



POSITIVE PATHWAYS PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

EDUCATE TOMORROW

JUNE 2023 CONFERENCE EDITION



Students and Pathways Members Shine During 2023 Positive Pathways Annual Conference

More than 100 child welfare professionals, higher education leaders and community youth advocates attended the 2023 Positive Pathways Conference, an annual highlight of the Florida's Department of Children and Families (DCF) Positive Pathways Program.

Judging by a survey sent to participants, the conference was a success. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of the attendees, who hailed from all over Florida, indicated that they were either satisfied (21%) or very satisfied (75%) with the conference. Attendees appreciated the chance to choose sessions, to hear directly from students, and to learn about best practices from a wide variety of presenters.

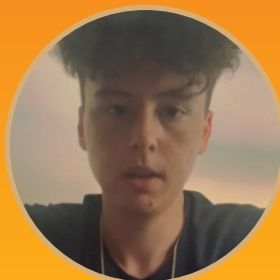
"I loved hearing from other people from around the state who are in similar positions as me," wrote one participant. "It was great to learn about programs that various colleges have put into place to help our students."

The day-long conference consisted of three main sessions, six breakout sessions, and a "Vision Panel." This special edition of The Path newsletter showcases the dedicated professionals who facilitated the sessions. The names of all presenters are listed on the Positive Pathways conference website, which can be found at www.PositivePathwaysFlorida.org.

Our thanks goes out to all conference attendees and speakers who shared so many valuable and practical insights to increase the academic success of the more than 6,000 students that use the DCF tuition and fees waivers at Florida's public universities, colleges, technical colleges, and K-12 district programs that serve young adults.

Positive Pathways, an eight-year old program and the only one of its kind in the nation, is comprised of more than 350 campus-based foster care liaisons and coaches who work with community-based advocates, lead foster care agency staff and providers to support and guide college students from foster care and homeless settings. The program has been administered for DCF by Educate Tomorrow since it was created.

