

Check & Connect*

A Tier 2 and Tier 3 Intervention

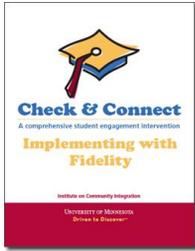
Lori Newcomer
University of Missouri

Check & Connect

- Check & Connect is a program developed and maintained by the Institute on Community Integration, College of Education and Human Development, University of Minnesota.

www.checkandconnect.org

Christenson, S.L., Stout, K., & Pahl, A. (2012). Check & Connect: A comprehensive student engagement intervention: Implementing with fidelity. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, Institute on Community Integration



<http://checkandconnect.umn.edu/>

Overview

This morning:

- Describe Check & Connect
- Core elements of student engagement: Mentoring
- Participant Identification

This afternoon

- Procedures for implementation

What is Check & Connect?



Reasons Students Disengage

About Check & Connect

Check

Check refers to a systematic monitoring of alterable performance variables

Connect

Connect refers to personalized, timely intervention focused on problem solving, skill building, and competence enhancement

Program to enhance student engagement for marginalized, disengaged students

Four Key Components

- A mentor who works with student and families for a minimum of two years
- Regular checks using existing school data on school adjustment, behavior, and educational process
- Timely interventions, driven by data to reestablish and maintain student's connection to school and learning to enhance social and academic competencies
- Engagement with families

Multiple Contextual Influences

I'M NOT GOING TO SCHOOL ANY MORE.

OH?

NOPE! I'VE DECIDED TO BE A WINTER GATHERER. WHEN I GROW UP, I'LL BE LIVING NAKED IN A TROPICAL FOREST, SUBSISTING ON BERRIES, GRUBS, AND THE OCCASIONAL FROG. AND SPENDING MY FREE TIME GROOMING FOR LICE!

ALL THE EXPERTS SAY ITS BAD PARENTING TO SQUELCH A KID'S AMBITIONS.

An empirically supported structured mentoring intervention

Intensive 5%

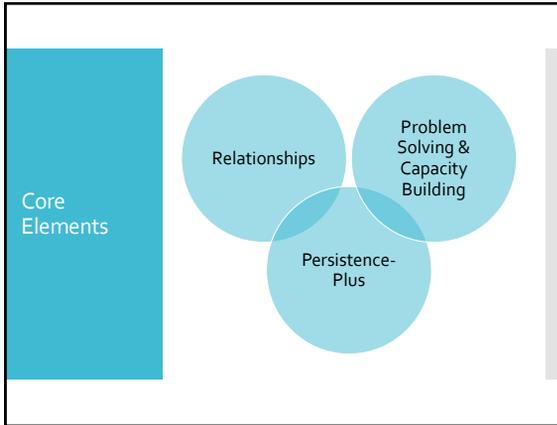
Targeted 15%

Universal 80%

Check & Connect

Established outcomes

- Improves enrollment, attendance, and odds of graduation for disengaged or at risk of dropout (Sinclair et al., 1998)
- Improves persistence, access to relevant educational services, student involvement in IEP transition planning and attendance for students with EBD (Sinclair et al., 2005)
- Improves engagement and attendance for elementary students (Anderson, Christenson, & Lehr, 2004; Lehr et al., 2004)
- Actively engages students and families at school and with learning (Lehr et al., 2004)
- Improves outcomes for students with history of truancy (Sinclair & Kaibel, 2002)
- Improves cohort-type AYP graduation rates (Sinclair * Kaibel, 2001)



Relationships:
Based in mutual trust & open communication through long-term commitment

- Focus on alterable variables**
 - System monitoring (check) of indicators of disengagement (attendance, grades, behavior) that are readily available and can be altered through intervention
- Personalized, data based intervention**
 - Supportive interventions (connect) that are personalized, not prescriptive
 - Mentors use data as basis for intervention design
- Long-term commitment**
 - Interventions implemented for minimum of two years
 - Mentors make two year commitment
 - May involve following highly mobile youth and families
- Participation in and affiliation with school**
 - Facilitate student access to and active participation in school related activities and events.

