SEAMLESSLY INTEGRATING SERVING YOUTH IN TRANSITION INTO CORE SERVICES, PART A.

PRESENTERS: KIMBERLY TISSOT AND CHARLIE WALTERS

CHARLIE WALTERS: SO, I HAVE BEEN ON THE

EDGE OF MY SEAT FOR TALKING ABOUT THIS STUFF SINCE WE GOT

HERE. BECAUSE THIS IS MY FAVORITE. AS A CENTER THIS IS AN

AREA THAT WE HAVE REALLY ENDEAVORED TO ORIENT

OURSELVES TO. FOR THE NEXT HOUR AND A HALF ROUGHLY, WE WILL BE

TALKING ABOUT SEAMLESSLY INTEGRATING YOUTH IN

TRANSITION INTO CORE SERVICES. WE ARE GOING TO TRY TO EXPLAIN

SOME STUFF AS WE GO. I GUESS THE DISCLAIMER IS THAT – YOU KNOW,

THERE IS ROOM IN OUR COMMUNITY TO HAVE DIFFERING FEELINGS

AND BELIEFS AND APPROACHES TO HOW YOU HANDLE THIS. I

GUESS THE DISCLAIMER THAT MIGHT GO WITHOUT SAYING IS THIS IS HOW WE

HANDLE YOUTH AND YOUTH PROGRAMMING AND SOME OF THE

PHILOSOPHY THAT UNDERPINS THAT FOR US. AND SO, THERE'S

GOING TO BE A TIME LATER IN THE AFTERNOON FOR DISCUSSION.

WE LOVE QUESTIONS AS WE GO, TOO. PLEASE DON'T HESITATE.

IF YOU DIFFER IN YOUR APPROACH OR WE ARE GLOSSING OVER OUR

APPROACH TO WHERE IT DOESN'T JIBE WITH HOW YOU THINK ABOUT

THESE THINGS, PLEASE STOP US AND LET'S TALK. I WANT TO

GIVE ONE OTHER COMMENT BEFORE WE DIVE INTO THIS STUFF

TOGETHER. AND THAT'S JUST ON OUR APPROACH TO YOUTH IN

GENERAL. AND SPECIFICALLY, YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT

DISABILITIES THAT WE WORK WITH. I HAVE HEARD TALK SINCE WE HAVE

BEEN HERE THIS WEEK AND I JUST WANT TO KIND OF CLEAR SOME

STUFF UP. HOPEFULLY, I CAN SAY THIS WITHOUT BRUCE

OVERHEARING ME QUOTING HIM. HE IS IN THE ZONE. BUT IN

THINKING ABOUT THE LANGUAGE THAT OUR NONDISABLED OVERLORDS

GIVE US FOR YOUTH AND HOW THAT LANGUAGE FOLLOWS PEOPLE WITH

DISABILITIES FOR THE REST OF THEIR LIFE. WHAT I WANT US TO HAVE IS

THE LATITUDE TO CHALLENGE THAT LANGUAGE. I AM TALKING

ABOUT DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA AND LABELS, LIKE HIGH FUNCTIONING

AND LOW FUNCTIONING, IQ SCORES, DEVELOPMENTAL AGES. THIS

IS NOT IL. RIGHT? THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH DISABILITY

RIGHTS OR WHO WE ARE AS A COMMUNITY. THIS IS STUFF THAT'S

BEEN GIVEN BY PROFESSIONALS TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, SO,

THAT PEOPLE WITHOUT DISABILITIES CAN BETTER UNDERSTAND

THEM. HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH WHAT WE ARE DOING AND WHY WE

ARE DOING IT. SO, AS WE TALK THERE'S A TENDENCY TO TALK ABOUT

SPECIFICALLY YOUTH WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES AS IF

THEY ARE FROM SOME ALIEN PLANET. WE NEED TO GIVE THEM A

DEVELOPMENTAL AGE, LIKE OH WELL, KYLE FUNCTIONS LIKE A

FOUR-YEAR-OLD, FOR US TO UNDERSTAND HIM. THAT STUFF IS GARBAGE.

NOT ONLY DOES IT NOT HAVE ANY BASIS IN INDEPENDENT LIVING,

IT HAS NEXT TO NO BASIS IN SCIENCE AND IT'S BEEN BASTARDIZED

TO THE POINT WHERE NOBODY REALLY KNOWS WHAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT

ANYMORE. I CAN TALK FOR THE NEXT HOUR AND A HALF ABOUT IQ

SCORES AND DEVELOPMENTAL AGES AND FUNCTIONING LABELS THAT WE PUT ON

PEOPLE. WHAT I WANTED TO THROW OUT THERE BEFORE WE START,

IS WE HAVE NO PLACE FOR THAT IN OUR CENTER. WE TRY TO

EMPOWER PEOPLE TO CHALLENGE THAT FOR THEMSELVES TOO.

SO, WHEN WE TALK ABOUT YOUTH PROGRAMMING, WE DON'T MAKE

THAT DISTINCTION BETWEEN THIS IS OUR HIGH FUNCTIONS CURRICULUM

AND THIS IS OUR LOW FUNCTIONING CURRICULUM. THIS IS FOR

YOUTH WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES AND THIS IS OUR GROUP FOR

THE OTHER FOLKS WHO CAN PASS A LITTLE BIT EASIER WITH THEIR DISABILITY.

THAT HAS NO PLACE IN OUR CENTER SO, I JUST WANTED TO MAKE THAT

CLEAR.

KIMBERLY TISSOT: AND WE ARE ALL EXPERTS IN ADAPTING

OUR EVERYDAY LIVES, SO, ADAPTING A CURRICULUM IS NO

DIFFERENT AND YOU CAN DO THAT AND YOU CAN MEET PEOPLE

WHERE THEY ARE.

SO, I KNOW WE HAVE TALKED A LOT ABOUT THE FIVE CORES, SO, I

AM NOT GOING TO GO THROUGH EVERY PART OF WHAT YOUTH

TRANSITION IS. BUT REMEMBER YOUTH TRANSITION FOR REPORTING

PURPOSES, ARE FOR YOUNG ADULTS WHO HAVE COMPLETED THEIR

SECONDARY EDUCATION OR LEFT SCHOOL TO THEIR POST

SECONDARY LIFE. SO, THESE ARE PEOPLE WHO ARE NO LONGER IN

HIGH SCHOOL. WIOA AGE RAGE IS FROM 14 TO 24. AND THEN THE

BIGGEST THING IS THIS IS NOT A NEW POPULATION THAT WE ARE

SERVING. WE HAVE ALWAYS SERVED ALL AGES WITHIN THE

INDEPENDENT LIVING MOVEMENT AND SO, THIS IS NO DIFFERENT. WE

ARE JUST HAVING TO REPORT IT DIFFERENTLY NOW. SO, IT'S

NOT A SERVICE DELIVERY ISSUE. IT'S THE WAY THAT

WE ARE REPORTING. NOW OF COURSE, WIOA ALSO BROUGHT FUNDING

OPPORTUNITIES TO CENTERS ACROSS THE U.S. AND I THINK WE ARE

ALL EXCITED TO BE ENGAGED IN THAT TO BE ABLE TO PREPARE

THE NEXT GENERATION OF YOUNG ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES AS

LEADERS.

SO, REMEMBER THAT IF YOU ARE SERVING SOMEBODY IN

HIGH SCHOOL, YOU CAN REPORT THAT UNDER A DIFFERENT CORE

SERVICE. THAT'S NOT GOING TO BE REPORTED

AS YOUTH TRANSITION. BUT ALSO, THINK ABOUT IT AS A WHOLE

PICTURE. IF YOU DON'T HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH SOME OF

THESE YOUNG ADULTS -- IF YOU ARE NOT IN THOSE HIGH SCHOOLS

OR MIDDLE SCHOOLS OR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, HOW ARE

YOU GOING TO FIND THEM WHEN THEY LEAVE HIGH SCHOOL? SO,

SOME OF THE WORK THAT WE DO YOU WILL NOTICE THAT WE ARE IN

THE SCHOOLS, BECAUSE WE ARE IN THE SCHOOLS TO FORM THAT

RELATIONSHIP, AS WELL. AND SO, WHEN THESE STUDENTS ARE

EXITING HIGH SCHOOL, WE ARE ABLE TO MAINTAIN THAT

RELATIONSHIP AND CONTINUE SERVING THEM.

ALL RIGHT. SO, YOU HEARD A LITTLE BIT ABOUT OUR

ORGANIZATION EARLIER. BUT WE ARE THE FIRST CENTER FOR

INDEPENDENT LIVING IN SOUTH CAROLINA AND WE HAVE, ACCORDING

TO OUR PART C FUNDING, WE SERVE 23 COUNTIES WHICH IS ACTUALLY HALF

OF OUR STATE. WE HAVE A NUMBER OF PROGRAMS THAT ARE

STATEWIDE AND A NUMBER OF OUR YOUTH PROGRAMS ARE

STATEWIDE. THE DIRECTION THAT OUR ORGANIZATION TOOK IS

THAT WE DON'T ONLY PROVIDE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS, WE ARE

ALSO ABOUT COMMUNITY CHANGE. SO, WE ARE WANTING TO MAKE

SOUTH CAROLINA A BETTER PLACE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

TO WORK, PLAY, AND JUST LIVE. AND SO, THAT'S OUR FOCUS

IN EVERYTHING THAT WE DO. SO, A LOT OF OUR SERVICES YOU

WILL SEE THAT WE NOT ONLY PROVIDE THE DIRECT SERVICES, BUT

WE ALSO PROVIDE SYSTEMS SERVICES WHERE WE ARE TRYING TO

FIX THAT SYSTEM ISSUE.

IN OUR ORGANIZATION WE HAVE 47 STAFF MEMBERS. AND

THAT INCLUDES YOUNG ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES ON OUR TEAM.

THEY ARE PAID. AND THEN WE ALSO, HAVE A LITTLE BIT OVER 30

FUNDING SOURCES. AND WE ARE GOING TO TALK SPECIFICALLY

ABOUT OUR FUNDING STREAMS TODAY. AS IT RELATES TO YOUTH.

BUT I DO WANT TO POINT OUT THAT OVER A MILLION

DOLLARS OF OUR OVERALL BUDGET IS DEDICATED TO YOUTH

TRANSITIONING. SO, WE ARE REALLY EXCITED ABOUT THIS AND WE

ARE TAKING THAT INITIATIVE AS AN ORGANIZATION TO REALLY BE

IN THE LEAD OF YOUTH TRANSITION. BECAUSE IT'S SO,

IMPORTANT.

CHARLIE: SO, WE LOOK TO THE NUMBERS OF

YOUTH THAT WE ARE SERVING I WANTED TO GIVE A QUICK

CLARIFICATION POINT HERE. WHEN WE TALK ABOUT – I MENTIONED

YESTERDAY I THINK IT WAS -- WHEN WE TALK ABOUT TRANSITION,

THE LARGER PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY UNDERSTANDS TRANSITION IN

A DIFFERENT WAY IN TERMS OF IDEA. AND SINCE 1990 IDEA HAS

MANDATED THAT PROFESSIONALS SERVING YOUTH WITH

DISABILITIES THAT HAVE IEPS HELP THEM TRANSITION TO POSITIVE

POST SCHOOL OUTCOMES SO, THEY LOOK AT TRANSITION FROM 16

ON. IT VARIES STATE TO STATE. WHEN YOUR DEPARTMENT OF

EDUCATION MANDATES FOLKS BEGIN THAT TRANSITION PROCESS.

IN SOUTH CAROLINA IT'S 13. AND SO, WE ARE TALKING ABOUT

TRANSITION STARTING AT 13. FROM WIOA HOW IT AFFECTED

CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING, LIKE KIMBERLY MENTIONS FROM

14 TO 24, ONCE THEY HAVE EXITED HIGH SCHOOL UNTIL THE AGE

OF 24 THAT'S TRANSITION. I MENTION THAT JUST TO SAY

THAT THIS IS A REPORTING ISSUE. WHEN WE TALK ABOUT

SERVING YOUTH THAT HAVE NOT EXITED HIGH SCHOOL YET, WE TALK

ABOUT THAT BEING A POPULATION THAT WILL VERY SOON MEET THE

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR YOUTH TRANSITION. DOES THAT

MAKE SENSE SO, FAR? SO, IT'S REALLY JUST KIND OF A SEMANTIC

AND REPORTING ISSUE. WHEN I SAY TRANSITION -- WHEN WE TALK

ABOUT TRANSITION AT OUR CENTER, WE ARE USUALLY SPEAKING

ABOUT IT MORE BROADLY THAN WHAT THAT DEFINITION THAT WIOA

GAVE TO US IN OUR CENTERS. SO, IN 2013, WE SERVED 135 YOUTH

BETWEEN THE AGES OF FIVE AND 21. THAT WAS 20 PERCENT OF OUR

CONSUMER BASE AT THAT TIME. THESE ARE FOLKS WITH

ILPS, TOO. THESE ARE CONSUMERS. IN 2014 IT JUMPED TO 157

BETWEEN THE AGES OF FIVE AND 24. IT WAS 26 PERCENT.

BY 2015 WE WERE SERVING 59 PERCENT OF OUR CONSUMER BASE

OF YOUTH BETWEEN THE AGES OF FIVE AND 24. IN 2016,

IT WAS 56 PERCENT, FIVE TO 24, 696 YOUTH THAT WAS.

IN 2017 (THESE ARE FISCAL YEARS) FISCAL YEAR 2017

WE SERVED 867 YOUTH CONSUMERS BETWEEN THE AGES

AGES OF FIVE AND 24, ACCOUNTING FOR 62 PERCENT.

KIMBERLY: AND PLEASE BE AWARE THAT WE ARE

WATCHING THESE NUMBERS TOO, BECAUSE WE DON'T WANT TO BE

A COMPLETELY YOUTH-DRIVEN ORGANIZATION. BECAUSE WE HAVE GOT

OTHER CORE SERVICES AND OTHER POPULATIONS TO WORK ON. SO,

WE ARE MONITORING THIS. AND WE ARE LOOKING AT

ESTABLISHING OTHER PROGRAMS. THIS PROGRAM PARTICULARLY JUST

BOOMED VERY, VERY FAST. AND IT MADE OUR ORGANIZATION GROW

SIGNIFICANTLY. AND SO, THERE WAS A LOT OF ATTENTION

FOCUSED ON THIS YOUNGER POPULATION FOR SO LONG, BUT WE DO

HAVE PROGRAMS FOR OTHER AGES, AS WELL. ALL AGES. AND

SO, WE ARE MONITORING THIS, BECAUSE WE DON'T WANT THE

MAJORITY ALWAYS TO BE YOUNG ADULTS.

QUESTION?

AUDIENCE: SO, PART OF THAT MONEY THAT YOU WERE

TALKING ABOUT, THAT MILLION DOLLARS, IS THAT OUT OF THE

C FUNDING OR IS THAT SOMETHING THAT -- WHERE DO YOU

COME UP WITH THAT?

KIMBERLY: WE ARE GOING TO SHOW YOU IN A MINUTE.

