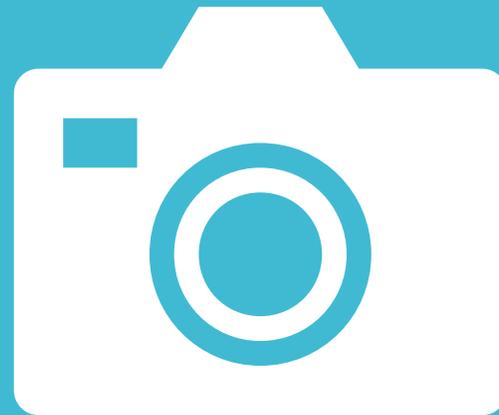


Diversion in Schools: A Snapshot

September 28, 2023

10:00am – 12:00pm

Training Session 4 of 4





Samie Iverson
Senior Manager of
Education Strategy



Dimitri Groce
Strategic Advisor of
Housing Initiatives



Joey Heilman
Senior Education
Strategy Specialist



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Housing & Education
Consultant

Tribal Land Acknowledgement

*We would like to acknowledge
the Indigenous people who have
stewarded this land since time
immemorial and who still
inhabit the area today.*

*Building Changes is on the land
of the Duwamish and Coast
Salish People.*





Please update your name as it appears in pdEnroller for clock hour attendance.



Mute when not speaking, bio breaks as needed, and take care of yourself! Live transcript available.



Use the "reactions" buttons, raise your hand during Q&As, and add questions to the chat as they arise.