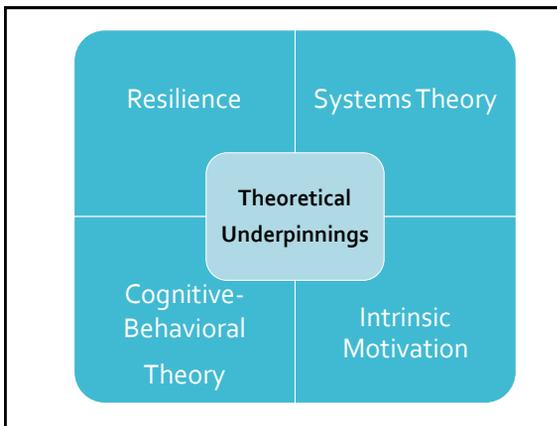
Problem Solving & Capacity Building

- A cognitive-behavioral approach is used to promote the acquisition of skills to resolve conflict constructively
- Encourage the search for solutions rather than a source of blame
- Foster productive coping skills

Persistence-Plus

Persistence, continuity & consistency!

- Mentor is persistent source of academic motivation
- Mentor familiar with youth and family (continuity)
- Mentor provides message that "education is important for your future (consistency)



Resilience

- Mentor focuses on reducing risks and enhancing protective factors
- Caring adults foster resilience

Systems Theory

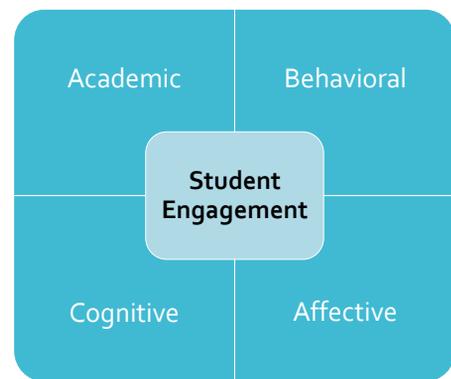
- Build connections among school, family and community to support youth and enhance school completion.
- Important to understand student perspective in context of family circumstances and school resources to provide differentiated support.

Cognitive Behavioral Theory

- Problem solving to enhance competence, design interventions, and foster student autonomy and personal responsibility
- Help students cope and meet challenges of school environment
- School environment changes to foster student engagement

Intrinsic Motivation

- Needs for autonomy, belonging, and competence met.
- Fosters internalization of
 - *"I can"* (self-efficacy), of
 - *"I want to, I value"* (valuing and goals);
 - *"I belong"* (social connections).



Academic Engagement Indicators

- Amount of time spent doing homework or projects
- Time on task
- Number of credits accrued
- Amount of homework completed with accuracy
- Course grades
- Number of failing grades

Academic Engagement Indicators

Facilitated by:

- After-school programs (tutoring, homework help)
- Increased home support for learning
- Self-monitoring interventions

Behavior Engagement Indicators

- Attendance
- Effort and active participation
- Involved in extracurricular activities
- Behavioral incidents: office referrals, detentions, suspensions

Behavior Engagement Indicators

Facilitated by:

- Personalized attendance & participation support
- Skill instruction (e.g. problem solving, anger management)
- Individualized behavior contracts

Cognitive Engagement

- Self-regulated learning strategies
- Goal setting
- Interest in learning
- Motivation to learn
- Perception of relevance of school to personal aspirations
- Competence in schoolwork

Cognitive Engagement

Facilitated by:

- Problem solving skills
- Goal setting
- Creating active interest in learning

Affective Engagement

- Sense of belonging and connection to school
- Availability of quality support from parents, teachers, peers

Affective Engagement

Facilitated by:

- Increased support from parents and teachers
- Building personal relationships
- Assistance with personal problems

"Student engagement includes both socializing the learner and fostering an academic identity. It is represented by the student's perceptions of competence and control (I can), personal values and goals (I want to), and social connectedness to peers and teachers (I belong)."

Christenson, Stout, Pohl, 2012
Pg.7

The Mentor

Role and Responsibilities

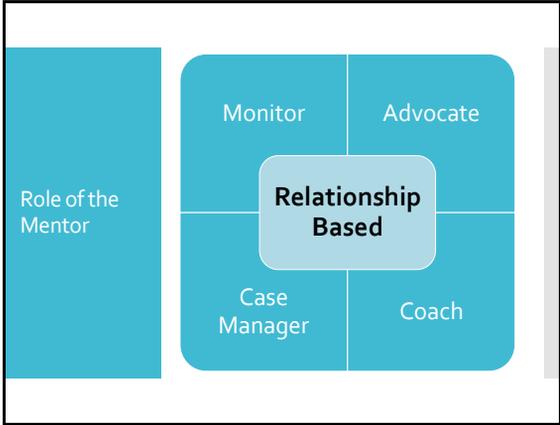


The role of the mentor

The presence of an adult in the child's life to fuel motivation and foster the development of life skills needed to overcome obstacles

(Masten & Coatsworth, 1998).