AUDIENCE: OKAY.

PRESENTER: DOES ANYONE ELSE STILL HAVE THOSE

IMAGES OF WILLOW BROOK IN THEIR MINDS FROM THE GREAT FIGHT

FOR DISABILITY RIGHTS? THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME I HAD SEEN

SOME OF THOSE IMAGES IN A WHILE. WE MAY HAVE CLOSED DOWN

A LOT OF OUR INSTITUTIONS LIKE WILLOW BROOK, BUT WHEN WE

LOOK TO OUR STATE AND OUR CONSUMER BASE, WHEN WE LOOK TO THE

DISABILITY COMMUNITY IN SOUTH CAROLINA, WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE

NEW WILLOW BROOK IN SOUTH CAROLINA IS A LACK OF

PREPARATION. THE NEW WILLOW BROOK IN SOUTH CAROLINA IS THE

FACT THAT WE ARE TAKING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND WE

AREN'T GIVING THEM A CHANCE. WHETHER IT'S FROM LOW EXPECTATIONS,

A LACK OF ACCESS TO SERVICES. YOU FILL IN THE

BLANK. WE ARE MARGINALIZING THEM IN NOT SETTING THE BAR

HIGH ENOUGH AND GIVING THEM THE TOOLS THAT THEY NEED TO

HAVE THE TYPES OF LIVES THAT THEY WANT AND THAT'S

HAPPENING FOR YOUTH. THROW A ROCK AND YOU WILL HIT ONE.

CHANCES ARE THEY ARE BEING MARGINALIZED BY THE SYSTEM AND

THAT STARTS SO, EARLY, RIGHT? WHETHER IT'S THE STIGMA OF

BEING PICKED APART BASED ON SOME OF THOSE DIAGNOSTIC

CRITERIA WE TALKED ABOUT, TO PROFESSIONALS THAT THEY

STILL CLAP -- WHEN WE DO PRESENTATIONS FOR YOUNG ADULTS THAT

HAVE GOTTEN COLLEGE DEGREES WITH DISABILITIES OR ARE EMPLOYED

AS YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, THESE ARE PROFESSIONALS.

WE HAVE A ROOM THIS SIZE FILLED WITH PROFESSIONALS AND THEY

WILL ALL START SIMULTANEOUSLY CLAPPING. YOUR JOB IS TO

PREPARE THESE FOLKS FOR THEIR LIFE AFTER SCHOOL,

BUT YOU ARE STILL STUNNED WHEN THEY ARE PREPARED.

THAT'S THE CULTURE THAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT.

AND SO, IT'S REALLY, REALLY IMPORTANT TO RECOGNIZE AS A CENTER.

AS A CENTER, WE HAD TO REALLY GET IN TOUCH WITH THAT PHILOSOPHY

AND WE ARE WATCHING THESE NUMBERS. BUT WE ALSO, UNDERSTAND

THAT IF WE DON'T GRAB THEM NOW, CHANCES ARE NO ONE IS GOING

TO. AND THE DAMAGE THAT'S DONE IN THE MEANTIME, THE

TRAUMA THAT THESE YOUTH EXPERIENCE, YOU KNOW WE CAN'T

EXCUSE THAT. WE CAN'T WATCH IT HAPPEN.

KIMBERLY: AND WE DO GET A LITTLE SPUNKY WITH THEM TOO.

WHEN THEY CLAP FOR US, WE CLAP BACK. YOU KNOW, SAYING HOW MANY

OF YOU HAVE A COLLEGE DEGREE? AND MAKING THAT POINT.

CHARLIE: SO, THE FOUNDATION FOR YOUTH TRANSITION, IT RUNS DEEP.

AS A CENTER WE LOOK TO MAKING SURE THAT FIRST AND

FOREMOST THE SERVICES THAT WE ARE

PROVIDING FOR ALL AGES ARE ALSO, ACCESSIBLE TO YOUTH AND

THAT OUTREACH IS THERE, SPECIFICALLY FOR YOUTH TO ACCESS

THAT PROGRAMMING TOO. THAT REQUIRES LEADERSHIP BUY-IN, WHICH I

CAN'T SAY HAS BEEN A REAL DIFFICULT THING. I THINK IT'S A

REAL EASY -- FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO AREN'T HERE WITH YOUR

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AREN'T HERE AS LEADERSHIP FROM YOUR

CENTER, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW TO GET THAT

LEADERSHIP BUY-IN. BUT THAT REALLY HASN'T BEEN DIFFICULT FOR US IN

OUR CENTER. WE HAVE THE LEADERSHIP BUY-IN SITTING BESIDE ME.

THE BIGGER HURDLE HAS BEEN STAFF EXPERTISE IN YOUTH TRANSITION AND

THAT IS ONE THAT WE ARE STEADILY WORKING ON. YOU HAVE TO

UNDERSTAND THE SYSTEMS THAT YOUTH ARE IN. YOU HAVE TO

UNDERSTAND THE SYSTEMS. THIS INCLUDES THE WORK FORCE

INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT, IDEA, HCBS FINAL RULE, BEST

PRACTICE IN TRANSITION. EVERYTHING FROM WORK-BASED LEARNING

TO INSTRUCTION PRACTICES. THESE ARE ALL THINGS THAT ARE

REALLY, REALLY IMPORTANT TO KNOW. NOT SO, MUCH TO SHAPE

THE SERVICES THAT WE PROVIDE. BUT TO BE ABLE TO SPEAK TO

THE CONTEXT IN WHICH THESE YOUTH ARE IN, RIGHT? TO BE

TAKEN SERIOUSLY AT THE TABLE AS CONTEXT EXPERTS ON

TRANSITION. WE HAVE TO DEVELOP THAT EXPERTISE AS A CENTER.

YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES DRIVING THESE PROGRAMS IS

PARAMOUNT. IT HAS TO BE. ONE OF THE NICE THINGS ABOUT

BEING OLDER FOLK LIKE OURSELVES IS THAT WE WERE YOUTH WITH

DISABILITIES. RIGHT? SO, DON'T LET THIS BE -- IF YOU

DON'T FEEL LIKE YOU HAVE YOUR FINGER ON THE PULSE OF YOUTH

IN YOUR AREA, DON'T LET THAT BE A STOPPING POINT. WE

STRIVE TO HAVE THAT BE THE FOREMOST INFLUENCER FOR THE

WORK THAT WE DO, THE WORDS STRAIGHT FROM YOUTH THEMSELVES.

BUT, WE ARE MADE UP OF A BUNCH OF -- BUT WE ARE A CENTER MADE UP

OF A LOT OF OLD FOGIES WHO WERE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES. RIGHT?

SO, THAT EXPERIENCE SHOULDN'T JUST BE PUSHED ASIDE AS NO LONGER

RELEVANT. IT'S STILL VERY RELEVANT.

KIMBERLY: AND MAKE THAT POINT WHEN YOU ARE AT THE TABLE. I THINK

PEOPLE FORGET THAT. WE DO GROW UP, AND WE DO HAVE LIVES, AND WE DO

HAVE FAMILIES AND JOBS.

CHARLIE: PURPOSEFUL SYNERGY BETWEEN PROGRAMS AS EXPANSION OCCURS.

IT'S HARD TO PICK APART EACH ONE OF THESE

PROGRAMS THAT WE ARE ABOUT TO JUMP INTO TOGETHER, BECAUSE

WHEN WE THINK ABOUT OUR YOUTH PROGRAMMING, WE DON'T THINK ABOUT

PROGRAMS IN ISOLATION. IT'S REAL DIFFICULT TO ASSESS THE

VALUE OF A SINGLE PROGRAM BECAUSE THEY ARE INEXTRICABLY

LINKED TO THE OTHER PROGRAMS. THEY HAVE DIFFERENT FUNCTIONS,

BUT THEY ARE ALL EQUALLY IMPORTANT. RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

AT EVERY TURN. THAT'S KIND OF PART AND PARCEL WITH THAT

DEVELOPING THAT STAFF EXPERTISE ON ISSUES RELATED TO

TRANSITION AND DISABILITY RIGHTS RELATED TO TRANSITION.

THAT RELATIONSHIP BUILDING IS TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY BY THE

FOLKS AT THE TABLE. FIRST AND FOREMOST, TO LET THEM KNOW

THAT YOU’RE PASSIONATE AND THAT YOU ARE THERE. I THINK WE

HAD A HISTORY BEFORE KIMBERLY'S LEADERSHIP IN OUR CENTER

OF THROWING SHOES TO BE FRANK. WE WENT TO IEP MEETINGS

AND WE TOLD PEOPLE WHAT THEY WERE DOING WRONG. BUT WE

WEREN'T THERE AS AN ASSET AND AS A PARTNER. AND AS

SOMEONE THAT THOSE PROFESSIONALS COULD LOOK TO FOR

GUIDANCE. AND THAT'S REALLY, REALLY IMPORTANT TO CHANGE

THAT SCRIPT. WE WILL TELL THEM WHERE THEY ARE WRONG.

RIGHT? WE HAVE NOT STOPPED TELLING PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE

WRONG. BUT WE ARE ALSO RIGHT THERE AT EVERY TURN TO LET

THEM KNOW WHAT WE ARE WILLING TO DO TO MAKE IT BETTER.

THAT SOLUTION FOCUS IS KEY IN THAT RELATIONSHIP BUILDING.

SO, THE EQUIP PROGRAM WE ALREADY HAD A COUPLE OF

QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS. THIS IS A CORNERSTONE FOR OUR YOUTH

PROGRAMMING. IT'S A LEADERSHIP PROGRAM FOR YOUTH AGE 13 TO

28. IT'S RUN BY YOUNG ADULTS. ALL OF THE CONTENT. IT HAS TO

ULTIMATELY BE RUN THROUGH OTHER LEADERSHIP AT OUR CENTER TO MAKE SURE

WE ARE NOT DOING ANYTHING ILLEGAL OR IMMORAL. WE HAVE FINAL

SAY, BUT ALL OF THE CONTENT AND THE DIRECTION COMES

STRAIGHT FROM THE YOUNG ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES THAT ARE

RUNNING THE PROGRAM. ITS CORE IS IN PEER TO PEER SKILL

DEVELOPMENT AND MENTORING. THAT'S THE CORE. LAST YEAR WE

REACHED ROUGHLY 8,000 YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND

COMMUNITY MEMBERS THROUGH THE PROGRAM. WE HAVE

STAKEHOLDERS AT THE TABLE. THIS ISN'T TO CHANGE THE SHAPE

OR GUIDE THE SHAPE OF THE PROGRAM SO MUCH AS IT IS TO

CREATE THAT TRANSPARENCY FOR STAKEHOLDERS IN THE COMMUNITY

SO THAT THEY FEEL THAT SENSE OF OWNERSHIP, EVEN THOUGH WE

ALL KNOW BEHIND THE CURTAIN, THAT THEY DON'T OWN THE

PROGRAM. THE YOUNG ADULTS RUNNING THE PROGRAM DO. BUT TO

OFFER THAT TRANSPARENCY. BRING THEM TO THE TABLE.

WE DO IT QUARTERLY TO TELL THEM WHAT THE YOUNG ADULTS

HAVE BEEN UP TO AND WHAT'S GOING ON.

IT'S A FOUNDATIONAL COMPONENT FOR OUR OTHER PROGRAMS

BECAUSE IT'S OUR AVENUE FOR DEVELOPING THAT YOUTH

EXPERTISE IN IL. IT'S OF CRITICAL IMPORTANCE. SO,

WE DO IT IN A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT WAYS AND

I HAVE GOT THE LOGO. WE TRIED TO INCLUDE -- FOR THOSE

OF YOU THAT WERE AT THE YOUTH TRANSITION TRAINING IN DENVER,

WE MAKE IT A POINT TO INCLUDE OUR LOGOS FOR PROGRAMS.

JUST SO THAT WE ARE ALL CLEAR THAT USING CLIP ART FOR PROGRAMS

ISN'T BRANDING. RIGHT? AND WE HAVE TO HAVE THAT CONSCIOUSNESS

ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS TO HAVE A PROGRAM THAT'S PUBLIC FACING.

WHAT DOES THIS PROGRAM LOOK LIKE ON THE OUTSIDE? AND SO LOGOS

AND THE BRANDING OF A PROGRAM IS IMPORTANT.

KIMBERLY: AND THE LOGO WAS ALSO DESIGNED BY YOUTH AND

THE COLORS WERE CHOSEN, SO IT'S ALSO YOUTH FRIENDLY.

CHARLIE: SO, IT'S AN ORANGE LOGO THAT SPELLS OUT EQUIP

IN BIG BLOCK LETTERS WITH A LITTLE DIALOGUE BUBBLE

IN THE CENTER OF THE Q. I HATE SEEING THE ORANGE CONSTANTLY,

BUT IT'S OUTSIDE OF MY HANDS. IT'S A FAVORITE.

WE DO REGIONAL PEER SUPPORT WITH EQUIP. THIS IS

RUN BY YOUNG ADULTS FOR YOUNG ADULTS IN DIFFERENT AREAS,

INCLUDING RURAL AREAS. AS A CENTER WITH A LOT OF

STATEWIDE PROGRAMS -- EQUIP IS A STATEWIDE PROGRAM, WE

HAVE A VERY RURAL REALITY IN SOUTH CAROLINA. SOUTH

CAROLINA IS NOT COLUMBIA, IT’S NOT GREENVILLE, IT’S NOT

CHARLESTON. THOSE ARE RELATIVELY SMALL PIECES OF OUR

STATE. THE REALITY IS WE HAVE TO LOOK REGIONALLY AT THE

THINGS WE DO AND WE HAVE TO LOOK AT ACCESSIBILITY FOR

FOLKS WHERE TRAVELING AN HOUR OR TWO TO GET TO A

YOUTH EVENT IS NOT FEASIBLE. WE CALL THEM HANGOUTS,

BECAUSE TEEN PEER SUPPORT SOUNDS TERRIBLE. IN OUR EXPERIENCE,

THE TEENS DON'T IDENTIFY WITH PEER SUPPORT. THAT DOES NOT

SOUND LIKE SOMETHING THEY WANT TO DO, SO, WE CALL THEM HANGOUTS.

THE CONTENT IS DEVELOPED BY THEM. WE

COVER EVERYTHING FROM SELF ADVOCACY AND THE IEP PROCESS TO

JOB ATTAINMENT SKILLS AND ISSUES RELATED TO RECEIVING

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN. WE

BRING LEADERS ON STAFF, SO THE FOLKS THAT RISE TO THE TOP

WITH A REAL DESIRE TO BE LEADERS IN THE COMMUNITY, WE BRING

THEM ON AS PART TIME STAFF. THEY DO EVERYTHING FROM

FACILITATING THOSE HANGOUTS TO DOING TRAININGS FOR

PROFESSIONALS AND FOR FAMILIES. WE DO OUTREACH TO PARENTS

AND I DON'T WANT TO MINCE WORDS ABOUT THE PARENT ISSUE. WE DO

OUTREACH TO PARENTS AND WE WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT'S

COMING FROM YOUNG ADULTS, PRIMARILY. AND, WE WANT TO MAKE

SURE THAT IT'S A FRACTION -- A SMALL FRACTION OF OUR FOCUS.