Vision

Mission

Values



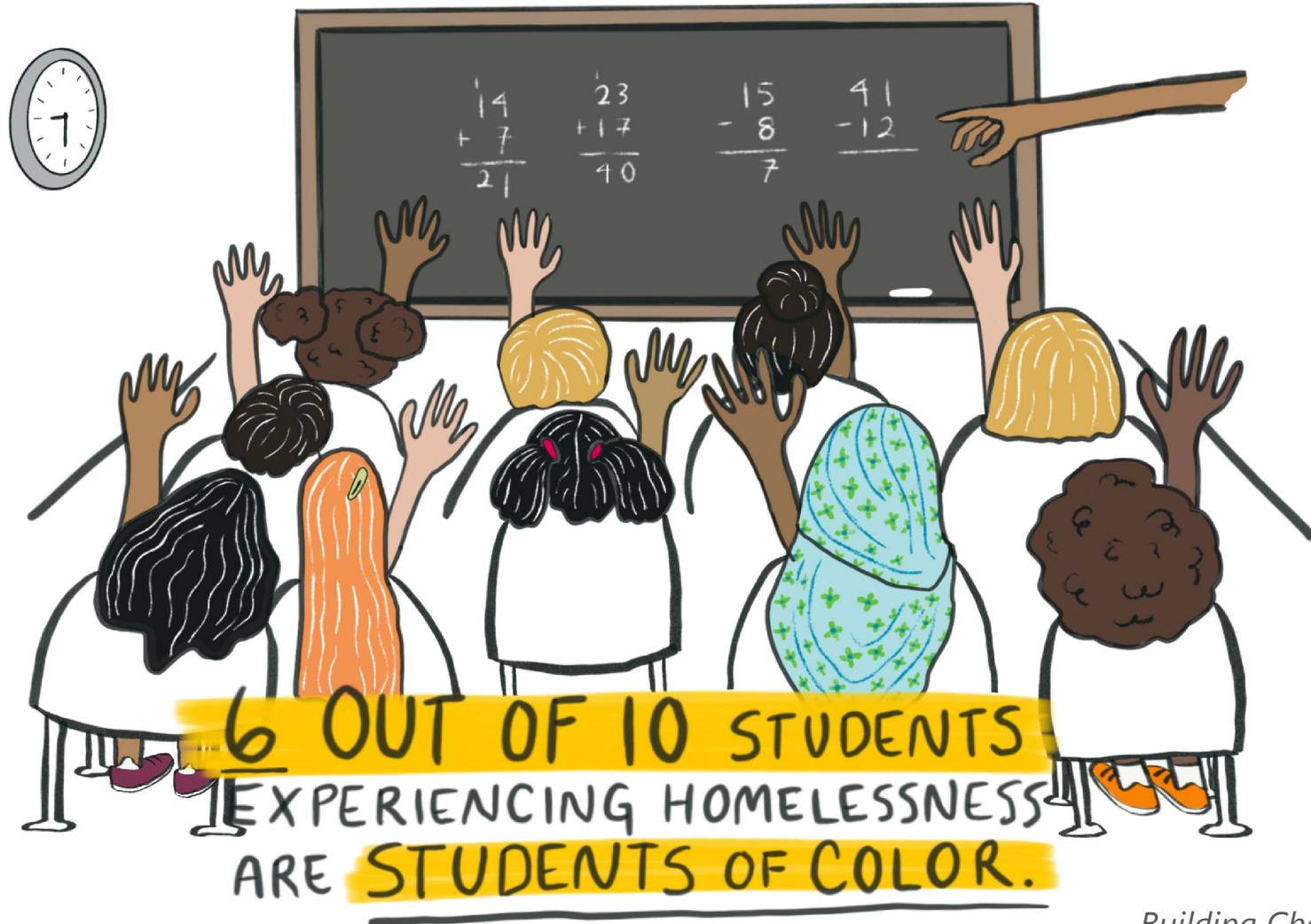
**BUILDING
CHANGES**

Communities thrive when people have safe and stable housing and can equitably access and use services.

Building Changes advances equitable responses to homelessness in Washington State, with a focus on children, youth, and families and the systems that serve them.

- Equity
- Partnerships
- People
- Integrity





Building Changes, 2019



BC's Education Team

Our Work with OSPI

Building Changes explores how school and housing systems interact with one another to serve students experiencing homelessness through our Education Team's work. We show up for students, encourage cross systems partnerships, and influence policies that shape on the ground practice.

OSPI and Building Changes have partnered, with the help of ARP funds, to provide training for McKinney-Vento school staff and community-based organizations serving students experiencing homelessness. We intend to offer 7 trainings (each one will occur 4 times) through September 2023. This partnership will offer content, tools, and peer networking opportunities to help those supporting students experiencing homelessness across our state.



Agenda

Check In

Diversion Snapshot

Guest Speaker: A Way Home WA

Example of Diversion

Diversion as an Asset for School/Housing Partnerships

Guest Speakers: Bethel School District

Breakout Rooms

Check Out

Objectives



Participants will leave with introductory understanding of Diversion, its key components, and how it can further racially equitable outcomes.



Attendees will learn how Diversion can be a helpful skillset to have when meeting the needs of students and families experiencing homelessness.



Participants will hear from McKinney-Vento liaisons who have been trained and are currently utilizing Diversion in their districts.



Attendees will have the opportunity to network and strategize with colleagues across the state.

Any questions before we proceed?

What is McKinney Vento?

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is a federal law that ensures immediate enrollment and educational stability for homeless children and youth.

The McKinney-Vento program is designed to address the barriers that homeless children and youth have faced in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school.

This is also inclusive of Unaccompanied Youth.

- *McKinney-Vento programs are built to meet the needs of their students and look different in every community.*
- *This work is dynamic, unpredictable, and requires a wide range of skills.*
- *It takes a village to serve this student population.*
- *Staffing does not always match up with the need.*
- *This is an underfunded mandate.*

[Building Changes MKV Deeper Dive Training Video](#)

[NCHE Unaccompanied Youth Brief](#)

Who is eligible?

The McKinney-Vento Act defines homeless children as "***individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.***"

The act provides examples of children who would fall under this definition.



FIXED:

Stationary, permanent, and not subject to change



REGULAR:

Used on a predictable, or consistent basis (e.g. nightly)



ADEQUATE:

Sufficient for meeting both physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments



ASK:

Can the student go to the same place (*FIXED*) every night (*REGULAR*) to sleep in a safe and sufficient space (*ADEQUATE*)

How familiar are you with Diversion?

0

I am currently utilizing Diversion and understand it well



1

I have been to a Diversion training and need more resources

[Start Merit](#)



1

I have worked with others doing Diversion and would like to learn for my own role