- Who can serve as a mentor?
- Individuals who have completed an undergraduate degree
 - School personnel
 - Community professional
 - Community volunteers supervised by school district staff



Characteristics of Effective Mentors

Belief that:

- All students have abilities, strengths and can learn
- Students can make progress and change their level of engagement
- Problem solving with students develops personal competencies

Characteristics of Effective Mentors

Willingness to:

- Persist with students, despite their behavior and decision making
- Cooperate and collaborate with families and school staff

Characteristics of Effective Mentors

- Advocacy skills, ability to negotiate, compromise, and confront conflict
- Organizational and case management skills
- Nonjudgmental attitude toward others
- Ability to work independently in a variety of settings
- Willing to be a mentor (want to rather than obligated to)

Build Relationships

- Help youth to
 - Solve problems
 - Develop self-reliance
 - Think about future
 - Enhance personal self-efficacy
- Model positive attitudes and behaviors

Help student participate at school

- Familiar with student interests, strengths, needs and educational progress
- Suggest feasible activities relevant to student
- Facilitate access to school-related activities

Help student navigate school and track progress

- Frequent, systematic monitoring of student level data
 - Attendance
 - Grades
 - Credit accrual
 - Behavior
- Ongoing Feedback
- Regular communication with family and teachers
- Keeps school progress a salient issue

Personalize intervention and targets strategies to meet student needs

- Individualized interventions based on student needs, family circumstances, and availability of school and community resources
- Progress monitoring to inform intervention

Collaborates with family, teachers and other adults to support the student

- Foster positive relationship with school personnel and family
- Create social support system for student that conveys importance of school to attain personal and educational goals

Helps student set immediate and future-oriented personal educational goals

- Discuss and support goal setting
- Attendance goals related to improved performance
- Future goals and aspirations

Help student solve problems and meet daily demands of school

- Stop! Think about the problem
- What are some choices?
- Choose one.
- Do it
- How did it work?

Help student persist in the face of challenges

Persistence

Continuity

Consistency

Persistence Plus
Message:
Elementary

You can...

- Be successful in school on a variety of tasks
- Attend school regularly
- Complete assignments
- Solve problems effectively
- Participate in school
- Express frustration in a constructive way

Persistence Plus Message Secondary

You can...

- Succeed
- Be on time
- Attend classes regularly
- Complete your schoolwork and assignments
- Express frustration in a constructive manner
- Stay in school
- Be involved in school activities
- Get a diploma
- Graduate ready for college and career

Share information about system issues

- Vigilant about school policy and practices
- Identify practices and policies that are alienating student and/or parent
- Share concerns with school personnel

The Mentor *Building Relationships*

Building Relationships

- Quality relationships develop over time
- Get to know the student by observing interactions with peers and adults
- Reach out, even when the student appears uninterested or indifferent
- Use both formal and informal connections to develop the relationship

Acceptance and Accountability

- Accept student and family where they are
- Keep focus of contact on improving educational performance of student
- Don't condone inappropriate behavior, but work to understand the student perspective
- Hold student accountable using problem solving dialogue and action planning
- Be nonjudgmental and use non-blaming communication, regardless of student's presenting behavior

Accessibility and Flexibility

- Be accessible to students and family
 - Ensure some evening and weekend availability
- Make sure student/family know how to initiate contact
- Offer a variety of ways for student/family to initiate contact (email, home visit, phone)
- Meet parents in a variety of neutral settings.

Commitment and Persistence

- Minimum two year commitment
- Hang in there, even when it doesn't seem like progress is being made.
- Continue to problem solve, action plan and communicate with family
- Reinforce the persistence plus message, especially if all others appear to have given up

Communication and Confidentiality

- Establish systematic method of communication with student and parents
- Confidentiality builds trust
- Discuss confidentiality with student
- Mentors are mandated reporters

Respect and Expectation

- Define desired behavior and steps to achieve
- Emphasize target behavior, don't dwell on past
- Provide support to reach expectation
- Model respect
- Use interactions to teach social skills

Role Model and Practice

- Model how to problem solve concerns
- Use think-aloud procedures for academic and behavior concerns
- Problem solve personal goals
- Model optimism
- Reinforce on time and in school
- Model punctuality and dependability

Honest Feedback and Action Plan

- Informed, nonjudgmental feedback
- Problem solve how to rectify performance gaps
- Celebrate success
- Set goals and action steps
- Emphasize work ethic: effort, persistence, try again