IN TERMS OF THE SCOPE OF THE THINGS THAT WE COULD DIRECT

OUR ATTENTION TO, CHANGING MINDS OF PARENTS JUST ISN'T

HIGH ON THAT LIST RIGHT? TO BE FULLY HONEST.

SO, SUMMER SERIES IS A BIG PART. IT'S AN OPPORTUNITY

TO REALLY IMMERSE YOURSELF AS A YOUNG ADULT IN THIS CONTENT.

SO, WE DO SIX WEEKS IN A ROW OF ONE DAY A WEEK

FULL IMMERSION. EVERYTHING IL. DISABILITY RIGHTS, SELF

ADVOCACY RELATED, THAT YOU CAN THINK OF WITH SPEAKERS FROM

THE COMMUNITY. WE DO THAT IN TWO DIFFERENT LOCATIONS IN THE

STATE. WE TRAIN FOLKS TO SERVE ON SERVICE BOARDS AND

COMMITTEES. THIS IS A BIG ONE. THIS RUNS PARALLEL TO THE

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP ACADEMY FOR US. AND, WE DO TRAININGS

FOR OTHER YOUTH, SO WE HAVE YOUNG ADULTS GOING IN TO

SUPPLEMENT THE WORK THAT WE ARE DOING IN THE CLASSROOM WITH

OTHER FOLKS AROUND THE STATE.

KIMBERLY: SO FAR AS THE FUNDING GOES FOR THIS PROGRAM, THIS

ACTUALLY STARTED OFF WITH A $10,000 GRANT FROM THE NATIONAL

YOUTH LEADERSHIP NETWORK. AND WE FORMED THIS IDEA OF WHAT

WE WANTED IN THIS PROGRAM. AND IT TOOK OFF VERY QUICKLY.

AND THE DD COUNCIL, THE SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF

DISABILITIES -- DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES, JUMPED IN AND

WANTED TO SUPPORT THE PROGRAM. SO, WE RECEIVED A LITTLE

BIT OVER $113,000 TO SUPPORT THE EQUIP PROGRAM. SO, DD

COUNCIL, OUR PTI (PARENT TRAINING AND INFORMATION) CENTER, THEY

ARE ALL FEDERALLY MANDATED AND UNDER THEIR GRANT TO

PROVIDE YOUTH SERVICES. WE DO NOT WANT PARENTS PROVIDING

YOUTH SERVICES BY ANY MEANS. AND THEY RECOGNIZE THAT. JUST

LIKE THEY DON'T WANT US TO PROVIDE PARENT TO PARENT

TRAINING. SO, THEY ALLOWED US TO IMPLEMENT THEIR YOUTH

PROGRAMMING UNDER THAT. AND THEN ALSO, THE STATE PLAN FOR

INDEPENDENT LIVING. WE DO RECEIVE A LITTLE TINY BIT OF PART

B FUNDING SPECIFICALLY DEDICATED TO YOUTH LEADERSHIP.

THE PROGRAM IS, LIKE CHARLIE SAID, RUN BY YOUNG ADULTS

FOR YOUNG ADULTS SO, IT'S KIND OF LIKE A MINI CIL WITH A

NEW GENERATION, IS HOW I LOOK AT IT. WE HAVE EQUIP

STAKEHOLDERS AND CHARLIE MENTIONED IT A LITTLE BIT.

WE HAVE 15 PARTNERS RIGHT NOW. AND WHAT I SEE THE

YOUNG ADULTS DOING, IS ACTUALLY PROVIDING INPUT

OF DIRECTION, OF THINGS THAT OUR STAKEHOLDERS CAN REALLY

THINK ABOUT WHEN THEY ARE IMPLEMENTING PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG

ADULTS. WE HAVE ONE FULL TIME COORDINATOR AND THIS PERSON

-- SHE IS FANTASTIC. SHE IS AN INDIVIDUAL WITH AUTISM. AND

HER ABILITY TO RELATE TO ALL OF THE YOUTH HAS BEEN A KEY

TO MOVING THIS PROGRAM FORWARD. WE HAVE SIX PART-TIME

STAFF THAT PARTICIPATE IN HELPING OUT WITH EQUIP AND THEN

WE HAVE 15 -- 16 PAID NOW YOUTH LEADERS. AND THESE YOUTH

LEADERS ARE AS NEEDED. SO, WHEN WE HAVE A SPEAKING

ENGAGEMENT, WHEN WE NEED TO GO TO SCHOOLS, WE BRING A YOUTH

LEADER WITH US. SO, FAMILY CONNECTIONS OF SOUTH CAROLINA,

WHICH IS A PTI, GIVES US $26,000. THE SPIL PROVIDES $14,500

AND THE REST IS THE DD COUNCIL. SO, THAT GIVES YOU A

LITTLE IDEA ABOUT HOW THIS PROGRAM HOW IT IS FUNDED.

CHARLIE: THERE IS NOTHING EASY ABOUT THIS PROGRAM.

WE LAMENT INTERNALLY THAT THIS IS LIKE HERDING CATS.

THIS PROGRAM IS DIFFICULT TO KEEP AFLOAT AND TO

KEEP CONSISTENT, BUT WE RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF IT

AND WE ARE COMMITTED TO ENSURING IT IS SUCCESSFUL.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM. LET'S SEE A SHOW OF HANDS OF FOLKS

ACTIVE IN THEIR STATE’S YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM.

ONE HAND, TWO HANDS, FIVE HANDS, SEVEN OR SO HANDS. OK, RIGHT

AROUND EIGHT OR SO, ARE ACTIVE IN THEIR STATES YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM.

WE TOOK OVER THE GRANT FOR OUR STATE’S YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM

A COUPLE YEARS AGO AND IT'S BEEN MARKEDLY DIFFERENT SINCE.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM IS TRULY BEING RUN AND DIRECTED BY YOUTH WITH

DISABILITIES. I THINK I MENTIONED EARLIER THAT IT WAS RUN

BY PARENTS AND HAD A VERY DIFFERENT FEEL. YOUTH

LEADERSHIP FORUM IN SOUTH CAROLINA IS -- AND WE HAVE A LOGO THERE

THAT WAS CREATED BY ONE OF OUR YOUTH STAFFERS. IT'S A

FOUR-DAY, THREE-NIGHT LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE. SO, JUST THAT

LEADERSHIP IMMERSION. WE COLLABORATE WITH MULTIPLE AGENCIES TO

ASSIST WITH RECRUITMENT AND STAFFING. THAT INCLUDES

PARTNERING WITH OUR OTHER TWO SISTER CENTERS IN SOUTH

CAROLINA FOR STAFFING AND PLANNING AND OUTREACH. WE HAVE

25 YOUTH THAT WE HAVE SPOTS TO ATTEND THE FORUM AS

DELEGATES. AND THEN TYPICALLY, WE HAVE FIVE SPOTS FOR PEER

STAFF. AND THEN RIGHT AROUND FOUR TO FIVE TO SIX SPOTS

FOR PROFESSIONAL STAFF WITH THE EXPRESS HOPE THAT

THOSE PROFESSIONAL STAFF ARE ALSO YOUNG ADULTS WITH

DISABILITIES. THERE'S TYPICALLY TWO OR THREE OF US

THAT ARE A BIT OLDER ON SITE WITH FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

IN HAND, BUT IT'S MAINLY YOUNG ADULTS THERE.

SO, IT'S RUN BY AND LED BY A MAJORITY OF YOUTH

WITH DISABILITIES AT ALL TIMES. WE CONNECT YOUTH TO

LEGISLATORS AND EXPERIENCES IN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION. WE

BRING IN SPEAKERS FROM THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY.

EVERYTHING FROM SELF ADVOCACY TO LEADERSHIP TO EMPLOYMENT,

MENTORING, CONFIDENCE BUILDING. WE REALLY WANT THIS TO BE AN

IL IMMERSION FOR FOLKS. AND WE TALKED ALREADY ABOUT THAT

HISTORY WITH THE PARENT ORGANIZATION THAT YLF WAS RUN

THROUGH. AND NOW WE ARE ENTERING OUR THIRD YEAR WITH IT

BEING AT A CENTER. AND WE COULDN'T BE MORE PLEASED WITH

THE WAY THINGS HAVE CHANGED THERE.

KIMBERLY: SO, THIS IS ANOTHER PROGRAM THAT IS FUNDED BY

THE DD COUNCIL. AND I WANT TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THE DD

COUNCIL -- AS LONG AS THE MAJORITY OF THE CONSUMERS, SO,

51 PERCENT OF THE CONSUMERS HAVE INTELLECTUAL AND

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES, WE CAN BE CROSS DISABILITY. SO,

ALL OF THESE PROGRAMS THAT ARE FUNDED BY THE DD COUNCIL

ARE ALSO, ACROSS DISABILITY BECAUSE THAT'S IMPORTANT.

AS FAR AS THE DD COUNCIL, THEY PROVIDE US $50,000 ANNUALLY.

I WANT TO MAKE IT VERY CLEAR THIS IS A PRETTY EXPENSIVE PROGRAM.

SO, IT'S A SUMMER ACTIVITY, BUT WE ALSO HAVE ANNUAL MEETINGS

AND WE HAVE A FULL TIME STAFF ON THIS. WHEN YOU DO – WHEN YOU CREATE

A YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM, YOU HAVE TO THINK ABOUT ALL

OF THE WHAT IFS? I USED TO JOKE WITH OUT STAFF -- WE DO

NOT WANT YLF BABIES, SO, WE HAVE TO MAKE SURE THAT WE

HAVE MALES AND FEMALES IN DIFFERENT DORMS AND SETTING THAT

UP AND STAFF RATIO AND ALL OF THAT. (LAUGHTER) WE ALSO – YOU

KNOW -- LIABILITY INSURANCE. WE HAD TO INCREASE OUR

LIABILITY INSURANCE BECAUSE THIS IS AN OVERNIGHT -- THESE

ARE OVERNIGHT EXPERIENCES. WE HAVE TO HAVE PCA'S AND

NURSING STAFF ON, BECAUSE I WANTED TO TRANSFER THAT

LIABILITY OF MEDICATION MANAGEMENT TO A NURSING STAFF. I

DO NOT WANT TO -- WE ARE NOT TRAINED TO PROVIDE MEDICATION

OR CPR OR ANY OF THAT. SO, WE WANTED TO TRANSFER THAT LIABILITY,

BUT IT'S ALSO IMPORTANT THAT YOU TEACH THOSE SELF ADVOCACY SKILLS

ALONG THE LINES AS FAR AS MEDICATION MANAGEMENT, BECAUSE

THEY NEED TO START LEARNING THAT AS WELL.

INTERVIEWING NURSING STAFF HAS BEEN VERY – IT HAS BEEN AN EXPERIENCE.

WE HAVE – HOPEFULLY, THIS YEAR WE WILL HAVE A GREAT TEAM.

BUT TEACHING THEM HOW TO ALLOW THE YOUTH TO BE ENGAGED IN MEDICATION

MANAGEMENT, TOO, HAS BEEN REALLY IMPORTANT.

SO, LIKE I SAID WE HAVE ONE -– WE HAVE A FULL TIME STAFF

MEMBER, BUT PART OF HER JOB PART TIME IS TO WORK ON THE

YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM. AND WE HAVE AN ALUMNI ASSOCIATION.

SO, THE PAST YLF DELEGATES GET TOGETHER AND

THEY HAVE QUARTERLY MEETINGS. AND WHEN IT GETS CLOSER TO

YLF, THOSE MEETINGS INCREASE. THEY CONTINUE TO DEVELOP

THEIR SKILLS THAT THEY LEARNED DURING YLF. AND THEN WE

ALSO, PAY -- WE PROVIDE SOME FUNDING TO OUR OTHER SOUTH

CAROLINA CILS SO THAT THEY CAN HELP SUPPORT THE EVENT,

SUPPORT THE YLF WITH STAFF.

CHARLIE: OKAY. DO WE HAVE ANY QUESTIONS SO FAR? YES.

AUDIENCE: I AM INTERESTED IN EXPLORING WHAT

MIGHT BE THE INHERENT OR INNATE TENSION BETWEEN LETTING

YOUTH AND ENCOURAGING YOUTH TO LEAD THEIR OWN PROGRAM AND

WANTING TO MAKE SURE THAT CERTAIN THINGS ARE TAUGHT OR

WANTING TO MAKE SURE THAT STAFF -- STAFF WANTING TO BE

SURE THAT CERTAIN ITEMS, TOPICS, CERTAIN SUBJECTS ARE

BEING COVERED OR PRESENTED. IN OTHER WORDS, TWO THINGS:

IF YOU HAVE GOT A NUMBER OF YOUTH COMING TOGETHER FROM

DIFFERENT RURAL TOWNS AND THEY DON'T KNOW EACH OTHER AND

THEY HAVE LIVED IN RELATIVELY OPPRESSIVE CIRCUMSTANCES

AND THEY ARRIVE FOR A YOUTH EVENT, HOW DO YOU BEGIN THE

CONVERSATION WITH THEM ABOUT WHAT YOUTH LEADERSHIP -- WHAT

THE FORUM OR WHAT THE GROUP WILL ENTAIL? SO, A BUNCH OF

KIDS ARE THERE AND WE SAY OKAY, KIDS. WHAT DO YOU WANT

THIS TO BE ABOUT? AND BY THE WAY, THERE ARE A BUNCH OF

THINGS THAT WE THINK THAT THIS IS WHAT IT SHOULD BE ABOUT.

BUT WE DON'T REALLY THINK WE CAN TELL YOU WHAT THOSE ARE,

BECAUSE WE WANT YOU TO LEAD IT. BUT THE KIDS MAY NOT

NECESSARILY KNOW. WELL, COME TO THINK OF IT, THIS IS WHAT I

WANT TO LEARN RIGHT NOW. HOW DO YOU PUT ALL OF THIS

TOGETHER?

CHARLIE: YES. THANK YOU FOR THAT. THAT'S A FANTASTIC

COUPLE OF QUESTIONS OR COUPLE DOZEN QUESTIONS IN THERE.

THERE'S A LOT OF STUFF TO UNPACK POTENTIALLY.

AUDIENCE: TOO SOON?

CHARLIE: NO. THAT WAS RIGHT ON TIME. THAT’S A --

SO, AS FOLKS RISE TO THE TOP, OR BECOME MORE

SEASONED, AND THIS IS STILL YOUNG ADULTS, THERE IS SOME

INFLUENCE FROM US AS OLDER STAFFERS, BUT IT'S STILL THOSE

FOLKS THAT ARE MORE SEASONED THAT ARE GUIDING THAT CONTENT.