3

I have heard of Diversion before



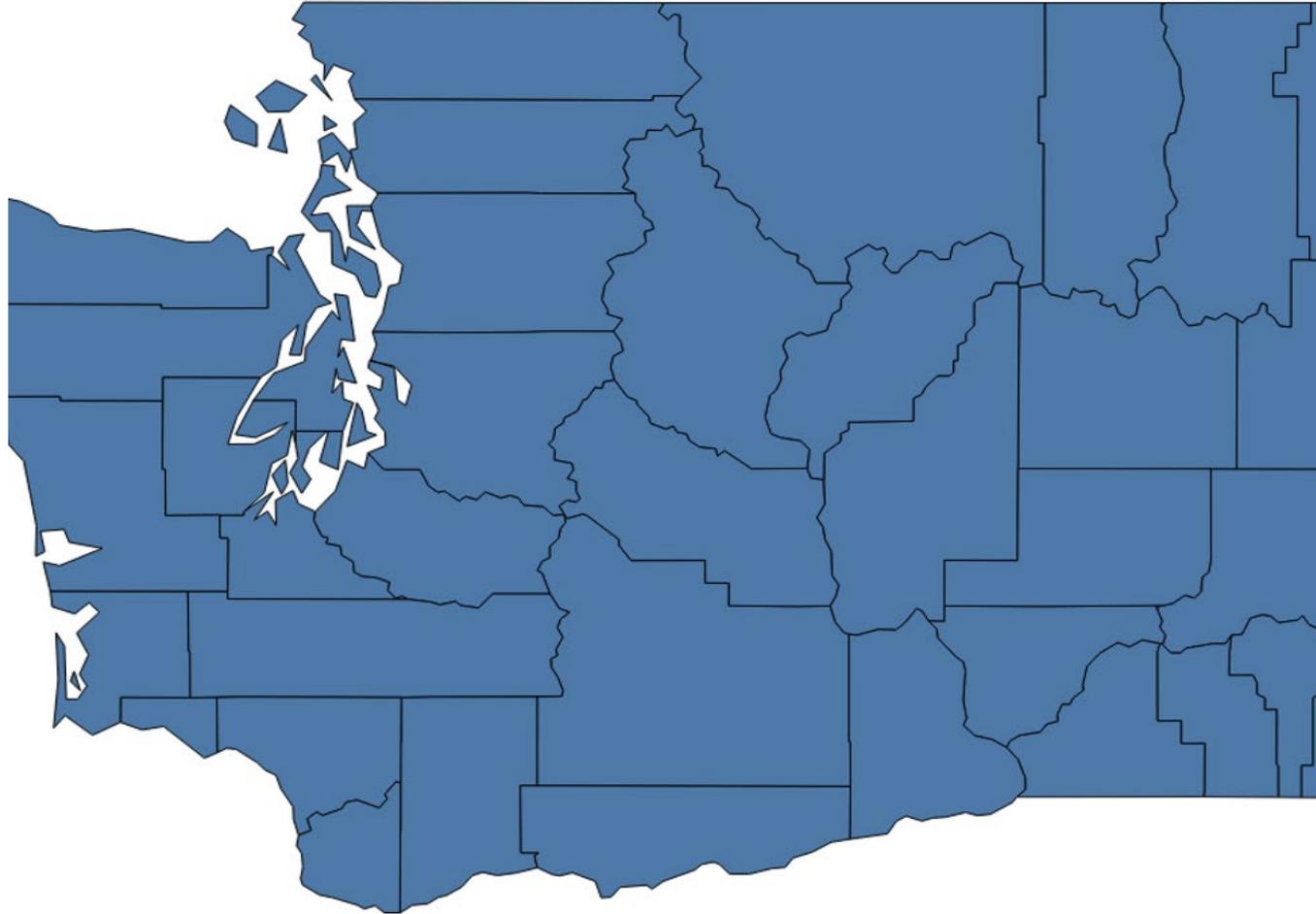
4

I have no idea what Diversion is, but I am here to learn!



Diversion Snapshot





How the Homeless Response System is Organized

System Demonstration Grants:

Clark, King, Pierce, Snohomish, & Spokane

Balance of State Continuum of Care:

Remaining 34 counties; governance and funding authority organized between agencies, Community Action Councils/networks, & County gov't.

Majority of the counties offer Diversion, approximately 25% of counties had access to flexible funding.