EVERY KID IS ONE CARING ADULT AWAY FROM BEING A SUCCESS STORY. — Josh Shipp

The Mentor

Motivating Students

- Avoid over-reliance on extrinsic reinforcement
- Attend to student's need for autonomy, belonging and competence
- Talk about role of effort and choices in outcomes

"Intention is the direct cause of action"

Miller & Rollnick, 2002

The Spirit of MI

Motivational
Interviewing

- Collaboration
- Evocation
- Autonomy

LEAP
Communication
Skills

L

- Listen, collect information

E

- Empathize

A

- Avoid blame, judgment, giving unsolicited advice

P

- Partner

Herman, Reinke, Frey, Shepard, 2014

Principles of
Motivational
Interviewing

R

- Resist the righting reflex

U

- Understand student's motivation

L

- Listen to student

E

- Empower the student

Miller & Rollnick, 2002

Principles of Motivational Interviewing

- O** • Open-ended questions
- A** • Affirmations
- R** • Reflective listening
- S** • Summary

Miller & Rollnick, 2002

Engaging Strategies for Youth

- Responsibility
- Decisional Balance
- Values Exploration

Responsibility

“Clearing communicating to youth that it is ultimately their decision about any changes they might make is an important element of engaging them in any conversation about change.”

Herman, Reinke, Frey, Shepard, 2014

Decisional Balance

	Status Quo (Option A)	Change (Option B)
Advantages	Good things about Status Quo or Option A <i>Sustain Talk</i>	Good things about Change or Option B <i>Change Talk</i>
Disadvantages	Less-good things about Status Quo or Option A <i>Change Talk</i>	Less-good things about Change or Option B <i>Sustain Talk</i>

Herman et al, 2014

DARN

Preparatory Change Talk

- Desire** • I wish I could understand math
- Ability** • I think I could do better in math
- Reasons** • If I did my work in math, the teacher would be nicer
- Need** • I have to do better or I won't pass the class

CATS

Mobilization of Change

- Commitment** • I'm going to get all my assignments finished
- Activation** • I didn't think homework matters, but I'm ready to start turning it in.
- Taking Steps** • I will do homework each night before dinner

Talking with students about academic performance

- A rationale for the conversation
- Self-reflection and exploration of values (decisional balance)
- Personalized feedback
- Planning

Augment decisional balance with open-ended statement

- How important academic performance is to them (e.g. getting good grades, attending class).
- How confident they are that they can improve their academic performance
- Concerns they have about academic performance

Values Exploration

- Listen for values expressions
- Values exploration card sort*
- Ask about discrepancies between values/beliefs and current behavior/performance to create cognitive dissonance
 - How many hours student studies vs. how many hours s/he wishes
 - Current GPA vs. preferred GPA
 - Current attendance rate vs. desired attendance rate
 - Current number of credits vs. desired number

Feedback

- Personalized information on how test scores, grades, attendance, office discipline referrals, and other academic behaviors compare to peers
- Best provided as matter of fact approach

"So you've missed 22 classes so far. That puts you in the 99th percentile in this school, meaning you have missed more classes than 99% of the students here."
- Feedback is designed to evoke reflection and further conversation, so make sure to check in with the student's reaction to the feedback.

"What do you make of that?"

Provide social norms about adolescent perceptions of school performance

- How many hours a night student study (separated by student GPA).
- What percentage of teens think it's important to get good grades.
- What percentage of teens have a favorable attitude about students who fail classes or drop-out?
- What percentage of students would date someone who got who grades? Who dropped out?

You have **BRAINS** in your **HEAD**.
 You have **FEET** in your **SHOES**.
 You can **STEER** yourself any **DIRECTION** you **CHOOSE**.
 ~ Dr. Seuss



Step 1:
Determine
indicators of
student
disengagement

<p>Status Predictors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age • Urban, suburban, or rural community • Region of the U.S. • Disability • Socioeconomic status • Gender • Ethnicity • Family structure 	<p>Alterable Predictors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance • Suspension • Attitude toward school • Extracurricular participation • Behavior • Homework • Grades, credit accrual • Grade retention
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Christenson, Stout, Pohl, 2012