AS FOLKS WHO ARE A LITTLE BIT LESS SEASONED AT SOME EVENTS

LIKE YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM OR COMING INTO EQUIP HANGOUTS

FOR THE FIRST TIME, THEIR VOICES ARE IMPORTANT, RIGHT. BUT,

THEY ARE NOT NECESSARILY COMING IN WITH THE AUTHORITY

TO OVERHAUL THE PROGRAMMING. THEY ARE ABSOLUTELY HEARD.

BUT IT'S STILL THAT CORE OF YOUNG ADULTS THAT ARE THERE

AND ACTIVE IN MAKING SURE THAT THE PROGRAM IS GOING ON.

WE ASK THEM TO COME INTO THAT FOLD AND MAKE DECISIONS ON

CONSENSUS. AS THEY COME FROM, AND YOU MENTIONED

OPPRESSIVE BACKGROUNDS, AS THEY COME WITH ISSUES, HEY,

THIS IS GOING ON, THIS TRAUMATIC THING. WE HAVE SEEN

MANY CASES WHERE THAT HAS BECOME CONTENT FOR THE NEXT

HANGOUT FOR EQUIP TO COVER THAT BASED ON THAT INPUT

FROM THAT SINGLE INDIVIDUAL BECAUSE IT’S OF BENEFIT

TO THE WHOLE.

KIMBERLY: IT WAS REALLY IMPORTANT WHEN WE

STARTED THESE PROGRAMS TO MAKE SURE THAT THESE YOUNG

ADULTS ARE ALSO BEING MENTORED BY OUR STAFF. THAT THEY

ARE LEARNING THE HISTORY AND THEY ARE LEARNING THE

SELF ADVOCACY SKILLS AND THE DISABILITY RIGHTS PIECES,

SO THAT THEY CAN CONTINUE TO SHARE THAT AND SPREAD THAT ALONG.

THE REASON WHY WE THINK IT'S SO IMPORTANT FOR YOUTH

TO RUN THIS PROGRAM IS BECAUSE IT'S A PROGRAM FOR THEM.

THEY DO NOT RELATE TO ME, TO SOMEBODY CHARLIE'S AGE EITHER.

THEY RELATE WITH EACH OTHER. THAT IS THEIR PEERS. AND SO,

HAVING THESE STRONG LEADERS IN PLACE TO BE ABLE IS TO

DRIVE A PROGRAM AND INCLUDE THEM, THAT'S WHERE WE HAVE

SEEN THE MOST CHANGE WITHIN THE GROUP.

CHARLIE: WE CAN'T GLOSS THIS OVER AND MAKE IT SOUND LIKE –

IN A COUPLE SLIDES, THIS SOUNDS UP LIKE A NICE, NEAT

TIED UP PACKAGE, RIGHT? IT'S NOT. THIS IS A -- WHEN YOU ARE

WORKING WITH YOUTH AND YOU’RE ENDEAVORING TO MAKE THINGS YOUTH

LED, THERE IS A VERY DYNAMIC TENSION THAT EXISTS IN MAKING

SURE THAT THERE IS BALANCE. THAT THERE IS NOT POWER INEQUALITY THERE

BETWEEN YOUTH AND OLDER FOLKS – THAT IT'S REPRESENTATIVE OF

THEIR VOICES. THAT'S AN ONGOING POINT OF CONTENTION. BUT,

IT’S NOT NECESSARILY -- I DON'T THINK WE EVER GET THE SENSE

THAT WE ARE TRYING TO INDOCTRINATE THEM OR THERE'S

TENSION WITH US WANTING THEM TO DO SOMETHING THAT THEY

ARE NOT WANTING TO DO. THAT'S NOT USUALLY PART OF IT.

KIMBERLY: AND YOU KNOW SOMETHING THAT – AND THE HARD

PART IS THAT WE ALSO, SEE THE ISSUES THAT THE

SCHOOLS ARE PUTTING ON THESE YOUNG ADULTS. WE SEE THE

ISSUES FROM THEM BRINGING THEM TO US. IT IS NOT

ACCEPTABLE FOR SOMEBODY, WHO HAS JUST COMPLETED HIGH SCHOOL,

TO NEVER HAVE A COMMUNICATION DEVICE, WHEN THEY DO NOT

SPEAK VERBALLY. THAT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE. AND SO, WE HAVE LEARNED

SO MUCH FROM THIS POPULATION TO BE ABLE TO SEE MORE OF THE

SYSTEMS ISSUES AND WHAT WE CAN CHANGE IN THE SCHOOL

SYSTEMS AS WELL. SO, IT'S BEEN A LEARNING OPPORTUNITY.

BUT ALSO, A LOT OF THESE YOUTH, A LOT OF OUR LEADERS, WE HAVE SOME

TOUGH LOVE CONVERSATIONS WITH THEM CONSTANTLY, BECAUSE

THEY HAVE OFTEN NOT EVER BEEN HELD TO EXPECTATIONS OR HAVE

HAD ANY ACCOUNTABILITY. SO, TEACHING THEM THOSE SKILLS IS

SO, VERY IMPORTANT AS WELL. BUT WE HAVE HAD SOME REALLY

GREAT SUCCESS STORIES FROM THESE -- FROM THIS PROGRAM -- FROM

THE EQUIP AND FROM YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM.

CHARLIE: QUICK QUESTION?

AUDIENCE: I HAVE NOTICED WITH YLF, AT LEAST IN OUR STATE,

THERE IS ALREADY A PRE-SET DYNAMIC. REALLY, THERE IS. SO, IT'S NOT LIKE

WE ARE DUMPING KIDS OR KIDS ARE JUMPING INTO SOMETHING

THAT'S A FREE FOR ALL. THERE IS ALREADY AN ESTABLISHED

DIALOGUE COMING DOWN. AND AS THEY AGE UP, THEY KNOW.

BECAUSE IT'S THAT PERFECT CIRCLE. SO, IT'S KIND OF LIKE

SITTING ON A BOARD. YOU START OUT AS A MEMBER AND YOU

KIND OF MOVE UP THE LINE. SO, YOU KNOW THE DYNAMICS AFTER

A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF TIME SO, IT'S A NATURAL GROWTH TO WHERE

OUR ASPECT COMES FROM?

KIMBERLY: AND THERE'S A LOT OF STRUCTURE TO

ALL THESE PROGRAMS MANY AND IT'S REALLY LED BY THAT

COORDINATOR. WE ARE VERY CAREFUL WITH WHO WE PLACE AND WHO

WE HIRE IN THAT COORDINATOR POSITION TOO BECAUSE

WE WANT TO MAKE SURE THEY ARE GOING TO RELATE TO YOUTH AND

ALLOW THEM TO TAKE A LEAD IN A LOT OF CONVERSATIONS WE ARE

HAVING.

CHARLIE: THANK YOU FOR ARTICULATING THAT BETTER THAN

EITHER ONE OF US DID. THAT WAS BEAUTIFUL. THANK YOU.

CHARLIE: YES, PLEASE.

AUDIENCE: WHAT WOULD YOU DO IN SITUATIONS WHERE

THE YOUTH HAVE DECIDED SOMETHING THAT MAKES -- THAT MAY --

THAT DOESN'T AGREE WITH HOW YOU WOULD PREFER SOMETHING TO

BE HANDLED? SO, FOR AN EXAMPLE, AT ACCESS LIVING WE DO

HAVE A YOUTH LED GROUP. AND, CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS DECIDED TO CUT

$26 MILLION OUT OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION BUDGET. SO, WHAT

WE ARE ABLE TO DO IS UTILIZE OUR STAFF PERSON, WHO IS A

POLICY PERSON, WHO WROTE AN ANALYSIS ABOUT THE BUDGET THAT

FOUND THAT. AND HE WOULD TESTIFY AT THE CHICAGO PUBLIC

SCHOOLS MEETINGS ABOUT HOW FROM A POLICY LEVEL THAT'S

PROBLEMATIC. BUT THEN THE GROUP ADVANCED YOUTH LEADERSHIP

POWER WERE PROTESTING. SO, WE WERE STAFF -- STAFF WERE

AVAILABLE TO DO A PROTEST, BUT THEN THEY WANTED TO GO TO

ARNIE DUNCAN'S HOUSE, WHICH WE WERE ABLE TO FIND THROUGH

NATIONAL PEOPLE'S ACTION. NATIONAL INFORMATION TRAINING

EDUCATION CENTER HELPED US FIND IT AND OUR LEADERSHIP

IN OUR ORGANIZATION WAS NOT SUPPORTIVE OF THAT.

SO, AS STAFF PEOPLE WE WERE NOT PERMITTED TO SUPPORT

THE STAFF TO MAKE THAT HAPPEN. AND I WAS THE YOUTH

MANAGER AT THE TIME. SO, I WAS TAKING A RISK BY

BEING SUPPORTIVE OF THAT IN TERMS OF MY JOB.

BUT THEY DID IT. AND I WAS THERE. I WENT

AGAINST MY BOSS'S REQUEST BECAUSE I FELT THAT IT WAS

SUPPORTIVE. I KNOW NO ONE WHO KNOWS ME IS SURPRISED.

BUT THESE YOUNG PEOPLE, WE WON. WE GOT THE CHICAGO

PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO PUT IT BACK IN THE BUDGET. AND THEN

OUR CEO ALSO ORGANIZED A MEETING WITH THE CEO,

BECAUSE ON THAT LEVEL, SHE WAS ABLE TO LEVERAGE HER

RELATIONSHIP SO THE YOUTH COULD MEET DIRECTLY WITH

THE CEO WHO JUST TOLD THEM TO GO STICK IT.

SO, HOW WOULD YOU HAVE HANDLED THAT? BECAUSE WE

TALK ABOUT AUTONOMY, I ALSO, HEAR YOU TALKING ABOUT

LIABILITY AND GENDER-SPECIFIC SPACES AND NO SEX

ON OUR YLF. WHERE IS YOUR SELF REFLECTION ABOUT

BEING YOUTH LED?

CHARLIE: THAT'S A FANTASTIC QUESTION. IN SOUTH CAROLINA

IT'S A BIT DIFFERENT IN SOME REGARDS TO --

IN TERMS OF DIRECT ACTION, IT HAS TO LOOK VERY DIFFERENT

IN SOUTH CAROLINA, ESPECIALLY AS WE ARE PURSUING STATE

FUNDING AND LOOKING AT ULTIMATELY THE BEST AVENUE FOR US

TO GO DOWN TO MAKE SURE WE HAVE THE BROADEST REACH

POSSIBLE, DIRECT ACTION LOOKS DIFFERENT.

IT GETS RIGHT TO THE HEART OF THE ISSUE THAT -- I AM

SOUNDING BEING LIKE A POLITICIAN RIGHT NOW -- BECAUSE THERE ARE

IMPASSES FOR US IN SOMETHING BEING YOUTH LED. THERE

ARE THINGS THAT ARE GOING TO GO AGAINST THE TRAJECTORY OF

OUR ORGANIZATION. THERE ARE THINGS THAT THERE GO AGAINST

THE TRAJECTORY OF IL. THAT ONE IS A BIT EASIER, RIGHT?

WE EDUCATE YOUTH ON WHY THAT'S NOT IL AND WHY THAT'S NOT

IN SYNC WITH THE MOVEMENT THAT WE ARE A PART OF. WHEN IT

GETS TO THE STUFF THAT MIGHT BE, BUT MIGHT NOT GEL WITH WHO

WE ARE AS AN ORGANIZATION OR WHERE WE ARE TRYING TO GO, AND

THE PR SPIN OFF OF SOME STUFF LIKE THAT, YEAH. THAT'S NOT

AN EASY ONE. YEAH. SO, WE DON'T WANT TO PAY LIP SERVICE

TO SOMETHING BEING YOUTH LED WHEN IT'S NOT 100 PERCENT

YOUTH LED.

KIMBERLY: WHEN THEY HAVE IDEAS THAT -- WHEN

THEY HAVE IDEAS THAT COULD TAKE SOMETHING IN A DIFFERENT

WAY, THAT'S A REALLY GREAT TIME TO BRAINSTORM. WELL,

HOW ELSE CAN WE DO THIS? AND WHAT WOULD THIS LOOK LIKE?

AND HOW CAN WE GET SUPPORT FROM LEADERSHIP AND CONVINCE

LEADERSHIP THAT THIS IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO. SO, I LIKE

TO BE CHALLENGED LIKE THAT. SO, I LOVE FOR YOUTH TO COME

IN AND TALK ABOUT SOME IDEAS. AS FAR AS THE LIABILITIES,

WE HAVE TO STILL -- WE CANNOT HAVE ANY DEATHS AT YLF. WE

HAVE TO NOT ONLY PROTECT OUR ORGANIZATION, BUT WE HAVE TO

PROTECT THE YOUNG ADULTS THAT ARE IN FRONT OF US. AND IF

THEY WANT TO HAVE SEX WHEN THEY LEAVE, GO AT IT.

(LAUGHTER).

CHARLIE: RIGHT. GETTING TO THAT INTENT IN THE SAME WAY

THAT THINGS ARE CONSUMER DIRECTED. WHEN WE WORK WITH

CONSUMERS ONE ON ONE WE GET BACK TO THAT INTENT OF WHAT

THEY WANT. IT’S NOT – YOU KNOW, THERE MIGHT BE

SOME GRAND IDEAS OF HOW GOALS CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED, BUT I

THINK IT COMES BACK TO US THAT ARE A LITTLE BIT MORE

FIRMLY PLANTED IN IL TO GIVE ALTERNATE SUGGESTIONS. RIGHT?

LIKE I HEAR YOU. THAT'S FANTASTIC. LET'S NOT SACRIFICE AN

OUNCE OF THAT INTENT, BUT HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THIS, THIS,

AND THIS? AND DARREL WAS SPEAKING IN A REALLY COOL WAY TO

SOME OF THAT STUFF WITH CONSUMERS.

KIMBERLY: AND I THINK THAT GOES WITH ADULTS, TOO,

BECAUSE SOMETIMES YOU SEEK ADVICE FROM OTHER ADULTS AND YOU

WANT TO BRAINSTORM IDEAS YOU HAVE AND YOU TALK OUT LOUD.

AND THAT'S THE SAME WITH YOUTH. THEY JUST HAVE NOT HAD

THAT EXPERIENCE YET. AND SO, GETTING THAT. THIS GROUP, TOO,

WITH THE YOUNG ADULT LEADERS, WE REALLY PREPARE THEM FOR

EMPLOYMENT, AS WELL. FOR FULL TIME EMPLOYMENT. BECAUSE THERE ARE

SOME SITUATIONS THAT OCCUR WHERE WE HAVE TO SAY, HEY, LET'S

TAKE IT BACK A LITTLE BIT AND LET’S TALK ABOUT WHAT YOU JUST DID,

BECAUSE IT COULD BE SEEN AS NOT BEING PROFESSIONAL OR

WHATEVER.

CHARLIE: FANTASTIC QUESTION. THANK YOU FOR THAT.

KIMBERLY: YOU HAVE GOT ANOTHER QUESTION?