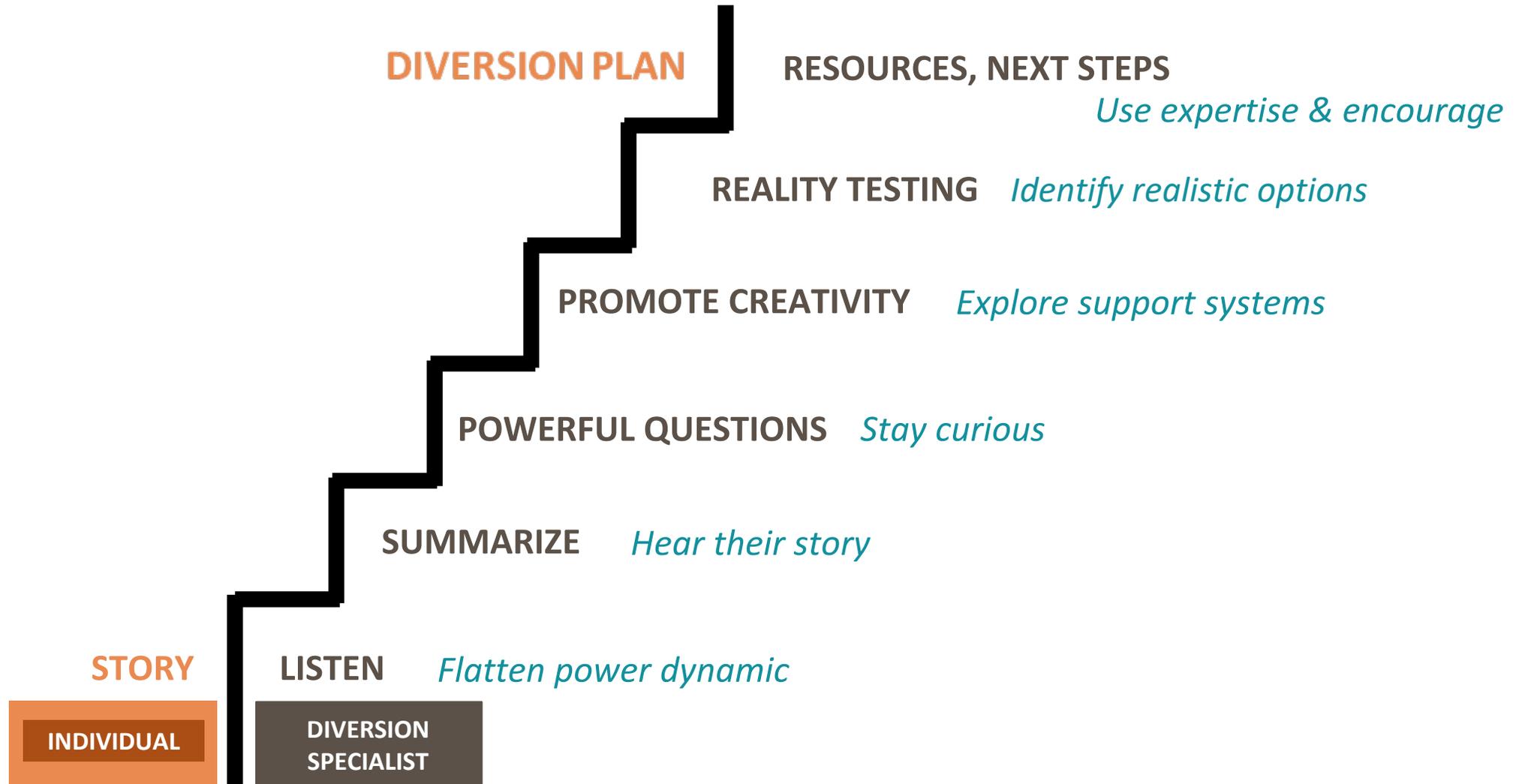
Diversion 101

Diversion is a **fast, strengths-based problem-solving approach** that supports a person/household to identify realistic housing options from **outside the homeless system** to resolve their housing crisis quickly.

- *Trauma-informed & person-centered*
- *Fast/flexible*
- *Exploratory not prescriptive*
- *Equitable & anti-racist*



Diversion Conversation: Steps for Being a Thought Partner



Infographic adapted from Washington Advanced Diversion Consultants & Trainers (WADCT)

Why is Diversion important?

Families who utilized diversion were **more likely** to exit to permanent housing

Families of color who utilized diversion were **more likely** to exit to permanent housing

Families who utilized diversion were **no more or less likely** to return to homeless service system

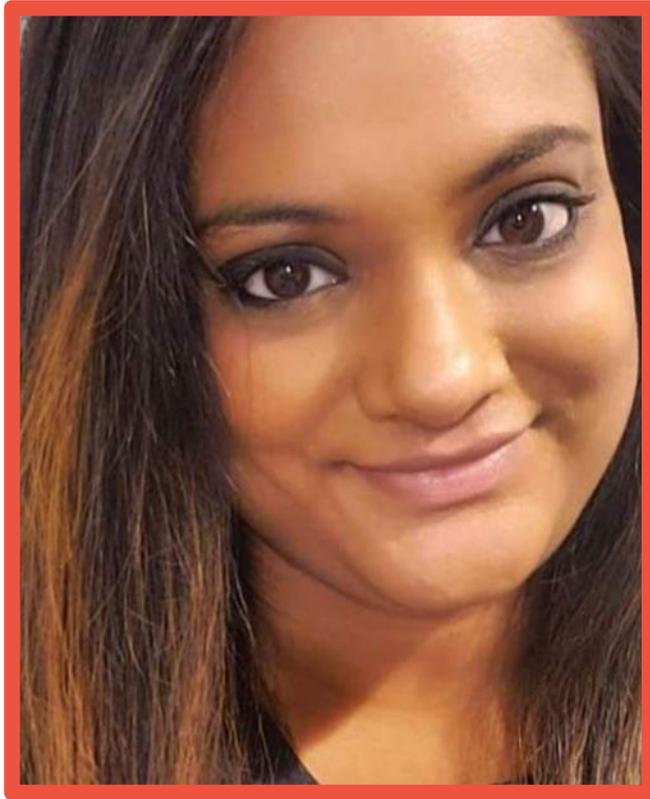
Families of color reported choosing Diversion because it met their needs

Washington State Diversion Study, 2022



A Way Home Washington

Anjali Riddick (She/her)



AWHWA Prevention Diversion and Training Manager

- Training & Engagement Team
- Facilitate HPDF Certification Trainings
- Data Reconciliation

10 Years Experience with YYA Experiencing Homelessness

- Education, Employment, and Career Coordination
- Employment Training Program Supervisor
- Employment & Education Program Manager



AWHWA: Building Yes-to-Yes communities

- AWHWA wants to prevent and end **unaccompanied** youth and young adult **homelessness** across WA.
- We value:
 - Ending, not just responding.
 - Justice – to end homelessness, we need to end disproportionality too.
 - Data – we need to know our impacts, pivot and learn.