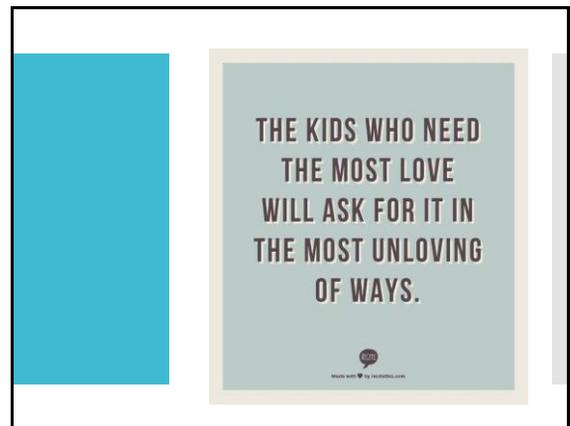
	Students	Families	Schools
Protective Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing homework • Coming to class prepared • High locus of control • Good self-concept • Expectations for school completion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic support for learning (e.g. homework help) • Motivational support for learning (e.g. high expectations, talk to children about school) • Availability of educational resources • Parental monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orderly school environments • Committed, caring teachers • Fair discipline policies • Relationship with one caring adult • Opportunities for participation
Risk Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High rate of absences • Behavior problems • Poor academic performance (e.g. course failure) • Working many hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low educational expectations • Mobility • Permissive parenting styles (i.e., lack of supervision or monitoring) • Few educational resources at home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak adult authority • Large school size (>1000 students) • High pupil-teacher ratios • Few caring relationships between staff & students • Poor or uninteresting curricula • Low expectations • High truancy rates • Limited parent outreach

Christenson, Stout, Pohl, 2012

Student engagement requires psychological connections with school and active student behavior

Disengaged students are easily confused with students with significant behavior problems.

Students with significant behavior problems are disengaged; however, a student who has few personal goals or low self-perceived competence or puts forth minimal effort is also disengaged.



Step 2: Identify students at risk of disengagement or dropout

	Elementary	Secondary
Behavior Indicators	Tardy, absenteeism, excessive unexcused absences, history of educational neglect, ODR, suspensions, expulsions, frequent moves	Skipping, absenteeism, truancy, ISS, OSS, ODR, detentions, expulsion, history of dropping in and out, frequent moves, limited extracurricular participation
Academic Indicators	Not completing work, not meeting reading/math objectives, reading below grade level, below proficiency on state tests	Credit deficiency, failing classes, below proficiency on state tests, poor task completion, low success rates, incomplete homework
Cognitive Indicators	Minimal interest in school, resistance to learning, low academic self-efficacy and perceived competence	Minimal interest in school, resistance to learning, low academic self-efficacy and perceived competence
Affective Indicators	Social isolation, feelings of not belonging at school	Low expectation to graduate, social isolation, feelings of not belonging at school

- Set Criteria for Identification**
- Academic and behavioral indicators are readily available in school data bases
 - ODR
 - Attendance
 - Discipline records
 - Grades
 - Credits accrued
 - Mobility data
 - Indicators of disengagement
 - Attendance (tardiness, skipping, absences)
 - Behavior problems (ODR, bus referrals, poor social skills, suspensions)
 - Academic performance (failing classes, credit deficits, literacy skills)
 - Set and use specific criteria; example: students who
 - Attendance below <80 – 90%
 - Low academic grades (e.g., 2 Ds or 1 F)
 - Credit deficits (off-track for on-time graduation)
 - 3 ODR

- Check for High Status Risk Groups**
- Race/ethnicity
 - SES
 - Disability Status
 - Single parent homes
 - Large urban schools
 - EBD

- Determine Prevalence and Capacity to Serve**
- Population-based Screening**
 - Systematic monitoring on alterable indicators of risk, e.g., one standard deviation below the mean
 - Referral Process**
 - Based on specific inclusion criteria
 - Example: Secondary students eligible if less than 85% attendance during prior school year and one or more failing grades in a semester
 - Example: Elementary students eligible if less than 88% attendance during prior school year and academic performance places them in bottom quartile of class

- Create a Monitoring Form**
- The link between alterable variables and systematic monitoring
 - The assessment to intervention link

Check & Connect High School Monitoring Form

Student: _____ ID #: _____ Grade: _____
 School: _____ Mentor: _____ Month: _____

CHECK	M	TU	W	TH	F	M	TU	W	TH	F	M	TU	W	TH	F	M	TU	W	TH	F	High risk
Academic data																					
Number of Ds or Fs																					
Number of missing assignments																					
Cumulative grades	1st quarter grades					2nd quarter grades					3rd quarter grades					4th quarter grades					
	Ds Fs					Ds Fs					Ds Fs					Ds Fs					
Credit accrual																					
Credits earned out of total possible																					
Met state acad. standards (proficient)																					
Math	Yes No																				
Reading	Yes No																				
Writing	Yes No																				
GPA																					
Behavior Data																					
Tardy																					
Skipping classes																					
Unexcused/unverified absence																					
Excused absence																					
Behavior referrals/infraction																					
Detention																					
Suspension (in/out-of-school)																					
CONNECT																					
Communication																					
With student	Formal																				
	Informal					Informal					Informal					Informal					
Attempted/not reached																					
Left message																					
Note home																					
With family																					
Phone conversation																					
Meeting																					
Home visit																					
Communication with school staff																					
Communication with outside agency																					