AUDIENCE: I JUST WANT TO ALSO, EXPRESS APPRECIATION

FOR MY LEADERSHIP. BECAUSE I AM STILL EMPLOYED, FIRST

OF ALL, RIGHT? THEY DO HAVE THAT TOLERANCE FOR MY OWN

DEVELOPMENT AND THINGS LIKE THAT TOO. AND ALSO,

TO STILL NEGOTIATE EVEN THOUGH WE WENT AGAINST

WHAT WAS ORIGINALLY ASKED OF US. TO

STILL LOOK AT THE LARGER ISSUE TO UNDERSTAND THAT. THAT

LARGE OF A BUDGET CUT IN SPECIAL EDUCATION WAS WRONG AND

THAT THE ORGANIZATION WAS BEHIND WORKING ON IT. I AM SO,

GLAD YOU ANSWERED IT IN THAT WAY BECAUSE I THINK IT'S

INDIVIDUALIZED FOR EVERY CIL.

CHARLIE: THANK YOU FOR THAT. OKAY. SO, WE ARE TALKING

ABOUT PROGRAMS THAT BREAK EVEN; THAT ARE GRANT FUNDED

ON SHOESTRING SO, FAR. THIS IS ANOTHER ONE. BUT WE ARE

TALKING ABOUT, AS WE GO, WE ARE TALKING YOUTH PROGRAMMING

THAT MAKES A LARGER PICTURE. ANY SINGLE

ONE OF THESE PROGRAMS IN ISOLATION DOESN'T MAKE A WHOLE LOT

OF SENSE. TO ADD INTO THAT PICTURE EACH YEAR WE DO A

CONFERENCE FOR YOUNG ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR

FAMILY MEMBERS THAT'S ENTIRELY FREE. IT'S ALL ABOUT

CONNECTING TO COMMUNITY SERVICES AND ACCESSING RIGHTS AND

EMPOWERMENT. WE DO A CONFERENCE ANNUALLY TOO -- THE DAY BEFORE,

THAT'S MAPPING YOUR FUTURE. THE CONFERENCE WE DO THE DAY

BEFORE IS EMPOWERING YOUR FUTURE AND THAT'S ALL FOR

TRANSITION PROFESSIONALS. SO, REHABILITATION COUNSELORS,

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS, YOU NAME IT -- DD SERVICE

PROVIDERS. WE BRING THEM IN AND WE GIVE THEM THE KOOL-AID.

WE GIVE THEM THE IL PHILOSOPHY. THEY DON'T EVEN KNOW

THEY ARE GETTING IT. RIGHT? WE DON'T LABEL IT AS A

CONFERENCE WHERE WE ARE GOING TO INDOCTRINATE THEM WITH

EVERYTHING WE WANT THEM TO THINK. BUT THAT'S EXACTLY

WHAT WE DO. WE CONFRONT THEM WITH DISABILITY RIGHTS

AND RADICAL YOUTH EMPOWERMENT IDEAS AND WE REALLY GIVE THEM

WHAT... WE FRAME IT AROUND BEST PRACTICE. WE FRAME IT IN

BEST PRACTICE AND IT'S A CONFERENCE TO GIVE THEM TOOLS

IN IMPLEMENTING BEST PRACTICE.

KIMBERLY: AND BECAUSE IL IS BEST PRACTICE, AS WELL?

CHARLIE: SURE. SO, THESE ARE STATEWIDE CONFERENCES THAT ONE

DAY FOR EDUCATORS, VR STAFF AND TRANSITION PROFESSIONALS,

A SECOND DAY FOR FAMILY AND YOUTH. SO, WE COLLABORATE WITH A NUMBER OF

DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONS TO PUT THESE CONFERENCES ON. OUR

FIRST CONFERENCE STARTED WITH THAT YOUTH AND FAMILY CONFERENCE

IN 2013. FOR THE YOUTH AND FAMILY CONFERENCE, THIS DOES GET

TO SOME OF THE PARENT STUFF. WE WORK WITH – WE DO BREAK OUT

SESSIONS. SO, YOUTH-LED SESSIONS FOR YOUTH IN ONE AREA,

THE CONFERENCE CENTER, AND PARENT SESSIONS TYPICALLY LED BY

OTHER PARENTS IN ANOTHER. WE TRY AND WORK WITH OUR PARENT

ORGANIZATION, OUR STATE'S PARENT TRAINING AND INFORMATION CENTER TO

DELIVER THAT CONTENT AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. IT'S HARDER TO

GET THAT CONTENT ON MESSAGE. RIGHT? I ABSOLUTELY HEAR

THE NEED, WHEN IT COMES TO EDUCATING PARENTS. BECAUSE IT'S

REALLY, REALLY, REALLY HARD TO FIND PARENTS THAT UNDERSTAND

IL AND DELIVER SOMETHING THAT GELS WITH WHAT WE ARE TRYING

TO DELIVER TO YOUTH AND THEIR FAMILIES. SO, UNDERSTAND

THAT, THAT TENSION. WE TRY AND DO THAT ONE IN A COUPLE OF

DIFFERENT WAYS. BUT THE FIRST ONE WE GO AFTER IS WORKING

AS CLOSELY AS POSSIBLE WITH OUR PARENT TRAINING AND

INFORMATION CENTER TO HANDLE WHATEVER CONTENT THEY FEEL

COMFORTABLE HANDLING THERE.

KIMBERLY: AND WE MAKE SURE THAT IN THE PARENT SESSIONS

THAT IT IS RUN BY THE ABLE SOUTH CAROLINA STAFF WITH A

SIGNIFICANT DISABILITY TO TRY TO CHANGE THE PERCEPTIONS.

BECAUSE A LOT OF PARENTS WILL RAISE THEIR HANDS AND SAY MY KID

CAN'T DO THIS BECAUSE OF X,Y, AND Z. AND SHE JUST SLAMS

THEM RIGHT BACK IN A NICE, POLITE WAY. BUT, SHE SAYS WHY DO YOU

THINK THAT WAY? AND SHE WILL CHALLENGE THEM ON THAT

AND KIND OF BREAK THAT STEREOTYPE AND WAY OF THINKING.

CHARLIE: THIS IS TOUGH. WHEN WE TALK ABOUT -- WE HAVE

BEEN WORKING ON THE ALTERNATIVES TO GUARDIANSHIP WORK.

ONE OF OUR PARTNERS THERE HAS BEEN OUR STATE’S PARENT

TRAINING AND INFORMATION CENTER. ONE OF THE MOST

INTEGRAL PARTS OF THAT CONTENT FOR THEM FOR A LONG TIME WAS THE

IDEA THAT THEY NEEDED TO EMPATHETICALLY RELATE TO OTHER

PARENTS BASED ON THAT MOURNING THAT THEY ALL EXPERIENCED

UPON THE DIAGNOSIS OF THEIR CHILD. THIS IS SOMETHING THEY

WERE NOT WILLING TO PART WITH -- MAKING THAT CONNECTION TO

OTHER PARENTS ABOUT WHAT DESPAIR THEY WERE THROWN INTO UPON

DIAGNOSIS. THAT'S NOT IL. RIGHT? AND IT’S HARD -- IT'S

REALLY HARD TO FIND YOURSELF IN THOSE PLACES WHERE THE

RISING TIDE OF THAT IS LINE OF MESSAGING THAT IS JUST

NOT WHAT WE WANT. SO, A LOT OF TIMES WE EXCUSE OURSELVES

FROM THAT AND FOCUS ON CONSUMERS, IN THIS CASE YOUTH WITH

DISABILITIES THEMSELVES. THIS IS NOT THAT INSTANCE THOUGH.

THIS IS ONE WHERE COME HELL OR HIGH WATER WE MAKE AN EFFORT

TO MAKE SURE THAT WE ARE EQUALLY YOKED IN PROVIDING THAT

MESSAGING TO PARENTS AND YOUTH.

KIMBERLY: SO, THE TRANSITION CONFERENCE REALLY GOT STARTED

BECAUSE NOTHING WAS HAPPENING AFTER HIGH SCHOOL. THERE WERE

NO RESOURCES AND SO, WE DECIDED TO DO A STATEWIDE

TRANSITION CONFERENCE. WE PARTNERED WITH PROTECTION AND

ADVOCACY DURING THE FIRST CONFERENCE. SO, WE HAD THE

FIRST YOUTH TRANSITION CONFERENCE IN OUR STATE.

SO, IT WAS LED BY AND FACILITATED BY A CIL, WHICH WAS

REALLY EXCITING FOR US. THIS PROGRAM ACTUALLY STARTED

WITH THE DD COUNCIL FUNDING. IF YOU ARE FAMILIAR

WITH THE DD COUNCIL FUNDING, THEY ARE NOT FOREVER, TYPICALLY.

THIS PARTICULAR FUNDING STREAM WAS JUST YEAR BY YEAR.

WELL, WE DID SUCH A GREAT JOB WITH IT THAT IT DID

SPARK THE ATTENTION OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT

OF EDUCATION. SO, NOW THE SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT

OF EDUCATION IS THE PRIMARY FUNDER AND WE BELIEVE THAT

THIS IS GOING TO CONTINUE FROM YEAR TO YEAR TO YEAR.

AND WE DO RECEIVE A LITTLE BIT OF SPONSOR SUPPORT

FROM A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT AGENCIES. TO IMPLEMENT MAPPING

YOUR FUTURE, WE HAVE FIVE PART-TIME STAFF AND CHARLIE

LEADS THIS AND DOES AN AMAZING JOB WITH IT. IT IS A

STATEWIDE TRANSITION CONFERENCE SO, PEOPLE FROM ALL

AROUND THE STATE ARE COMING TOGETHER.

CHARLIE: WE HAVE THE LOGOS HERE FOR BOTH. THERE IS A LOGO

FOR MAPPING YOUR FUTURE AND EMPOWERING YOUR FUTURE. WHAT THIS

CONFERENCE DOES FOR US YEAR AROUND -- AND THIS ISN'T INTENDED TO

BRAG, BUT SOME OF THIS STUFF… I THINK WE ARE BENEFITED BY

TALKING EXPLICITLY ABOUT WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE TO SET YOURSELF

UP AS A CONTENT EXPERT. FOR US THIS GOES A LONG WAY TOWARDS

SHOWING THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY THAT WE UNDERSTAND TRANSITION

INTIMATELY. WE UNDERSTAND TRANSITION BECAUSE WE HAVE LIVED

TRANSITION. WE UNDERSTAND TRANSITION BECAUSE WE UNDERSTAND

TRANSITION FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE, TOO. AND ALL THE

TECHNICAL JARGON THAT YOU DON'T EXPECT PEOPLE WITH

DISABILITIES TO UNDERSTAND. WE GET THAT TOO. RIGHT?

SO, SETTING OURSELVES UP AS THOSE CONTENT EXPERTS

AND ASSERTING THAT AUTHORITY FROM THE IL PERSPECTIVE

IS REALLY, REALLY IMPORTANT FOR OUR CENTER AND SOME

OF THE OTHER YOUTH PROGRAMS THAT WE RUN.

SO, PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES – YEAH, PLEASE.

AUDIENCE: IS IT THERE A CHARGE FOR ANYONE TO

PARTICIPATE IN THIS ONE.

CHARLIE: YEAH. GREAT QUESTION. NO CHARGE TO

YOUTH AND FAMILIES FOR MAPPING YOUR FUTURE. THERE IS A

CHARGE TO PROFESSIONALS, BECAUSE IT'S NOT COMING OUT

OF THEIR POCKETS, AND SO WE DON’T MIND. AND THAT'S WHAT

SUSTAINS THE CONFERENCE FOR YOUTH AND THEIR PARENTS.

THAT'S WHAT PAYS --

KIMBERLY: IT'S A VERY SMALL FEE, 50 DOLLARS.

CHARLIE: FIFTY DOLLARS. YES. SO, PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES.

THIS IS A BIG ONE. IS ANYONE INVOLVED IN THE DELIVERY OF

PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES IN THEIR STATE? OK, COOL.

I SEE EIGHT OR NINE, TEN HANDS. I THINK I

MENTIONED THIS ALREADY. OUR STATE'S VOCATIONAL

REHABILITATION DEPARTMENT DOESN'T CONTRACT OUT WITH ANYONE

FOR ANYTHING. SO, WHEN THE WORK FORCE INNOVATION

OPPORTUNITY ACT CAME OUT, THIS REALLY RADICALLY CHANGED THINGS FOR

VR DEPARTMENTS, BECAUSE IT TOLD THEM THAT 15 PERCENT OF

THEIR BUDGET HAD TO BE DEDICATED TO NOT JUST SERVING

CONSUMERS IN TRANSITION, BUT TO SERVING POTENTIALLY

ELIGIBLE CONSUMERS OR CLIENTS WITH PRE-EMPLOYMENT

TRANSITION SERVICES. 15 PERCENT IS A BIG

CHUNK AND THERE ARE VERY STRICT GUIDELINES ON WHAT THAT

15 PERCENT CAN BE USED FOR. CHIEFLY DIRECT SERVICE.

CHIEFLY JUST DELIVERING THOSE SERVICES. FOR FOLKS, FOR

STATES THAT DIDN'T HAVE A REAL STRONG

PRESENCE WITH YOUTH FROM VR, THIS WAS A PRETTY

BIG HURDLE. OUR STATE'S VR WITH THE ROLL OUT OF WIOA

DIDN'T LOOK AT IT AS A TIME TO START CONTRACTING OUT WITH

FOLKS. OUR BLIND SERVICES ARM OF VR DID, SOUTH CAROLINA

COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND, AND THEY ASKED US TO DEVELOP

A PILOT PROGRAM. WE CREATED A COUPLE OF DIFFERENT

CURRICULA FOR THEM. ONE ON SELF ADVOCACY, ONE ON

WORK READINESS, AND CAREER EXPLORATION. AND WE ROLLED IT

OUT AND STARTED PILOTING IT. WE DID IT IN A WAY THAT’S

REALLY IMPORTANT TO TALK ABOUT. THIS IS ONE OF THE

PROGRAMS THAT WE DO WHERE WE'RE WORKING DIRECTLY WITH

YOUTH IN THE CLASSROOM ON IL-RELATED GOALS. THE REALLY

IMPORTANT THING ABOUT THIS IS THAT PROGRAM EVALUATION

PIECE. AND THIS IS KIND OF A THREAD THAT RUNS THROUGH ALL

OF OUR PROGRAMS. AS WE ARE IMPLEMENTING YOUTH PROGRAMS,

PEOPLE ARE LOOKING. RIGHT? WHEN WE TALK ABOUT YOUTH

WITH DISABILITIES, WE ARE TALKING ABOUT A MINORITY

POPULATION THAT'S MORE LIKELY THAN ANY OTHER POPULATION

TO BE INCARCERATED, TO BE UNEMPLOYED, TO BE SITTING

ON THE COUCH AFTER HIGH SCHOOL, AND TO HAVE HORRIBLE

OUTCOMES AFTER HIGH SCHOOL.