Who are we talking about?

A Way Home Washington's Definition

Young people who are **unaccompanied** and are:

- Unsheltered
- Staying somewhere not meant for human habitation
- Fleeing domestic violence or trafficking
- Sheltered
- **Unsafely or unstably couchsurfing or doubled-up**



Things to remember

- Enforce an anti-racist/anti-homophobic space.
- Offer Diversion to **everyone**.
- We don't know what young people can achieve.
- Get out of young people's way.
- Center trust.
- Believe young people know what they need.
- Focus on strengths to come up with solutions.



Diversion Model



Exploratory, strengths-based conversation to brainstorm practical solutions for people to resolve their experience of homelessness quickly and safely outside of the homelessness system.



Focused on helping people get past the **immediate barriers** they face in obtaining safe housing.



Generates **creative ideas** to identify realistic options for safe housing.



Housing options are identified based on the **person's own available resources** rather than those of the homeless response system.



The goal is to become housed right away (within about **30 days**).



One-time **financial assistance** when needed.

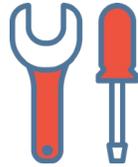
Homelessness
prevention
and diversion
funds can be
used to...



Eliminate a barrier to housing.



Create a new opportunity for housing.



Make existing housing safer or more tenable.



Resolve a conflict that was threatening housing.



Result is a client being housed permanently or temporarily outside of the homelessness system.



Beliefs underlying Diversion

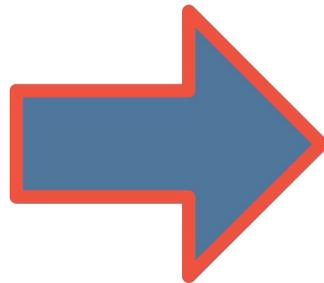
- Everyone **deserves** housing.
- People have deep wells of resources and **potential**.
- Not everyone needs an entire suite of services to be able to be housed – people can be housed **outside the system**.
- People need and want different things, and have **different** perceptions of what housing will work for them.
- Rejects the idea that people experiencing homelessness are in that position due to fundamental **flaws**.
- We as service providers actually **don't have all the answers**.
- We need to actively center **justice**.



Spirit of Diversion

Person-centered and strengths-based approach that assists an individual or household to quickly secure a **permanent** or **temporary** housing solution outside of the homeless response system.

- Crisis resolution
- Client choice
- Equity
- Progressive engagement



- Flexibility
- Creativity
- Immediacy

Understanding the Situation

The dynamic

- Correct pronouns
- Consider accessibility needs
- Transparent with information
- “asking for help should be like asking for a cup of sugar”
- Emphasize that you are a thought-partner
- Ask them to check you

The Story

- Let them tell what they want and feel is important
- Don't interrupt
- Be curious
- We don't need to know every little thing
- Withhold judgement and fix your face



Flexible spending funds can be used to...

1. Eliminate a **barrier** to housing
2. Create a **new opportunity** for housing
3. Make existing housing **safer or more tenable**
4. Resolve a **conflict** that was threatening housing
5. Result is a client being housed **permanently or temporarily outside of the homelessness system**



Let's explore
those
possibilities!

Own
apartment

Something
totally out of
the box?

Relocation

Creative
Housing
Convo

Stay with
friends

Prevention &
Household
Stabilization

Fam ily
reun ification

Eligible Use of Funds

“Will this young person be housed outside of the homelessness system within ~30 days because of this intervention?”

Eligible costs/expenses may include (but are not limited to):

- Security deposits
- One-time rent payments or other move-in costs
- Rental application fees and payments for background and credit checks
- Fees for securing vital documents
- Transportation, including gift cards for gas, bus/airline tickets for both local transport and to facilitate relocation to verifiable, safe housing out-of-the-area
- Previous housing debt/rental arrears
- Utility (or pet) deposits and arrears
- Cost to repair a vehicle if it is directly tied to a housing solution
- Employment supplies/tools, tests, licenses, certifications, etc.
- Food or utility assistance that can be used to secure housing with a friend/relative

No more than 25% of young people who have exited to acceptable diversion exit destinations return to homelessness within 3 months

Primary
OUTCOME

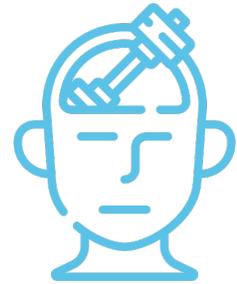


A WAY HOME
WASHINGTON

Diversion
allows us
to...