Students Recognized and Offer Thanks and Advice During Conference



Jonah
St. Petersburg College



Rayla
UCF



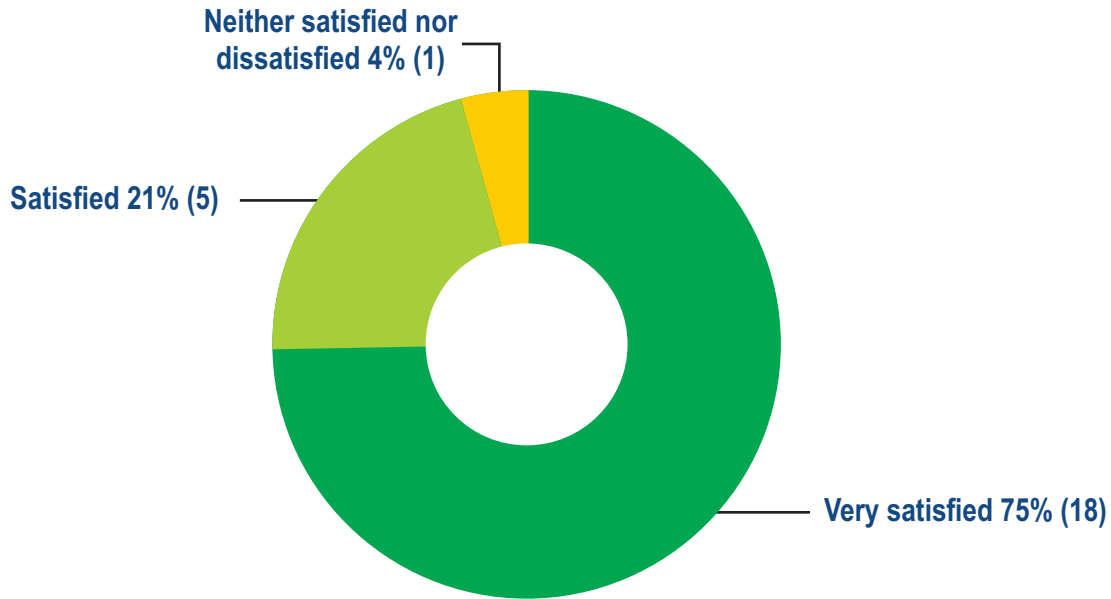
Conqualla
FSU

Click [HERE](#) to see the Roll Call of Students Powerpoint

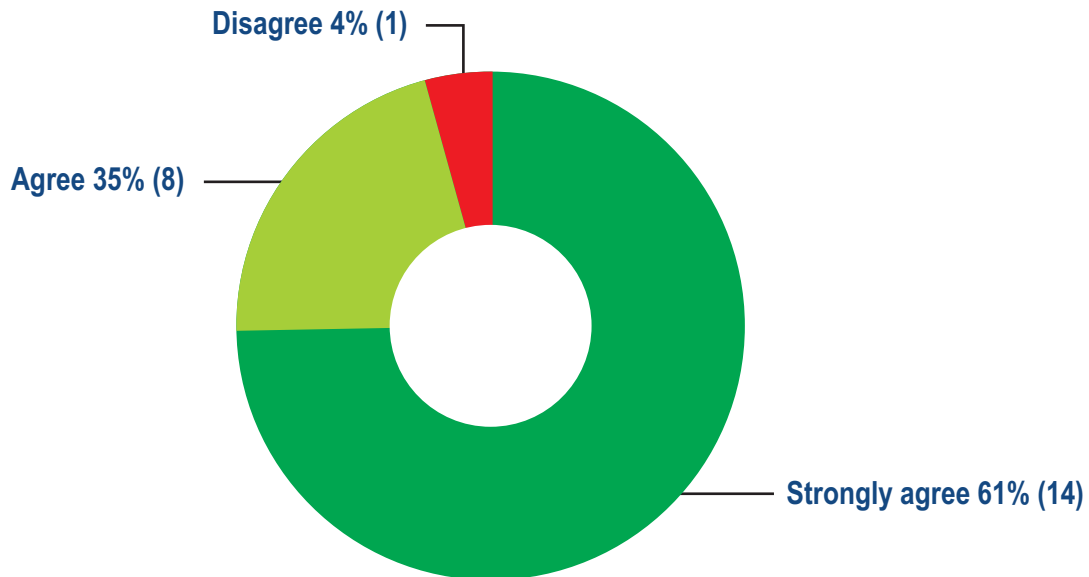
Click [HERE](#) to see the video of students who talked about their experiences with Positive Pathways and why campus-based support is vital for students using the tuition exemption.

2023 Conference Feedback Survey

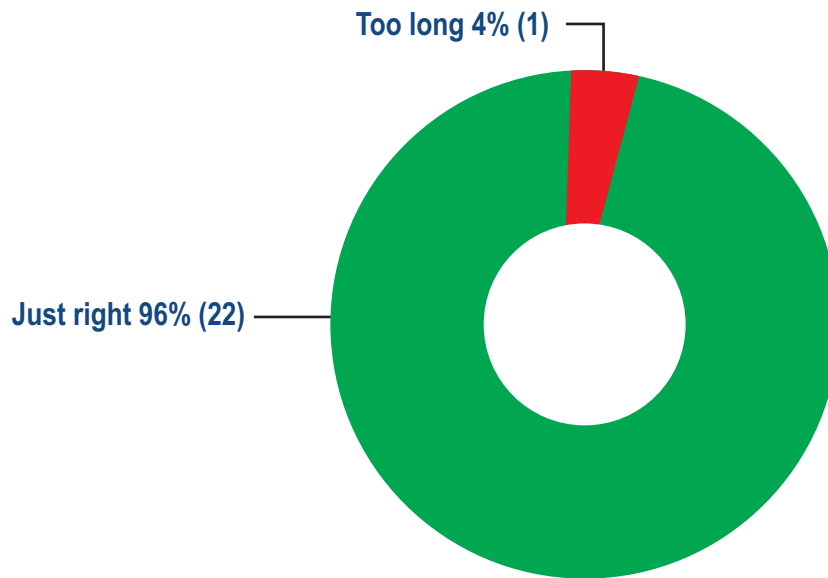
Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with the 2023 Positive Pathways Conference? (N=24)



As a result of the conference, my knowledge of resources available to students using the tuition waiver has increased (N=23)



Was the conference too long, too short, or just right? (N=23)