EVERYONE KNOWS THIS. THIS IS NO SECRET THAT YOUTH WITH

DISABILITIES ARE COMPLETELY MARGINALIZED IN TERMS OF THE POST

SCHOOL OUTCOMES THEY ENCOUNTER. THE TRICKY THING THERE IS THAT

NO ONE REALLY KNOWS WHAT TO DO, RIGHT? WE HAVE PILES AND

MOUNTAINS OF RESEARCH ABOUT BEST PRACTICE, BUT NOTHING IS

REALLY CHANGING. NOTHING HAS REALLY CHANGED IN DECADES.

IT'S CHANGED IN BITS AND PIECES. SO, EVERYONE IS KIND OF

LOOKING ON. FOR US, ESTABLISHING OUR CENTER IS PEOPLE THAT

UNDERSTAND HOW TO APPROACH THESE ISSUES, OUR PROGRAM

EVALUATION IS INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT. I TALKED TO SOMEBODY

FROM A CENTER HERE RECENTLY WHO WAS REACHING OUT FOR

SOME HELP WITH YOUTH WORK AND GETTING MORE YOUTH

INTO THE CENTER. HER CONCERN BEGAN AND ENDED WITH

HOW DO I GET MORE YOUTH INTO MY CENTER?

SO, WHAT WE HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT IS WHY. WHY DO YOU

WANT YOUTH AT YOUR CENTER? WHAT'S THE POINT? WHAT'S THE

END GAME? ONCE THEY ARE THERE, WHAT ARE YOU DOING? WHAT'S

IN IT FOR THEM? THIS IS REALLY, REALLY IMPORTANT. HAVING

FULLY FLESHED OUT IN YOUR MINDS AS TO WHAT THAT LOOKS

LIKE. IT'S NOT JUST A MATTER OF DOING ANNUAL

REPORTING AND SHOWING THAT, WE ARE DOING BETTER WITH THE YOUTH

WE SERVE. BUT WHAT HAPPENS? AND WHAT ARE WE DOING TO

ENSURE THAT THAT IMPACT THAT WE ARE MAKING IS A

SUSTAINABLE IMPACT AND AN IMPACT THAT'S GOING TO GROW YEAR

OVER YEAR. SO, PROGRAM EVALUATION IS REALLY IMPORTANT. AS

AN EXAMPLE, WITH PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, IF WE

ARE DOING OUR SELF ADVOCACY CURRICULUM WITH MIDDLE OR

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS RIGHT NOW IN SOUTH CAROLINA, I CAN OPEN UP A

SPREADSHEET AND SHOW YOU THAT FOR THE LESSON WE DID ON PROBLEM

SOLVING -- OF THE 500 STUDENTS THAT DID THAT LESSON ON PROBLEM

SOLVING, 432 OF THEM MET THE OBJECTIVE FOR THAT

PROBLEM-SOLVING LESSON, THAT BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE.

SO, THIS BRILLIANT DATA COMES OUT OF THAT. JUST BY IMPLEMENTING

A COUPLE OF REALLY EASY DATA POINTS TO COLLECT ON WITHIN

THAT WORK. THE VALUE IS VERY, VERY CLEAR FOR THE FUNDER.

THE VALUE IS EXTREMELY CLEAR FOR THE FOLKS THAT WE ARE

PARTNERING WITH TO DELIVER THESE SERVICES WITH YOUTH.

KIMBERLY: IT'S REALLY IMPORTANT TO TAKE A LOOK

AT ALL OF THAT, TOO, AND MAKE SURE THAT THE AREAS THAT MAYBE

THE YOUTH AREN'T EXCELLING IN OR MEETING THE EXPECTATIONS

OF OUR CURRICULUM, WE GO BACK AND WE LOOK AT THAT CURRICULUM.

HOW ARE WE DOING IT? SHOULD WE BE DOING IT DIFFERENTLY

AND ALWAYS TRYING TO IMPROVE WHAT YOU STARTED. WITH OUR SOUTH

CAROLINA VR SYSTEM, THEY DON'T CONTRACT OUT. BUT I AM GOING TO

CONTINUE TO GO THERE AND SHOW THEM OUR DATA AND OUR

OUTCOMES. BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT WE ARE DOING REALLY GREAT

WORK AND WE KNOW THAT THEY ARE NOT. AND WE KNOW THAT

OUR NUMBERS ARE BEATING THEIR NUMBERS FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT

TRANSITION SERVICES, SO, WE ARE GOING TO CONTINUE TO USE THE

QUALITY OF SERVICES THAT IS WE ARE PROVIDING TO OPEN THAT

DOOR. AND HOPEFULLY, IT WILL ALLOW US TO END UP PROVIDING

PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION FOR VR.

CHARLIE: IN THESE CONVERSATIONS WITH THIS OTHER CENTER

AND ASKING HER WELL WHY? WHY YOUTH? WHY YOUR CENTER?

AND SHE STARTED TALKING ABOUT PHILOSOPHY IN IL

AND I UNDERSTAND THAT. RIGHT? ALL OF US SITTING IN THIS

ROOM UNDERSTAND THE INEXTRICABLE VALUE OF IL TO YOUTH IN

TRANSITION. THIS IS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE. WHEN KIMBERLY CAME

TO SPEAK TO THE MASTER'S PROGRAM THAT I WAS IN IN FOR SPECIAL

EDUCATION, I HAD GONE TWO FULL YEARS OF A GRADUATE PROGRAM

LEARNING ALL THE INS AND OUTS THAT YOU COULD LEARN ABOUT

SPECIAL EDUCATION, FROM TIME IN THE CLASSROOM TO TIME

TEACHING STUDENTS IN SCHOOLS.

I DIDN'T HEAR A WORD ABOUT IL. I DIDN'T HEAR A WORD ABOUT

DISABILITY RIGHTS OR DISABILITY-RELATED LEGISLATION IN

TERMS OF DISABILITY RIGHTS. I HEARD ALL ABOUT IDEA. ONE

OF MY FAVORITE THINGS ABOUT THIS FIELD IS THAT WHEN IT

COMES TO TRANSITION, YOU HAVE GOT DISABILITY RIGHTS

LEGISLATION BOLSTERED BY THE REHAB. ACT AND ADA, BUT STUFF

THAT'S JUST BOMB PROOF WHEN IT COMES TO -- IN TERMS OF

OUTCOMES. WHAT IDEA AND WIOA CALL FOR IN TERMS OF

OUTCOMES IS UNPARALLELED. THE LEVERAGE WE HAVE IN THIS

FIELD FOR YOUTH IS INCREDIBLE. AND WE LEAVE A LOT OF

OPPORTUNITIES ON THE TABLE, IF WE DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT

FULL PICTURE OF WHAT WE HAVE TO LEVERAGE IN TERMS OF

BETTER PREPARING YOUTH FOR THE KIND OF OUTCOMES THAT THEY

WANT FOR THEIR LIVES.

KIMBERLY: AND SO, THE FUNDING COMES FROM THE SOUTH CAROLINA

COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND AND THIS IS WIOA —- THIS IS A

PERCENTAGE OF THEIR OVERALL BUDGET. BUT IT'S OPENED

UP TO ANY ELIGIBLE VR CONSUMER. AND SO, THIS DOES

OPEN THE DOORS TO ALL CONSUMERS, WHO ARE ELIGIBLE

FOR VR SERVICES. SO, NOT JUST PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND.

SO, THE SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND IS

TECHNICALLY ALSO PROVIDING SERVICES TO

VR'S YOUTH IN THE SCHOOLS. WE RECEIVE $325,000, BUT

WE RECEIVED NOTICE THIS WEEK THAT WE ARE GOING TO GET AN

ADDITIONAL $100,000 NEXT YEAR, SO THIS WILL BE 425.

[APPLAUSE]. WE HAVE TWO PART-TIME COORDINATORS AND TEN

PART-TIME PROGRAM STAFF THAT IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAMS. AND

HOW MANY SCHOOL DISTRICTS ARE WE IN RIGHT NOW?

CHARLIE: AS OF RIGHT NOW IN THE SCHOOL YEAR, WE

HAVE DONE AT LEAST ONE SIX SESSION CURRICULUM AND

MOST MULTIPLE, IN 28 DIFFERENT MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOLS

IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

KIMBERLY: AND THEN ALSO, THE NEAT THING IS THIS

IS A CIL/CIL PARTNERSHIP WITHIN OUR SOUTH CAROLINA CILS.

THERE'S ONLY THREE OF US, BUT THEY ARE ALSO IMPLEMENTING

PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES THROUGH THE

SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND AS WELL.

SO, THEY ARE COVERING THEIR TERRITORIES WITH

THIS FUNDING.

CHARLIE: WE HAVE OUR LITTLE CUTESY LOGO ON HERE FOR OUR

CAPABLE AND READY PROGRAM. IT SAYS THE NAME OF THE PROGRAM

AND THE EXCLAMATION MARK IS A STRIPED BLUE TIE WITH

THE DOT BELOW IT.

AUDIENCE: WE HAD A QUESTION. IT SAYS HERE FUNDING

SUPPLIED BY, OR WHATEVER, THE COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND (

NOT OUR STATE'S VR). SO, WHERE IS THAT DIFFERENCE?

WHERE IS THAT COMING IN, BECAUSE YOU KEEP TALKING VR?

KIMBERLY: SO, COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND IS ACTUALLY

VR FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND. BUT THEY RECEIVE – THEY

HAVE TO USE A CERTAIN PERCENTAGE TOWARDS WIOA.

SO, WITH THE PERCENTAGE OF WIOA, THEY CAN SERVE ANY

ELIGIBLE PERSON WITH A DISABILITY, WHO IS VR ELIGIBLE.

AUDIENCE: SO, IT IS VR?

KIMBERLY: SO, IT IS VR FUNDING. YES, YES

CHARLIE: GREAT QUESTION. IT DEPENDS ON THE LANDSCAPE OF YOUR

STATE. IT IS KIND OF AN ANTIQUATED WAY OF DOING THINGS.

I KNOW THAT A LOT OF STATES HAVE MOVED TO THAT BEING ONE BODY.

THERE IS NO SEPARATION. BUT IN SOUTH CAROLINA, WE STILL HAVE THAT

SEPARATION. THEIR STAFF ARE PAID WAY LOWER THAN VR STAFF.

IT’S REALLY, REALLY INTERESTING THING.

AUDIENCE: I HAVE A QUESTION.

CHARLIE: SURE.

AUDIENCE: SO, I JUST STARTED AT MY CIL ABOUT TWO

MONTHS AGO AND I TOOK OVER THE TRANSITION SERVICES FOR OUR

CIL FOR YOUTH. AND WE DO CONTRACT WITH OUR VR. AND

THAT'S WHERE OUR FUNDING DIRECTLY COMES FROM. THE

PROBLEM -- I DON'T KNOW IF YOU GUYS -- WE DO THROUGH OUR

VR IT'S THE PAID WORK-BASED LEARNING. AND THE PROBLEM

THAT WE HAVE -- I WANT TO PUT IT OUT THERE IN

CASE SOMEBODY ELSE HAS THOUGHT OF A SOLUTION. THE PROBLEM

THAT WE HAVE IS GETTING INTO BUSINESSES AND GETTING THAT

PARTNERSHIP. I MEAN NOBODY IS WILLING TO LISTEN. IT

JUST -- I MEAN IT'S LIKE LITTLE RINKY-DINK SHOPS THAT YOU

CAN GET INTO AND WE HAVE TO KNOW THEY ARE THERE. IN A

BIGGER TOWN YOU CAN'T. THAT'S MY BIGGEST PROBLEM. I HAVE

TWO YOUTH AND NEITHER ONE OF THEM HAVE JOBS BECAUSE NOBODY WILL

TAKE THEM. WE CAN'T TAKE ANYBODY UNDER 18. AND

THEY DON'T HAVE TO PAY THEM. THEY DON'T HAVE TO COVER

THEM UNDER INSURANCE WITH OUR PROGRAM. THEY ARE PAID

SOLELY THROUGH A HIRING AGENCY. AND SO, THEY DON'T HAVE TO

PAY THEM. ALL THEY HAVE TO DO IS GIVE THEM A JOB. GO

THROUGH THE HIRING PROCESS, GO THROUGH THE INTERVIEW

PROCESS AND THAT'S NOT EVEN A SELLING POINT TO THEM

ANYMORE. THEY ARE LIKE, NOPE, WE STILL DON'T WANT TO DO IT.

CHARLIE: SO, WORK-BASED LEARNING IS PART OF PRE-EMPLOYMENT

TRANSITION SERVICES. THAT IS ONE THAT WE PURPOSEFULLY DID

NOT SELECT AND THIS IS WHY. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT AT ITS

HEART IS SOMETHING THAT WE REALLY STRUGGLE WITH

PHILOSOPHICALLY. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT FOR YOUTH

WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES MIGHT BE A NECESSITY,

BUT WHEN YOU TAKE A POPULATION OF YOUTH, SUCH AS THOSE

POTENTIALLY ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, AND THEN YOU’RE THEIR

FRONTLINE FOR EMPLOYERS, IT'S REALLY HARD FOR US TO GEL

THAT WITH IL. RIGHT? WHY ARE WE AUTOMATICALLY BY DEFAULT

THEIR MOUTHPIECE TO EMPLOYERS TO ORGANIZE WORK-BASED

LEARNING EXPERIENCES. FOR ALL THE WORK THAT WE ARE

DOING IN TERMS OF SYSTEMS ADVOCACY, FOR US, THAT WAS

KIND OF RUNNING THE RISK OF SENDING A VERY DIFFERENT

MESSAGE TO EMPLOYERS ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE ARE CAPABLE OF

WITH DISABILITIES.

AUDIENCE: EXACTLY AND THAT'S KIND OF THE THOUGHT THAT I HAD.

BUT AT TWO MONTHS AND JUST STARTING.

KIMBERLY: WE REALIZE YOU DON'T WANT TO DO THAT

AND THAT'S NOT OUR NICHE AND WE WOULD NOT BE GOOD AT IT.

AUDIENCE: AND I MEAN IT'S STARTING TO BE A PROBLEM.

I MEAN, I CAME IN AND SOMEBODY ELSE WAS WORKING ON IT

AND THEY LET HER GO, FOR OBVIOUS REASONS NOW THAT I

AM WALKING INTO THE SITUATION. BECAUSE NOTHING WAS DONE.

AND WITH OUR CONTRACT, THE PRE-EMPLOYMENT SERVICES THROUGH

VR HAVE TO BE FINISHED. THEY HAVE TO COMPLETE 240 HOURS

ON THE JOB BEFORE THEY GRADUATE HIGH SCHOOL. AND SO, NOW

IT'S MAY AND NEITHER ONE OF THEM HAVE JOBS. BECAUSE I

MEAN THE ONE PROBLEM THAT I AM RUNNING INTO WITH ONE OF

THE YOUTH THAT I AM WORKING WITH IS THE PARENTS CAN'T TAKE

THEM. SO, THEN THEY CANCELLED THE INTERVIEW. AND THEN THE

NEXT TIME THE EMPLOYER RUNS INTO AN EMERGENCY AND THEY

CAN'T TAKE THEM. BUT THEY DON'T COMMUNICATE DIRECTLY.