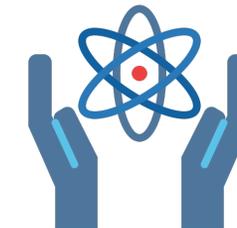
CENTER JUSTICE IN
SERVICES



HONOR STRENGTHS



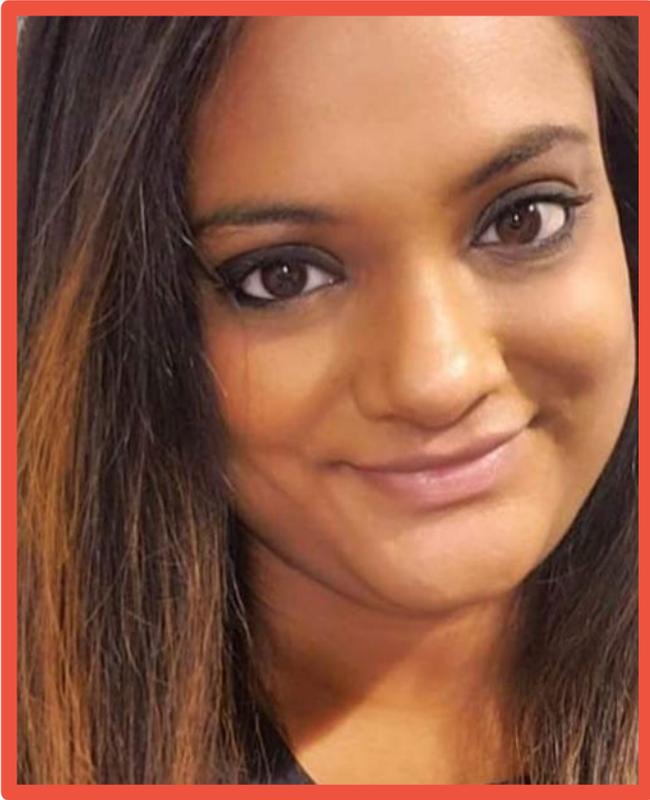
EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES



BE CREATIVE



A Way Home Washington
Anjali Riddick (She/her)



THANK YOU!

**A Way Home Washington
Prevention Diversion and Training
Manager- HPDF**

Ariddick@awayhomewa.org



Diversion Example Video Provided by Washington Diversion Coaches. For access to this video with captions, please contact Building Changes

Diversion Example Group Reflection



Reflect on what you just saw in context of what we have heard today!

- How was Karen treated?
- What active listening skills were used?
- How was problem-solving approached?