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 Check & Connect Research Team and partner entities: MS, Hennepin, and Ramsey School Districts

Mentor Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in education or a human service field.
- Experience working with children and adolescents, youth agencies, social services, and school systems
- Persistence. A belief that all youth have the ability to learn
- Ability and willingness to work with families using a non-blaming approach
- Advocacy skills, including good communication skills and the ability to negotiate, compromise, and confront conflict
- Organizational skills, flexibility, and the ability to work in a variety of settings. The ability to work independently
- Knowledge of community and educational resources
- Valid driver's license, car insurance, and a reliable means of transportation

Staffing with existing personnel

- Redefine positions of current staff; adjust typical caseloads. Consider teachers, counselors, school psychologists, social workers, and educational assistants
- Provide a small stipend to school personnel who take on a larger caseload (e.g. 5 or more students).
- Relieve school personnel servicing as mentors from other service duties (e.g. bus or lunch duty).
- Use committed community volunteers supervised by school staff members (e.g. counselor, school psychologist, social worker) who have dedicated time for Check & Connect.

Step 4: Organize existing resources for intervention

- Use existing services in schools and communities whenever possible
- Resource mapping:
 - Identify services and programs available
 - Identify how to access services and programs

Resource Mapping

	School	Contact Information	Community	Contact Information
Academic Support				
Mental Health Support				
Extra-curricular Activities				

Step 5: Get to know students, teachers and parents

Start with knowing student as a person (conversations about interests)

Move to understanding students' school experience (conversations about school)

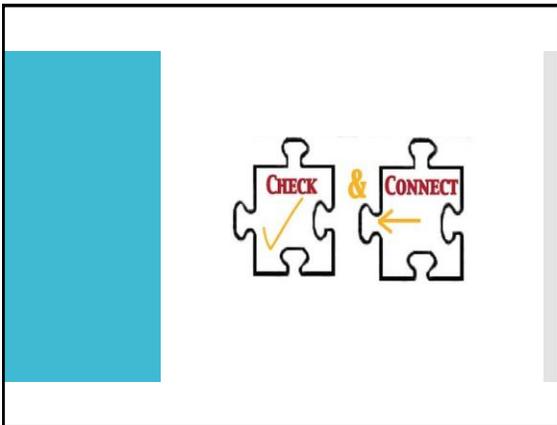
End with school requirements and expectations (conversations about goals and expectations)

Primary message to parents

- Attendance, completing schoolwork, and appropriate behavior are important for school success. The mentor will work with the parent with the goal that the student will have a successful year.
- Parents are a necessary component in their child's education and their involvement is important
- The mentor is sincere and genuinely cares about the family

Step 6: Use the "Check" procedures and the monitoring form

- Check feature provides systematic and efficient monitoring
- Provides data based link to educational progress and performance



"Connect"

- Communication
- Basic Intervention
- Intensive Intervention
- Monthly summary of case notes.

Check & Connect High School Monitoring Form

Student: _____ ID #: _____ Grade: _____
 School: _____ Mentor: _____ Month: _____

CHECK		M	TU	W	TH	F	M	TU	W	TH	F	M	TU	W	TH	F	M	TU	W	TH	F	High risk
Academic data																						
Number of Ds or Fs																						
Cumulative grades		1st quarter grades					2nd quarter grades					3rd quarter grades					4th quarter grades					
Credit accrual		_____ Ds _____ Fs					_____ Ds _____ Fs					_____ Ds _____ Fs					_____ Ds _____ Fs					
Most state acad. standards (proficient)		Math: _____ Yes _____ No					Reading: _____ Yes _____ No					Writing: _____ Yes _____ No					GPA _____					
Behavior Data																						
Tardy																						
Skipping classes																						
Unexcused/unverified absence																						
Excused absence																						
Behavior referral/instruction																						
Detention																						
Suspension (in/out-of-school)																						
CONNECT																						
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With student		Formal																				
		Informal																				
Attempt/not reached																						
Left message																						
With family		Note home																				
		Phone conversation																				
Meeting																						
		Home visit																				
Communication with school staff																						
Communication with outside agency																						

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 Check & Connect neither may use neither results nor form with students at their sites.