YOU KNOW IT'S ALL THROUGH ME AND THEN I HAVE TO APOLOGIZE

OVER AND OVER AGAIN BECAUSE HEY, THEY CAN'T DO THAT.

KIMBERLY: THAT'S A SYSTEMS ISSUE AS WELL AND SO THAT

BRINGS US TO OUR NEXT PROGRAM THAT WE ARE TRYING TO FIX

SOME OF THESE SYSTEMS CHANGE. WHAT I DON'T UNDERSTAND IS

WHY – AND I KNOW SOME CILS DO THIS AS A SERVICE, BUT WHEN WE

PROVIDE THAT DIRECT JOB PLACEMENT, PEOPLE ARE BECOMING

DEPENDENT. AND IT'S ALSO INTERFERING WITH HOW THE

EMPLOYERS ARE SEEING EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH

DISABILITIES. EMPLOYERS ARE SAYING, OH YEAH, I WOULD LIKE

TO HIRE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, BUT I HAVE TO WAIT FOR

SOMEBODY FROM VR TO CONNECT ME. NO. SOMEBODY WITH A

DISABILITY SHOULD BE ABLE TO COME TO YOUR PLACE OF

EMPLOYMENT -- YOUR BUSINESS -- APPLY FOR A JOB AND BE

CONSIDERED FOR A JOB. AND THAT'S WHERE WE HAVE TO DO

A BETTER JOB WITH EDUCATING EMPLOYERS AND TRYING

TO GET AWAY FROM THE SHIFT OF JUST JOB PLACEMENT.

BECAUSE YOU BECOME DEPENDENT ON THE SYSTEM

THAT IS PLACING YOU INTO THAT JOB.

CHARLIE: GREAT QUESTION. AND AGAIN, LIKE KIMBERLY MENTIONED,

THERE MIGHT BE A WAY TO DO IT AND NOT SACRIFICE YOUR INTEGRITY.

FOR US IT WAS -- FOR THOSE WHO MIGHT BE CONSIDERING IT,

WE DIDN'T SEE THAT PATH. BUT, THAT’S NOT TO SAY (INAUDIBLE).

KIMBERLY: AND WITH OUR FUNDER, WE HAD THIS CONVERSATION

WITH THEM, AND WE TOLD THEM WHAT WE WOULD BE REALLY

GOOD AT PROVIDING AND THAT'S HOW WE MADE OUR CONTRACT.

AUDIENCE: BUT THAT IS SOMETHING THEY WANTED YOU TO PROVIDE

AT ONE POINT.

KIMBERLY: IT IS. AND ACTUALLY, THE FEDERATION FOR THE BLIND IS

ALSO A CONTRACTOR WITHIN THE SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION

FOR THE BLIND. AND SO, THAT'S SOMETHING THAT THEY WANTED

TO FOCUS ON. SO, LET THAT BE THEIR NICHE. WE ARE GOING

TO FOCUS ON WHAT WE REALLY BELIEVE IN.

CHARLIE: THE SOUTH CAROLINA EMPLOYMENT FIRST INITIATIVE. WE

HAVE THE LOGO HERE THAT WE DEVELOPED AND THAT'S CHANGING

IN A COUPLE WEEKS, BUT IT'S A LITTLE BRIEF CASE

THAT SAYS SOUTH CAROLINA EMPLOYMENT FIRST INITIATIVE.

THIS IS SOMETHING THAT WE NEVER WOULD HAVE HAD THE

CAPACITY OR THE CLOUT TO PULL OFF. KIMBERLY IS GOING TO

TALK ABOUT THE FUNDING FROM THE ADMINISTRATION ON

COMMUNITY LIVING. I SPOKE TO THIS EARLIER ABOUT THIS

BEING ABOUT A PARTNERSHIPS IN EMPLOYMENT PROJECT THAT

SOUTH CAROLINA WAS SELECTED FOR AND WE WERE SELECTED TO LEAD.

THIS IS SOMETHING THAT WE BUILT TOWARDS FOR A

LONG TIME. WE ARE LOOKING AT TWO CORE INDICATORS.

WE WANTED TO SEE THE NUMBER OF YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

REACHING THE TIME OF HIGH SCHOOL EXIT WITH COMPETITIVE

JOBS IN THE COMMUNITY INCREASE. AND WE

WANTED TODAY SEE AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF COMMUNITY

BASED WORK EXPERIENCES THAT YOUTH WERE RECEIVING IN HIGH

SCHOOL. WHEN IT COMES TO THOSE WORK-BASED LEARNING

EXPERIENCES, WE CENTERED AN ENTIRE EMPLOYMENT FIRST PROJECT

AROUND SEEING THOSE NUMBERS INCREASED. WORK-BASED LEARNING

IS INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT. THAT'S JUST NOT SOMETHING THAT

WE WANTED TO PROVIDE. THAT'S SOMETHING THAT'S VERY MUCH

INCUMBENT UPON A NUMBER OF OTHER AGENCIES TO PROVIDE. AND

SO, THAT'S WHERE WE TOOK IT FROM -- FOR THE PURPOSES OF

THIS PROJECT. SO, WE HAVE KIND OF THREE MAIN AIMS ATTACHED

TO THOSE CORE INDICATORS. WE WANTED TO SEE – WE WANTED TO

EQUIP HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND THOSE RECENTLY EXITED TO

ENTER COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT. WE WANTED TO SEE SYSTEMS

ALIGNMENT IN STATE AGENCY POLICIES AND THE IMPLEMENTATION

OF EMPLOYMENT FIRST PRINCIPLES. WE WANTED TO MAKE SURE

THAT FOLKS WERE GETTING TIMELY AND RELEVANT BENEFITS

TRAINING FOR SSI AND SSDI BENEFICIARIES. DID YOU HAVE SOMETHING

TO ADD?

KIMBERLY: I WAS GOING TO MENTION THE POLICIES THAT THE

STATE AGENCIES HAVE ALREADY INCORPORATED SO, FAR.

CHARLIE: YEAH, AWESOME.

KIMBERLY: AND SO, A NUMBER OF AGENCIES DID NOT HAVE

EMPLOYMENT FIRST POLICIES ORIGINALLY. AND SO, WITH THIS

INITIATIVE, THEY HAVE BEEN CHANGING THEIR POLICIES

AND THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION JUST ANNOUNCED THAT

THEY ARE GOING DO RELEASE A POLICY SHORTLY.

THE SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND.

PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY NEVER HAD AN EMPLOYMENT

FIRST POLICY AND NOW THEY DO. (INAUDIBLE)

WHO ELSE WAS ON HERE? DD COUNCIL HAS ONE AND THEN OUR

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ORGANIZATION.

CHARLIE: WHO IS FAMILIAR WITH EMPLOYMENT FIRST

IN PRINCIPLE OR IN PRACTICE? JUST A FEW HANDS? JUST SIX OR

SEVEN HANDS OR SO. EIGHT HANDS MAYBE. SO, EMPLOYMENT FIRST.

EITHER YOU HAVE HEARD IT AND YOU THINK YOU KNOW WHAT IT MEANS,

OR YOU HAVE NEVER HEARD IT AND YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT MEANS.

EMPLOYMENT FIRST IS JUST THIS MOVEMENT THAT ASSERTS THAT

IN PUBLICLY FUNDED SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES,

EMPLOYMENT IS GOING TO BE THE NUMBER ONE PREFERRED OUTCOME,

THE PRIORITY OUTCOME. RIGHT? WE ARE NOT GOING TO SPEND

ANOTHER PUBLIC DOLLAR ON PUTTING SOMEONE IN AN INSTITUTION

WHEN EMPLOYMENT HASN'T EVEN BEEN ON THE TABLE FOR THEM.

THE KIND OF TROUBLING THING ABOUT EMPLOYMENT FIRST IS

THE MOMENTUM, AS SEEN BY THE ADMINISTRATION ON COMMUNITY

LIVING, AND WHO THEY HAVE CHOSEN FOR THESE PARTNERSHIPS

AND EMPLOYMENT GRANTS TO STATES. THEY ARE USUALLY GOING TO

UCED'S UNIVERSITY CENTERS FOR EXCELLENCE AND DISABILITY.

THEY ARE GOING TO ACADEMICS. THEY ARE GOING TO PARENT

ORGANIZATIONS. THEY ARE NOT GOING TO OUR COMMUNITY –

THESE SYSTEM CHANGE GRANTS TOWARDS EMPLOYMENT FIRST AND

THIS IS REALLY, REALLY IMPORTANT BECAUSE THIS IS A

CONVERSATION THAT FITS INTO OUR AGENDA PART AND PARCEL

REALLY, REALLY SMOOTHLY. EMPLOYMENT FIRST IS A REALLY

BIG ONE. WE COULD PROBABLY SPEND AN HOUR AND A HALF

TALKING ABOUT THE WORK WE ARE DOING WITH EMPLOYMENT FIRST.

WE ARE GOING TO JUST DO A QUICK OVERVIEW AND

KIMBERLY IS GOING TO TALK A LITTLE BIT ABOUT

THE FUNDING WITH THAT.

KIMBERLY: THIS IS A FIVE-YEAR GRANT AND WE RECEIVE

$250,000 ANNUALLY. IT DOES COME FROM ACL. WE

HAVE A DIRECTOR OF EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS,

WE HAVE TEN PART-TIME STAFF AND WE ALSO SUBCONTRACT

WITH OUR CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING.

THEY PROVIDE A NUMBER OF SERVICES THAT WE LISTED

IN THE EMPLOYMENT FIRST GRANT.

WE HAD TO HAVE MOUS (MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING)

WITH A NUMBER OF AGENCIES AND THAT WAS REQUIRED.

AND I KNOW I KEEP SAYING RELATIONSHIP BUILDING.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING IS SO IMPORTANT, BECAUSE

WE WOULD NOT HAVE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE THE

SYSTEMS CHANGE, IF WE DID NOT HAVE RELATIONSHIPS

WITH A LOT OF THESE STATE AGENCIES. SO, WHEN WE WENT TO

SIGN THE MOU, I HAD OUR STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

SENDING US HER SIGNATURE TWO DAYS LATER. WE HAD TO FIGHT

A LITTLE BIT WITH VR, BUT THEY CAME ALONG AND SIGNED THE

MOU. BUT ALL OF THESE AGENCIES ENDED UP JUMPING ON

BOARD WITH US TO ASSIST USE WITH THIS EFFORT TO CHANGE THE WAY

SOUTH CAROLINA IS LOOKING AT EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE

WITH DISABILITIES. THE NEAT THING ABOUT -- THIS GRANT

IS REALLY EXCITING BECAUSE WE DO GET TO SEE THE CHANGES

THAT ARE REALLY COMING INTO PLAY WITH THE WORK THAT

WE ARE DOING. WE DO HAVE SOME UNRESTRICTED FUNDS.

AND I THINK I MENTIONED THIS TO YOU. WE INTRODUCED

LEGISLATION THIS YEAR. TOMORROW IS ACTUALLY GOING TO

BE THE DAY THAT IT GETS THE FINAL READING IN THE SENATE.

SO, IT'S GOING TO BECOME A LAW. SO, SEEING ALL THIS

GREAT CHANGE WITHIN THIS ONE OPPORTUNITY IS REMARKABLE.

CHARLIE: A NOTE ON DIVERSION HERE. ACL ASKED THAT THIS

COULD BE A CROSS DISABILITY INITIATIVE, BUT THAT WE FOCUS

ON OUTCOMES FOR YOUTH WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL

DISABILITIES. WHICH IS FINE BY US. BECAUSE WHEN IT COMES TO

DIVERSION, THIS BECOMES A TRACKING ISSUE. AND IN STATES LIKE

SOUTH CAROLINA, WE RECOGNIZE THAT ALMOST ALL HOME AND

COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES PROVIDED THROUGH MEDICAID IN SOUTH

CAROLINA ARE (DRUM ROLL) FACILITY-BASED, RIGHT? SO, YOUTH

WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ARE ALMOST

EXCLUSIVELY RECEIVING SERVICE IN FACILITIES. SO, ANYTHING

THAT WE ARE DOING WITH -- DIRECTLY WITH YOUTH WITH

INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES TOWARDS

COMMUNITY INTEGRATION IS DIVERSION. BY WAY OF ITS

EXISTENCE THIS PROGRAM IS A DIVERSION RELATED PROGRAM.

DIRECT CONTACTS MADE WITH YOUTH THROUGH THIS PROGRAM

ARE PART AND PARCEL WITH EFFORTS RELATED TO DIVERSION.

OKAY. SO, THE SOUTH CAROLINA PARENT TRAINING AND

INFORMATION CENTER. WHO IS ALREADY PARTNERING WITH THEIR

STATE'S PARENT TRAINING AND INFORMATION CENTER? I ASKED THIS

EARLIER. I SAW A HANDFUL. SO, EVERY STATE HAS A FUNDED

PARENT TRAINING AND INFORMATION CENTER. THEY ARE ALL

GIVEN THE KIND OF SOFT MANDATE TO ALSO IN THEIR PARENT

TRAINING EFFORTS RELATED AROUND SPECIAL EDUCATION AND

YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES, THAT THEY ALSO PROVIDE

SELF ADVOCACY TO YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES. SO, THIS

WAS KIND OF OUR FOOT IN THE DOOR WITH OUR STATE'S PARENT

TRAINING AND INFORMATION CENTER, FAMILY CONNECTION

OF SOUTH CAROLINA, TO PROVIDE THOSE SERVICES AND LET THEM

KNOW THAT THEY DIDN'T REALLY KNOW THE FIRST THING ABOUT

DOING THAT. SO, PLEASE GIVE THAT TO US.

KIMBERLY: ANOTHER SENSITIVE TOPIC THAT WE HAD

TO BRING TO THEIR ATTENTION IS THEY WERE ALSO REQUIRED FOR

THE PTI'S TO PROVIDE SERVICES -- TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO

PARENTS WITH DISABILITIES. AND SO, I REALLY NEEDED TO

INTERVENE IN THAT SITUATION BECAUSE I KNOW THEIR

PHILOSOPHY. THEY THINK THAT THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY HAS

TO BE PROTECTED. SO, HOW DO YOU THINK THEY ARE GOING TO DO

WITH GETTING PARENTS WITH DISABILITIES. HOW ARE THEY GOING

TO ENGAGE THEM? SO, THAT'S ANOTHER PIECE OF THE CONTRACT

THAT WE WERE ABLE TO TAKE.

CHARLIE: SO, IT GIVES US A SMALL BIT OF FUNDING

AND THIS JUST BOLSTERS THAT PART C FUNDING TO WORK WITH

YOUTH CONSUMERS. WE ARE PROVIDING SELF ADVOCACY SKILL TRAINING,

IL SKILLS TRAINING TO YOUTH, THAT TRAINING FOR PARENTS WITH

DISABILITIES ON DISABILITY RIGHTS AND SELF ADVOCACY. WE

WERE CO-FACILITATING A PARENT-YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL.