Break



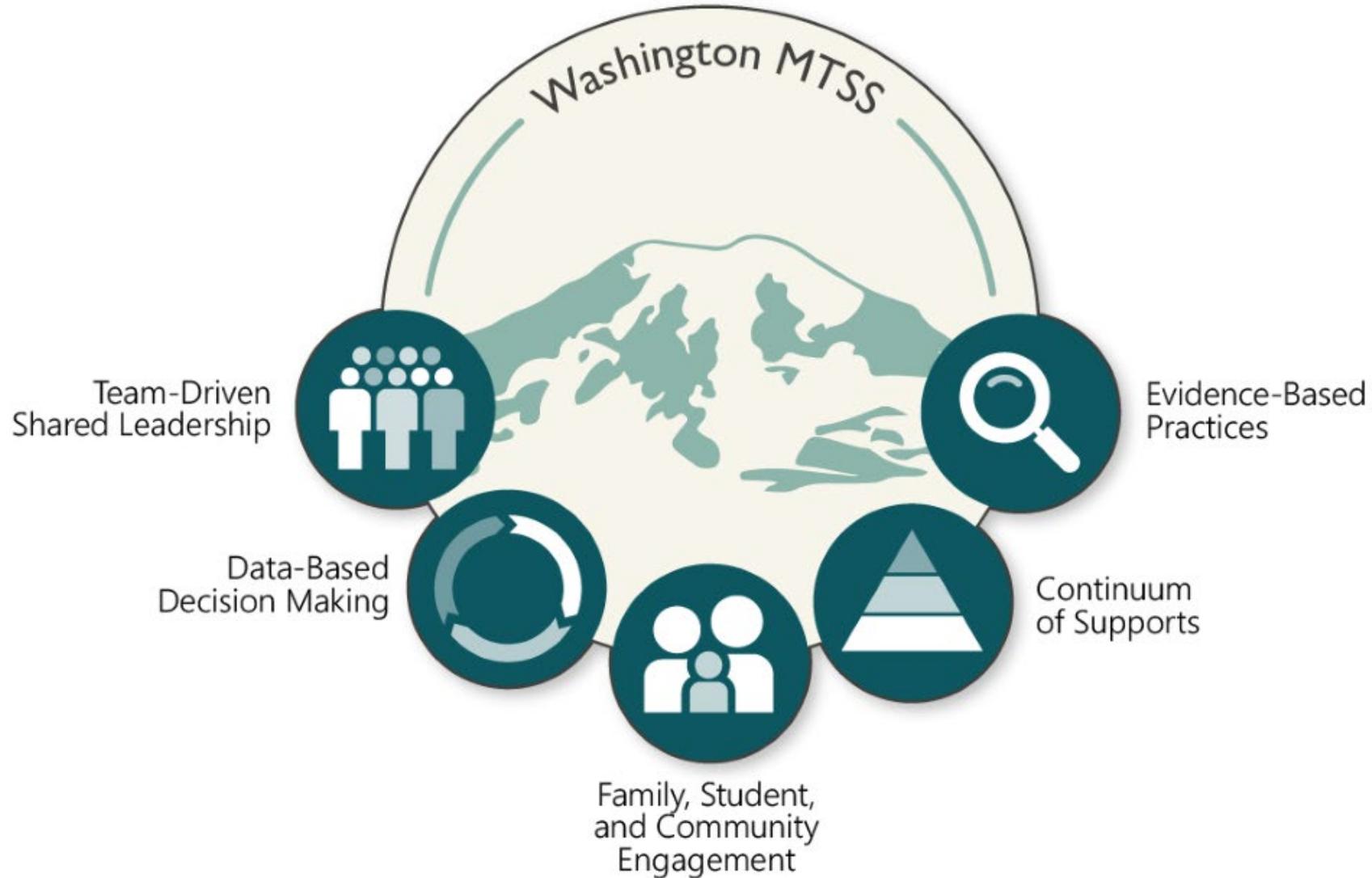
Diversion as
an Asset to
School/
Housing
Partnerships



Shared Values Across School and Housing Systems

- **Trauma-informed & healing-centered**
 - Schools: Trauma-informed and student-centered.
- **Fast/flexible**
 - Schools: McKinney-Vento – right to immediate enrollment, right to transportation, right to participate in all student activities.
- **Exploratory not prescriptive**
 - Schools: Every student. Every day. Individual Education Plans. McKinney-Vento programs look very different across the states.
- **Equitable & anti-racist**
 - Schools: Equity and inclusion offices and efforts. Centering the needs of students of color.

Aligning Values – Multi-Tiered System of Support



<https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/support-programs/multi-tiered-system-supports-mtss/mtss-components-and-resources>

6 GUIDING PRINCIPLES TO A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

The CDC's [Center for Preparedness and Response \(CPR\)](#), in collaboration with SAMHSA's [National Center for Trauma-Informed Care \(NCTIC\)](#), developed and led a new training for CPR employees about the role of trauma-informed care during public health emergencies. The training aimed to increase responder awareness of the impact that trauma can have in the communities where they work.

Participants learned SAMHSA'S six principles that guide a trauma-informed approach, including:



Adopting a trauma-informed approach is not accomplished through any single particular technique or checklist. It requires constant attention, caring awareness, sensitivity, and possibly a cultural change at an organizational level. On-going internal organizational assessment and quality improvement, as well as engagement with community stakeholders, will help to imbed this approach which can be augmented with organizational development and practice improvement. The training provided by [CPR](#) and [NCTIC](#) was the first step for CDC to view emergency preparedness and response through a trauma-informed lens.