Basic intervention	M	TU	W	TH	F	M	TU	W	TH	F	M	TU	W	TH	F	M	TU	W	TH	F
Share "check" data																				
Provide regular feedback																				
Discuss staying in school																				
Problem solve about risk																				
Intensive intervention																				
Facilitate goal setting																				
Discuss academic progress and supports																				
Discuss behavior and supports																				
Impact likelihood of graduating from high school																				
Intensive problem solving																				
Intensive problem solving with parent																				
Intensive problem solving with school personnel																				
Facilitate participation in community service																				
Facilitate participation in school or community sponsored activities																				
Facilitate tutoring																				
Facilitate participation in small group instruction for passing exit exam																				
Teach problem solving skills																				
Teach organization and study skills																				
Arrange an alternative to suspension																				
Other:																				

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INTENSIVE INTERVENTION

- Supplemental, personalized
- Designed to achieve a person-environment fit
- Supports student to change
- Encourages environment (teacher, parents, school) to engage in different policies or practices

"CONNECT" Enhance opportunities for academic success

- Set clear goals and identify ways to succeed
- Talk with teacher to share and gather information on progress
- Access services such as tutoring or help with homework
- Assist with crating homework schedules or plans for homework completion
- Teach organizational skills
- Design time management system with student
- Discuss with teachers potential academic modifications or differentiated supports
- Enhance home support for learning and extended learning time

"CONNECT" Communicate relevance of education and learning to future endeavors

- Help set goals by discussing where student would like to be 2 years after graduation
- Encourage student to identify steps to pursue personal goal/attain career aspirations
- Monitor student performance and conduct problem solving focused on choosing goals based on student's interests, skills and limits
- Discuss link between attending class, grades and learning
- Discuss wages as a function of educational credentials
- Encourage parents to deliver message of importance of school and work

"CONNECT" Create a caring and supportive learning environment

- Contact parents by phone or home visits to share information; jointly develop a plan to re-engage student at school
- Write agreement plans with students, teachers, parents to develop alternatives to disciplinary actions (e.g., suspension)
- Teach expected behavior through role play, coaching, and modeling
- Teach anger management
- Role play how to respond to teasing and how to receive or provide constructive criticism
- Build skills regarding how to ask for help
- Help student learn to accept limits

"CONNECT" Help with personal problems

- Enhance decision-making skills through structured problem solving. Never tell student what to do
- Help family to learn how to constructively navigate schools, how to support reaching important benchmarks, and how to reduce risk of dropping out
- Help student cope with family changes (e.g., moves, divorce, new boyfriend in home)
- Lend an empathetic ear, check on how student feels
- Collaborate with counselors or social workers for complex cases

Core of CONNECT interventions: Problem Solving and Goal Setting

Solve problems with, not for the student.

- Step 1: Think about the problem or risk
- Step 2: What are some choices?
- Step 3: Choose one
- Step 4: How important is this to you? How confident are you that you can do this?
- Step 5: Do it.
- Step 6 : How did it work?

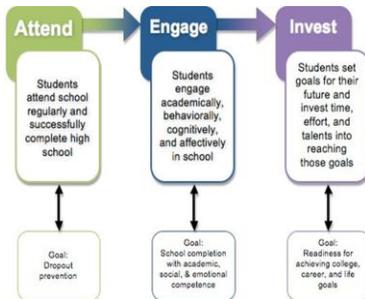
Core of
CONNECT
interventions:
Problem
Solving and
Goal Setting

SMART Goals

- S** Specific
- M** Measurable
- A** Attainable
- R** Realistic
- T** Timely

Goals that are not
**WRITTEN
DOWN**
are just
WISHES.
— UNKNOWN —

Continuum
to move
student to
success



Christenson, Stout & Pohl, 2012

ASK YOURSELF
IF WHAT YOU
ARE DOING TODAY
IS GETTING YOU
CLOSER TO WHERE
YOU WANT TO
BE TOMORROW.

Step 8:
Strengthen the
family-school
relationship

- Parent engagement is different from parent involvement:
 - Is relationship based
 - Assumes the family and school are both socializing environments that support and guide the student as a learner
 - Occurs through dialogue, problem solving, and shared decision making about expectations, goals, and desired learning outcomes for the student

(Christenson, 2010)

Mentors do not see families as lacking and try to "fix" them. Instead, mentors recognize that all families have strengths but vary in the amount of cultural capital they possess. Cultural capital refers to "family knowledge and norms about education and whether or not those are congruent with the knowledge and norms presupposed and valued by the school"

(Christenson, Stout & Pohl, 2012; Stanton-Salazar, 2001, p.11.)