THAT ENDED AFTER THE SECOND MEETING WHEN ONE OF OUR

YOUNG ADULTS THAT WAS ON THE ADVISORY COUNCIL STOPPED THE MEETING

TO LET THE PARENTS KNOW THAT ONE OF THE CHIEF THINGS

WE SHOULD BE WORKING ON IS PARENTS NOT DIVULGING PERSONAL

DETAILS ABOUT THE LIVES OF THEIR YOUTH TO OTHER PARENTS

OR ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND HOW DAMAGING THAT IS LONG TERM

FOR A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY. WE WERE TOLD THAT WE HURT

THE PARENTS' FEELINGS, OR THAT YOUNG ADULT HURT THE PARENTS’

FEELINGS, SO TERRIBLY BAD THAT THE PARENT YOUTH ADVISORY

COUNCIL WASN'T GOING TO WORK. THAT THOSE TWO GROUPS COULD

NEVER BE RECONCILED -- SO, WE TABLED THAT FOR THE LAST YEAR

AND A HALF OR SO. WE DO FACILITATE REGIONAL MINI CONFERENCES.

THE CENTER ON ALTERNATIVES TO GUARDIANSHIP, WHERE WE DO THE

SAME MODEL AS MAPPING YOUR FUTURE. FAMILY CONNECTION DOES

A LOT OF THE WORK WITH FAMILIES. WE TAKE OVER ALL OF THE

WORK WITH YOUTH THAT’S RELATED TO SELF ADVOCACY AND

DECISION MAKING. AND WE ALSO, PROVIDE CONTENT ON

ALTERNATIVES TO GUARDIANSHIPS TO THOSE FAMILIES THERE.

KIMBERLY: THIS IS A SMALL BIT OF FUNDING. SO, WE

GET $26,000 FROM THEM ANNUALLY AND THEIR OVERALL BUDGET IS A

LITTLE BIT UNDER $200,000, SO IT'S NOT VERY MUCH. THE NEAT

THING ABOUT THIS GRANT IS THAT IT WAS WITH A

DIFFERENT ORGANIZATION AND WHEN THE GRANT BECAME

OPEN AGAIN, WE ASSISTED WITH THE PROCESS OF WRITING

THIS GRANT. AND AGAIN, THAT GOES BACK TO RELATIONSHIP

BUILDING. BEING ASKED TO COME TO THE TABLE TO ASSIST WITH

DEVELOPING A GRANT OR WRITING A GRANT. AND THEN WE COULD

EMPOWER THEM TO PUT US IN THERE AS WELL. SO, THAT WAS --

THAT WAS PART OF THAT RELATIONSHIP WORKING.

CHARLIE: SO, I HOPE YOU ALL ARE SEEING THIS

PICTURE THAT IS EMERGING THAT WE ARE TRYING TO DEVELOP.

WE HAVE THROUGH EQUIP AND YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM,

WE HAVE THAT AVENUE FOR INSTILLING LEADERSHIP SKILLS

AND TAKING THAT SPARK THAT YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES HAVE

AND TRYING TO HELP THEM TURN THAT INTO A FIRE FOR IL.

WE ARE WORKING WITH YOUTH ON THE FRONT LINES IN MIDDLE

AND HIGH SCHOOL AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS LESS SO.

BUT THAT'S A BIG INTEREST OF OURS. WE ARE WORKING

WITH YOUTH DIRECTLY AND WE ARE ACTIVELY SEEKING FUNDING.

EVEN THOUGH THIS IS A JUST A SMALL BIT OF FUNDING,

WE ARE ACTIVELY SEEKING TO SUPPORT THAT PART C FUNDING

TO WORK WITH MORE YOUTH ONE-ON-ONE. SCHOOL VISITS ARE

IMPORTANT. WE ALREADY TALKED ABOUT PRE-EMPLOYMENT

TRANSITION SERVICES AND THAT FITS IN HERE. WE ARE GOING

TO TALK ABOUT A COUPLE OF OTHER PROGRAMS REAL QUICKLY. WE

STICK TO OUR WHEELHOUSE IN TERMS OF WHAT WE PROVIDE TO

STUDENTS. DISABILITY PRIDE, SELF ADVOCACY, EMPLOYMENT,

INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILL BUILDING, OPPORTUNITIES

THROUGH INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION WITH

PEER MENTORS IN THE CLASSROOM. WE UNDERSTAND -- THIS

IS REALLY, REALLY IMPORTANT -- AND GOES BACK TO

CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING BEING CONTENT

EXPERTS. WHEN WE LOOK TO IL, ALL OF THOSE THINGS IN THE

RESEARCH THAT OUR NON-DISABLED OVERLORDS (I THINK THAT

MIGHT BE MY NEW FAVORITE PHRASE BY THE WAY). ALL THAT

RESEARCH THAT'S BEEN DONE BY OUR NON-DISABLED

OVERLORDS ON US, IT UNDERSCORES ALL THE STUFF

THAT WE DO AS CENTERS. ALL OF THE THINGS THAT WE DO,

WE CAN POINT BACK TO THE LITERATURE AND SHOW FOLKS

HOW -- NOT ONLY IS THAT SUPPORTED AS BEST PRACTICE,

MOST OF THE THINGS THAT WE DO AS A MATTER OF

COURSE AS CENTERS, HAVE ALSO BEEN IDENTIFIED AS THINGS THAT

PREDICT POST-SCHOOL SUCCESS. DOES EVERYONE KNOW THAT SELF-

ADVOCACY SKILLS PREDICT SUCCESS IN EMPLOYMENT? THE THINGS

THAT WE HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT FOR DECADES, LOW AND BEHOLD,

RESEARCH OVER THOSE LAST DECADES HAS COME BEHIND AND SAID,

OH YEAH, ILS HAD IT INCREDIBLY RIGHT THIS WHOLE TIME.

WE HAVE TO BE ABLE TO SPEAK INTIMATELY TO THAT AS WELL

AND BRIDGE THE GAP FOR THOSE OTHER PROFESSIONALS THAT

WE ARE PARTNERING WITH TO HELP THEM UNDERSTAND THAT CONNECTION.

SO, ONE-TO-ONE SKILL BUILDING WE DO WITH OUR

INDEPENDENT LIVING SPECIALISTS. THERE IS NO BETTER WAY TO

CONNECT WITH YOUTH IN SCHOOLS. THERE IS NO BETTER WAY TO CATCH THEM

WHEN THEY ARE ACTUALLY FITTING THAT DEFINITION OF

TRANSITION YOUTH OR YOUTH IN TRANSITION FOR US AS

CENTERS. RIGHT? WHICH IS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL. THERE IS NO

BETTER WAY TO GRAB THEM THAN IN MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL OR

ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, AND HIGH SCHOOL. THEY KNOW WHO WE ARE

BEFORE THEY ULTIMATELY MEET THAT DEFINITION OF TRANSITION AGING.

DOES THAT MAKE SENSE? AND SO, THAT SETS THE STAGE

FOR -- IT'S A DROP IN A BUCKET WHAT WE DO GROUP INSTRUCTION

COMPARED TO WHAT WE CAN DO FOR A LOT OF THOSE YOUTH THAT

COME TO US ULTIMATELY FOR ONE-TO-ONE SERVICES ON EVERYTHING

FROM EMPLOYMENT PREP, TO COOKING AND BUDGETING AND SECURING

TRANSPORTATION AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND SO ON.

AND WE HAVE THE YOUTH FOLKS -- THE SAME FOLKS THAT ARE DELIVERING

THOSE SERVICES IN THE SCHOOLS. IN THEIR OFF TIME, WHEN THEY

ARE OUT OF SCHOOLS, THEY ARE ALSO THE ONES THAT ARE

PROVIDING THOSE ONE-TO-ONE SERVICES TO THOSE YOUTH.

KIMBERLY: AND WE GET ADDITIONAL FUNDING, TOO, TO PROVIDE

SOME TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE SCHOOLS TO HELP

CHANGE THE CULTURE IN SCHOOLS. TO GO INTO THE SCHOOLS, TO

WORK WITH THEIR TEACHERS AND THEIR STAFF. WE ALSO GET PAID BY THE

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO GO IN AND TEACH SELF ADVOCACY IN THE

CLASSROOM. THEY DEFINITELY SUPPLEMENT OUR ABILITY TO GO

INTO THE CLASSROOMS AND PROVIDE THAT SUPPORT.

CHARLIE: SO, SUPPORTED DECISION MAKING IS A BIG ONE FOR US.

IT IS THE SMALLEST FUNDING STREAM THAT WE HAVE FOR

ANYTHING YOUTH RELATED, BUT IT IS ONE THAT WE ARE

COMMITTED TO SEEING GROW AND SUSTAIN. ALL THAT EXISTED ON

THE ISSUE OF GUARDIANSHIP IN SOUTH CAROLINA BEFORE WE

STARTED THIS PROJECT WAS A BOOKLET THAT WALKED PARENTS

THROUGH STEP-BY-STEP HOW TO GET GUARDIANSHIP FOR THEIR SON

OR DAUGHTER. THAT'S ALL THAT EXISTED ON THE ISSUE. AND WHEN WE

LOOKED NATIONALLY TO WHERE OUR COMMUNITY WAS, OUR

COMMUNITY WAS SILENT ON THE ISSUE FOR A LONG TIME. IT

WASN'T UNTIL THERE WAS A STUDY DONE IN 2015 THAT SHOWED

THAT SINCE 1995 -- BETWEEN 1995 AND 2015, THE RATE OF

GUARDIANSHIP TRIPLED IN THE U.S. A MILLION NEW PEOPLE

WITH DISABILITIES WERE PLACED UNDER GUARDIANSHIP

AND WE WOKE UP TO REALIZE THAT THERE WAS AN EPIDEMIC

ON OUR HANDS. WE HAD BEEN PARTY TO SOMETHING THAT WAS

HAPPENING RIGHT UNDERNEATH OTHER NOSES FOR DECADES.

WE’RE TALKING ABOUT POST OLMSTEAD DECISION, POST ADA,

POST HCBS FINAL RULE. FOLKS WERE GOING, AND ARE GOING,

EN MASSE AS A FIRST RESORT TO PURSUE GUARDIANSHIP

FOR THEIR SON OR DAUGHTER AND GET A DECLARATION OF THEM

BEING INCAPACITATED WITHOUT TRYING ANYTHING ELSE FIRST.

SUPPORTED DECISION MAKING SOUNDS LIKE A FANCY CONCEPT

AND IT'S NOT. IT IS JUST SAYING -- ALL IT ASSERTS

IS THAT PEOPLE MAKE DECISIONS WITH SUPPORT.

WHO HAS USED YELP SINCE THEY WERE HERE? ANYONE

USED YELP TO FIND A RESTAURANT? YEAH, ABOUT TEN HANDS.

WHO USES AN ACCOUNTANT FOR THEIR TAXES? ANOTHER TEN, 15 HANDS.

WE ALL MAKE DECISIONS WITH SUPPORT. NOBODY MAKES DECISIONS

IN A VACUUM. VERY FEW DECISIONS DO WE MAKE IN A SILO

AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE NO DIFFERENT, RIGHT?

THAT'S THE MESSAGE THAT WE ARE SENDING THROUGH CAPACITY

BUILDING IN SOUTH CAROLINA. WE HAVE DEVELOPED A LOT OF

DIFFERENT RESOURCES TO HELP PEOPLE UNDERSTAND WHAT

OPTIONS THEY HAVE. ALSO, UNDERSTANDING THEIR

CONCERNS, RIGHT. THEIR CONCERNS ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS IN

MEDICAL TRANSITION FOR FOLKS. WHEN THEY SWITCH FROM

PEDIATRICIANS TO ADULT HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS. WHAT DOES THAT

LOOK LIKE? THESE ARE REAL CONCERNS THAT PARENTS HAVE, BUT

THEY'RE LOOKING TO GUARDIANSHIP AS IF IT’S THE

SILVER BULLET THAT’S JUST GOING TO FIX EVERYTHING. IT DOESN'T.

IT STRIPS THEM OF ALL THEIR RIGHTS AND VERY RARELY

HAS THE INTENDED – OR THE DESIRED CONSEQUENCES.

KIMBERLY: AND TO GET GUARDIANSHIP, YOU ACTUALLY HAVE A FORM –

A DOCTOR COMPLETES A FORM OF WHAT SOMEBODY CAN AND CAN'T DO.

DOES A DOCTOR LIVE WITH THEM? NO. SO, IT'S REALLY BASED OFF OF

ASSUMPTIONS MOST OF THE TIME.

CHARLIE: SO, THE SCOPE OF SUPPORT WE ARE NOT GOING TO GO INTO.

BUT IT'S EVERYTHING FROM ABLE SAVINGS ACCOUNTS TO RENT PAYEE

OR POWERS OF ATTORNEY, WHICH AREN’T MY FAVORITE.

BUT THERE'S LOTS OF DIFFERENT WAYS THAT PEOPLE USE SUPPORT

THAT ARE LESS RESTRICTIVE. SO, WALKING FAMILIES THROUGH

UNDERSTANDING THOSE OTHER MEANS OF SUPPORT.

WE HAVE CREATED MANUALS; WE HAVE CREATED VIDEOS.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THIS AGAIN THAT IL-NET WEBINAR

IS ON ALTERNATIVES TO GUARDIANSHIP. THE SC SUPPORTED

DECISION MAKING.ORG IS ALSO, A WEBSITE THAT WE HAVE

DEVELOPED WITH A LOT OF THOSE RESOURCES THAT YOU ARE WELCOME

TO BORROW.

KIMBERLY: THERE’S SOME REALLY NEAT VIDEOS ON THERE AS WELL.

THIS IS A TINY GRANT FROM THE DD COUNCIL, $23,000,

AND WE HAVE A FEW STAFF MEMBERS WORKING ON IT, BUT IT

IS A STATEWIDE PROGRAM. WE SUBCONTRACT WITH PROTECTION

AND ADVOCACY BECAUSE THEY CAN HELP WITH REVERSING

GUARDIANSHIPS, SO WE PULL THEM IN. WE ALSO SUBCONTRACT

WITH OUR PARENT TRAINING AND INFORMATION CENTER AND

THEN ARC OF SOUTH CAROLINA, BECAUSE THEY WORK SPECIFICALLY

WITH PARENTS AND THAT'S ONE WAY WE CAN CHANGE THE

PERSPECTIVES OF PARENTS -- BY CHANGING THE PERSPECTIVE

OF THESE AGENCIES WORKING WITH THE PARENTS.

CHARLIE: AT THIS TIME, I THINK WE ARE GOING TO

REGROUP HERE AND LOOK AT TAKING THE NEXT FIVE OR TEN

MINUTES WHEN WE COME BACK FROM BREAK TO ZOOM THROUGH SOME

OF THIS LAST BIT OF CONTENT AND THEN HOPEFULLY WE ARE

GOING TO HAVE AMPLE TIME TO OPEN IT UP TO SOME DISCUSSION AND

QUESTIONS. SO, IF ITS ALL RIGHT WE’LL GO AHEAD AND TAKE A

15-MINUTE BREAK AND WE WILL COME BACK RIGHT AROUND 3:15.