https://www.cdc.gov/cpr/infographics/6_principles_trauma_info.htm

Flexibility and Sense of Urgency

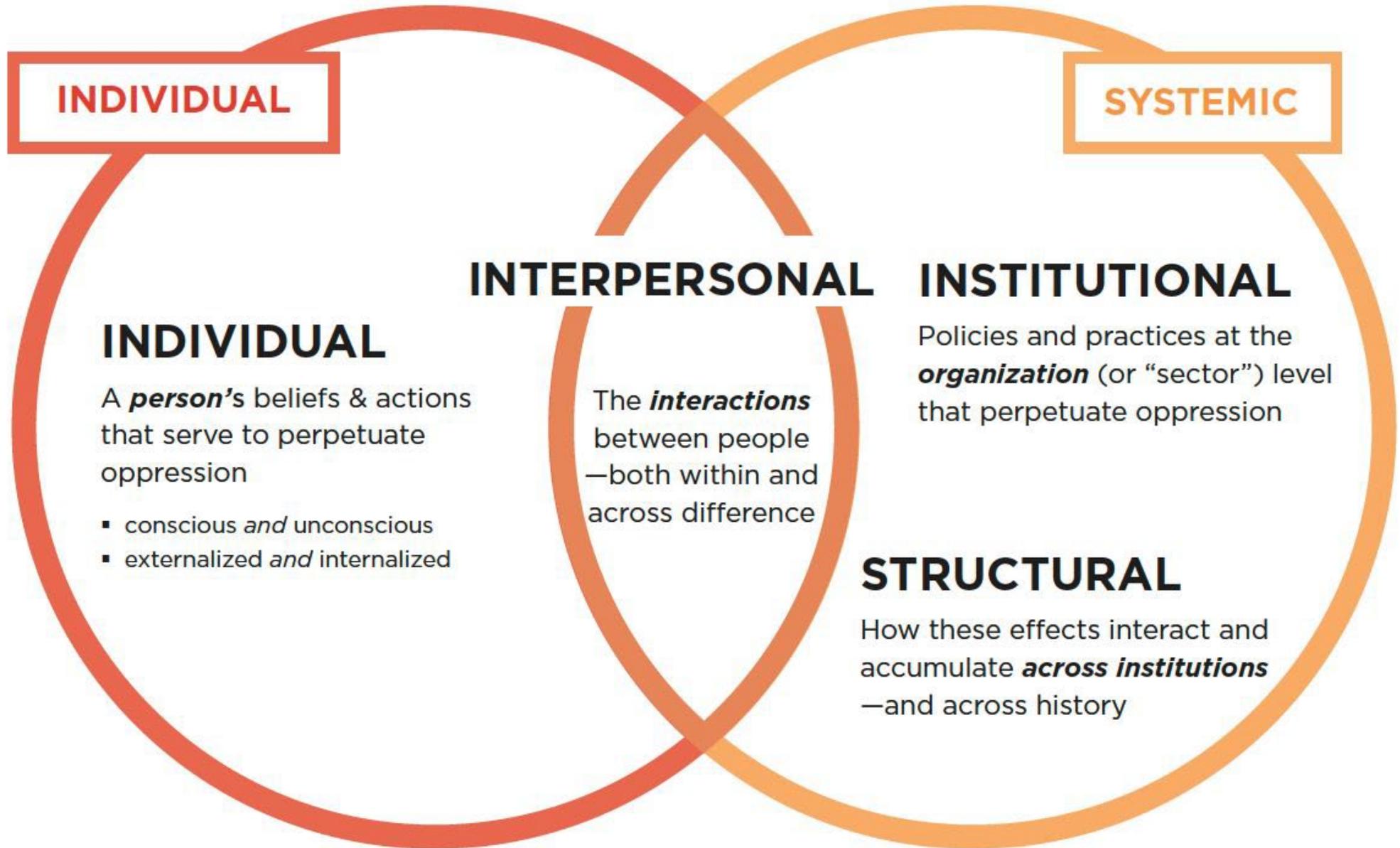
- Housing crisis is stressful and cannot always be addressed within the school day.
- Role definition and resource sharing across schools/school districts and housing providers can help ease access for students and families experiencing homelessness.
- Capacity limitations are real for school and housing staff.
- Flexible funds DO exist to help address housing crisis.



Centering Equitable Access for Students of Color



Image found: <https://www.susankaisergreenland.com/blog/trusted-resources-for-talking-to-children-and-families-about-race>



“Individual” vs. “systemic” oppression diagram from the [National Equity Project](#).

Exploratory, not prescriptive



WHITE PRIVILEGE MEANS

I can allow my child to express difficult emotions like anger or frustration without worrying it will make them unsafe

When my child turns on the TV, they see lots of people who look like them

My child has never had a teacher single them out because of their race

My child has never been the only one who looks like them at a birthday party



If my child scrapes their knee at a friend's house, they'll get a band-aid that matches their skin

@curious.parenting

Diversion in Schools: Applying to Practice

Echo Abernathy & Dani Stanford

Bethel School District

McKinney Vento/Foster Care Liaisons



What are the main principles of diversion from what you learned today?

24 responses



Breakout Rooms

In what ways does your district live into the "Spirit of Diversion"?

What are ways you envision bringing the "Spirit of Diversion" into your district?



In Closing...

Thank you for sharing your time with us!

- Please complete the post training survey!
 - [Survey Monkey](#)
 - PD Enroller if seeking Clock Hours
- [School/Housing Network](#)
- If you are interested in more training opportunities, reach out to us!
- Funding Opportunities!





Washington Office of Superintendent of

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

homelessed@k12.wa.us



**BUILDING
CHANGES**

Connect with us!

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