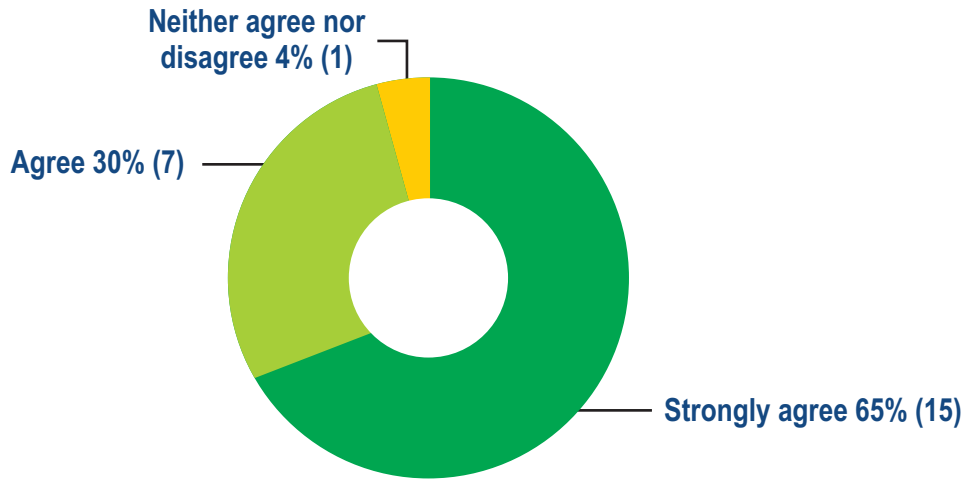


What aspects of the conference were most beneficial to you? (N=22)

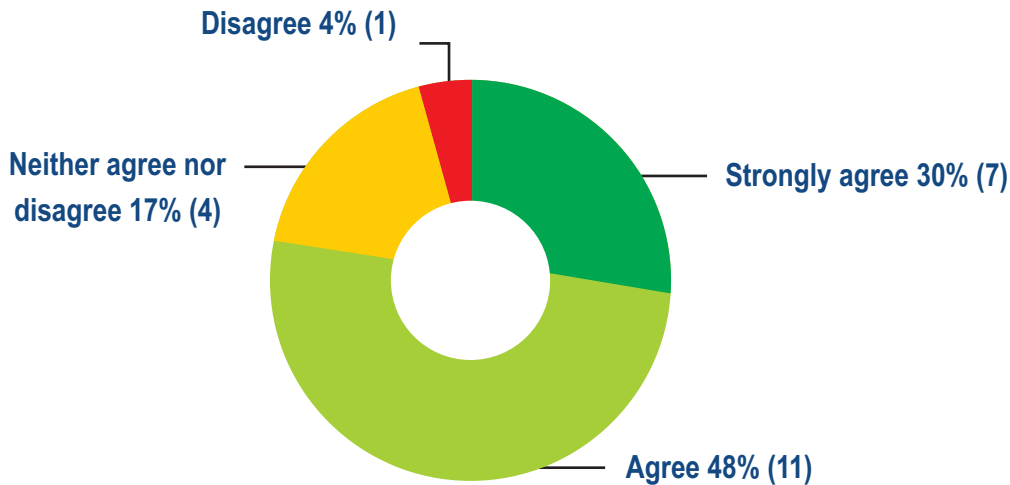
- The presentations and time for Q&A.
- Hearing from different community partners and how they support our students.
- It was all beneficial.
- I loved hearing from other people from around the state who are in similar positions as me. It was great to learn about programs that various colleges have put into place to help our students.
- The breakout sessions were wonderfully engaging and very informative.
- The aspect highlighting the various students and their activities after graduating.
- Information on specific program elements offered at each of the different schools
- Sharing resources. Good to see what others are doing and how they are supporting students.
- Waiver updates
- Cross-collaboration and discussion during the breakouts.
- Presenters and choices to hop around rooms.
- Hearing from the young adults on what worked and what needs improvement.
- The variety of speakers. Even if you don't deal with these people on a regular basis you know they exist. And you can look them up in the future.
- The connections made with others. Breakout sessions were a great idea and smaller forum allowed for easy discussions!
- Information from those in post-secondary institutions regarding programs that serve students identified as Homeless, Unaccompanied, Foster Care, and DCF assigned
- Getting to know how other institutions work
- Student testimonials, overview of other programs

2023 Conference Feedback Survey

As a result of the conference, I have a better understanding of effective ways to support students from foster care and homeless settings (N=23)



As a result of the conference, I expanded my professional network (N=23)



You Gave Your Time, Let Us Give You Your Certificate!