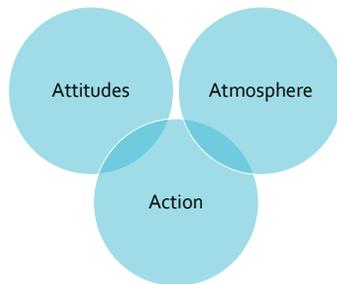
Guidelines for Engaging with Parents

- Maintain a positive, honest orientation to communication with parents
- Develop a two-way communication system
- Focus all communication on the student's engagement at school and progress in learning
- Ensure that parents have the information they need to support their child's education
- Recognize that trusting relationships develop over time.

Family Centered Practices

- Adopt a family orientation
- Think about what is best about family
- Walk in parents' shoes (i.e., perspective taking)
- Treat parents as equals
- Be a resource

Building a trusting family-school relationship



Home-School Communication

- Call on a regular basis
- Send notes to let parents know what is going on
- Make home visits regarding progress, make at least once a year for a positive reason
- Find out if parent wants suggestions, resources or support to help student at home
- Directly invite parent to be a partner
- Attend parent-teacher conferences with parents
- Work with school staff and community supports to offer parent education classes or workshops
- Share good news – document it.

Step 9: Provide Mentor Support and Supervision

- Identify Program Coordinator
- Anchored at district level
 - Typically .5 to 1.0 FTE
 - Typically licensed professional employed by district (e.g., special education teacher, counselor, juvenile justice coordinator, school psychologist)

Tasks of Check & Connect Coordinator

- Establish referral procedures with support team of school administrators, teachers, counselors, social workers
- Identify target students (in collaboration with school personnel)
- Serve as liaison among schools, families, community agencies
- Connect mentors with critical school and community resources
- Establish working relationships with school- and community-based programs to involve C&C students
- Meet weekly with mentors at schools to provide supervision
- Provide technical assistance
- Coordinate collection of evaluation data
- Ensure fidelity of implementation
- Provide ongoing staff development and supervision

To Summarize: Key Features

1. Mentor
2. Mentees identified based on need
3. Systematic monitoring (CHECK)
4. Timely, individualized intervention strategies (CONNECT)

Key Features

- **Relationship Building**
 - mutual trust and open communication
- **Routine Monitoring of Alterable Indicators**
 - systemically checking warning signs of withdrawal (attendance, academic performance, behavior)

Key Features

- **Persistence Plus**
 - a persistent source of academic motivation
- **Problem-Solving**
 - designed to promote the acquisition of skills to resolve conflict constructively and to look for solutions rather than a source of blame
- **Affiliation with School and Learning**
 - facilitating students' access to and active participation in school-related activities and events

To Get Started: Establish capacity

- ✓ COMPELLING NEED for intervention
- ✓ STAFF DEVELOPMENT to build knowledge and skill within those involved

Define indicators of Risk

- ATTENDANCE
- TARDIES
- BEHAVIORAL REFERRALS
- ACADEMIC
- D/F
- CREDITS

Organize!

- ✓ Align mentors and mentees
- ✓ Forms or Protocols
- ✓ Communication to parents
- ✓ Determine data collection process

Structure for Collaboration

- How can mentors come together
 - to discuss mentee progress?
 - learn intervention strategies?

Consider a Focus Team

Team Members

Administrator
Counselor
Sped director
Core teacher
Noncore teacher
Sped teacher

Function

Monitor the system:

- data collection
- mentoring needs
- plan for staff development
- reflection on progress
- creation of tools

PD Support

- Initial training of mentors and administrators
- Monthly staff development to support mentors:
 - *Relationships, Rigor, Relevance, types of engagement*
- Implementation of intervention team meetings:
 - *facilitation support, individual conferencing with mentors*
- Data collection and analysis (mentees and system)

Training "Content"

- Strategies for engaging students in school
- How dropout risk factors may be altered
- Basic and intensive dropout prevention interventions
- Skills of an effective Check & Connect Monitor/Mentor
- How Mentor works with students, families, and school staff
- Resources

A few final thoughts...

"EVERY CHILD DESERVES A CHAMPION — AN ADULT WHO WILL NEVER GIVE UP ON THEM, WHO UNDERSTANDS THE POWER OF CONNECTION, AND INSISTS THAT THEY BECOME THE BEST THAT THEY CAN POSSIBLY BE."
RITA PIERSON

