

INTRODUCING...

# BRAVE CONVERSATIONS

BE THE SOMEONE THEY TALK TO

Youth in foster care need **trusted adults** in their lives who can meet them where they are, and who will listen and provide information for navigating relationships and sexuality.

Learn how to be a safe and trustworthy resource for youth and connect with caregivers working through the same challenges in our 4-hour training offered in person or virtually for **parents, caregivers, mentors, and other adults.**

## HEAR FROM PARTICIPANTS:

- “[The training provided] methods to have those hard conversations with youth without judgment.”
- “I liked the group activities and interactions - everyone was able to present their perspectives and input.”
- “[The most useful part was] bridging the communication gap between my generation and today’s generation.”
- “You know, you want to have a straight talk with the kids. But if you’re a little uncertain how to bring it up, the training gives you confidence.”

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## ABOUT BRAVE CONVERSATIONS

The Texas Foster Youth Health Initiative is excited to share Brave Conversations – Be the Someone They Talk To, an innovative 4-hour training for foster caregivers, child welfare professionals, mentors, and other supportive adults.

Foster parents and young adults with lived experience were instrumental in developing Brave Conversations. They wanted other caregivers to understand that youth in foster care need trusted adults in their lives who can provide non-judgmental support and information for navigating relationships and sexual health needs. Ideally, all the adults in a young person's life work as a team, share consistent messages about sexual health and healthy relationships, and support each other when challenges arise. Attending Brave Conversations can provide an important foundation for youth-serving teams and help to develop a thoughtful approach to these discussions.

This interactive training provides opportunities to practice strategies and skills to be a safe and trustworthy resource for youth and have ongoing, open conversations about sexual health and relationships. Brave Conversations can be tailored to the unique needs and schedules of child welfare professionals and foster caregivers. The flexible design accommodates various implementation formats, including in-person and virtual. For example, the training can be implemented in two, 2-hour sessions, or as a 4-hour workshop. The training is intended for groups of 5-20 participants.

Brave Conversations has been tested in partnership with child welfare agencies in four geographically and culturally diverse areas of Texas. Feedback from caregivers, young adults with lived experience, implementers, and child welfare professionals was incorporated into the final version of the training.

Our data show that after the training participants feel more confident talking about sexual health and expect more positive outcomes from having these ongoing conversations with youth. Participants also report that they intend to use the tools and resources provided through the training.



# TRAINING OVERVIEW

SECTIONS	LEARNING OBJECTIVES
<b>WELCOME &amp; INTRODUCTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand purpose and goals of the training</li> <li>• Identify ground rules and expectations for participation</li> <li>• Identify at least three reasons why it is important for caregivers to have brave conversations with youth in care</li> </ul>
<b>REFLECTION ON VALUES &amp; MESSAGES ABOUT SEXUALITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase awareness of personal and cultural values about relationships and sexuality</li> <li>• Increase skills for responding to youth in a non-judgmental and empathetic manner</li> <li>• Increase skills for communicating about sexuality and relationships using positive, strength-based messages</li> </ul>
<b>INCLUSIVE PRACTICES FOR SUPPORTING YOUTH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify at least three reasons why it is important for caregivers to provide a safe and affirming space for all youth</li> <li>• Increase knowledge about sex, gender identities, and sexual orientation</li> <li>• Increase skills for using inclusive language</li> </ul>
<b>TRAUMA-INFORMED CONVERSATIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase awareness of how complex trauma impacts youth's relationships and sexual behaviors</li> <li>• Identify six key principles of trauma-informed conversations and how they promote resilience, health, and wellbeing</li> <li>• Increase skills for talking about relationships and sexuality using trauma-informed principles</li> </ul>
<b>DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE RESPONSES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify three reasons why sexuality education needs to be an ongoing, developmentally-appropriate conversations, not a one-time "talk"</li> <li>• Increase skills for talking with youth about sexuality and relationships using developmentally-appropriate language</li> <li>• Increase skills for responding to youths' sexual behaviors and setting boundaries in a trauma-informed, developmentally-appropriate manner</li> </ul>
<b>SEXUAL &amp; REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase confidence for talking with youth about STI/HIV and pregnancy prevention</li> <li>• Increase awareness of online resources on relationships and sexual health</li> </ul>
<b>CLOSURE &amp; RESOURCES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase knowledge of online and community resources, including sexual/reproductive health care providers</li> </ul>