.

She can put you on the waitlist or help you if you have any troubles with the registration.

And again I want to reiterate what I said at the beginning of the Webinar as well which is, that a copy of this presentation will be available on the OAH Web site. For those of you asking about it, that is where it's going to be located.

And I think to be respectful of everyone's time I want to offer any last comments or food for thought from any of the presenters. Anything else you'd like to share before we close the Webinar?

Suzanne Markoe Hayes: There is one clarification I wanted to make -- this is Suzanne -- in regards to the swag bag. I forgot to mention that we also give at the end, rewards based on attendance if they did nine, ten, or 11 classes.

And so we give them gift cards from Forever 21; it's a very popular store where you can buy things for very cheap. And so we give a \$10 gift card for Forever 21 if they've attended nine classes; \$15 for ten classes, and \$25 for 11 classes.

And the other thing that I noticed is that there's a question about high turnover rate in staff, and I'm not sure if that's regards to our particular staff or the staff at the schools because really you deal with both of those challenges. So I wasn't sure what that question was about.

Isaac Castillo: And Danette is there any sort of last words you want to leave us with?

Danette McLaurin Glass: Actually I just wanted to say thank you on behalf of More than Conquerors, Inc. and just remember that the young people, you know, they are so desiring to have people to come in and assist and walk along this journey with them.

So the points that Brigitte made also about, you know, just listening to them and engaging them and making sure that they know that we're there for them, it goes a long way to retaining them in your program.

Isaac Castillo: Great, thanks Danette. And I think I'd love to close by expanding on that is, and I think, you know, as much research and expertise as everyone on the call has with these issues, it very much is not a one size fits all scenario.

And there's nothing better than simply asking your participants about what they would like and what they - what would be encouraging to them to make sure that they come on a regular and a frequent basis.

And things are going to vary by ages and by population and by risk levels, and even by neighborhoods. Some things are going to be more persuasive to get people to come on a frequent basis than other things. And it's going to vary over a number of factors.

So I just encourage people to keep that in mind and engage your participants and engage your youth as much as possible in these sort of discussions.

So I wanted to thank all of our speakers very much and thank all of you as an audience for your great questions and for your attention for the Webinar.

Thank you very much everyone and have a good day.

Coordinator: Thank you for participating on today's conference. The conference has concluded. You may disconnect at this time.

END