If you attended the 2023 Pathways conference and would like a certificate for your records, please let us know!

Email us at Pathways@EducateTomorrow.org



Your Name

Positive Pathways Conference
9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
June 23, 2023



Thank you to Our Excellent Facilitators!

Breakout Session 1

Partnerships and Services that Promote Student Academic Success



Dr. Tammie Nadeau
Assistant Director
Student Care Services



Melanie Gnaizda-Gilson
Manager of Student Services



Promoting Student Achievement in Your Community and on Your Campus



Patrick Simon, President
Citrus County Coalition for
College & Careers



Bea Awoniyi, PhD.
Assistant Vice President of
Student Affairs / University Ombuds



Breakout Session 2

Promoting Student Achievement in Your Community and on Your Campus



Dr. Misty Kemp
Executive Director
Retention Services



Sandra Obas, LCSW
Mental Health Specialist



Jasmine Moore
Associate Director



John Watson, Youth Advisor
Eric Wetzel, Youth and Young Adult
Transitions Services Specialist
(not pictured)



A distinguished panel of Positive Pathways members share their thoughts on what PPP can be in the future. Thank you Jack Levine for leading an inspiring and challenging discussion.



Vision Panel 2023



Phil Scarpelli
Chief Executive Officer



Yvette R. Robinson
CEO & Founder



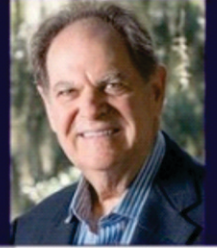
Shavon Saint-Preux
CEO & Founder



Shay Rzaire
Foster Care Youth Advocate



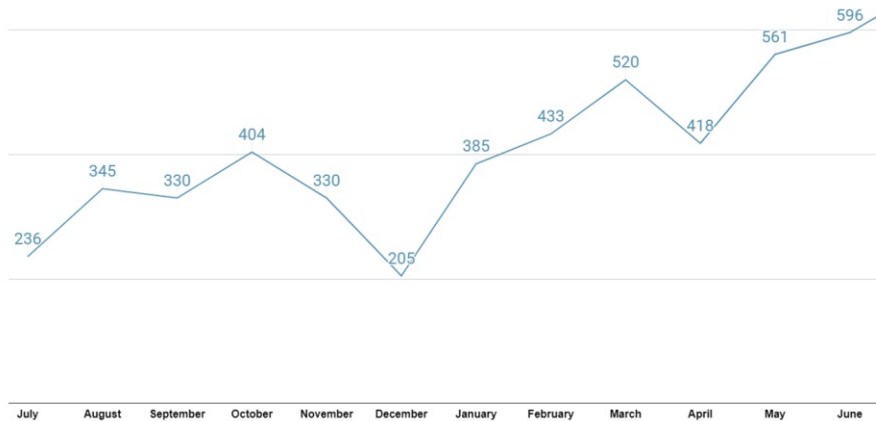
John Watson
Youth Advisor



Jack Levine, Moderator
Founder



The Positive Pathways Website Registered 4,763 Unique Visits During the 2022-23 Contract Year



Join Positive Pathways, YOUR Network for Success!

The Florida Department of Children and Families Positive Pathways, part of the DCF Office of Continuing Care (OCC), is funded by DCF and Educate Tomorrow, which has administered the program since 2016. The Program is comprised of more than 300 members located at Florida's public colleges, universities, technical colleges and community-based care agencies. These individuals are knowledgeable, accessible and compassionate professionals who provide consistent support to young adults from foster care and homeless backgrounds as they pursue their postsecondary educational goals.

The Positive Pathways team, which includes Brett McNaught, CEO of Educate Tomorrow, Jasmine Moore, and Dr. Steve J. Rios, all of whom are nationally recognized professionals at the intersection of higher education and child welfare. Positive Pathways is overseen by staff in the DCF Office of Continuing Care, by Director Taylor Peck, Deputy Director Cal Walton, III, and Eric Wetzel, the Youth and Young Adult Transitions Specialist. For more information about our program, or to join the Network, visit our website at www.PositivePathwaysFlorida.org. We look forward to working with you to improve academic outcomes among students from foster care and homeless settings.