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**Utilizing Interprofessional Collaboration to Support and Broaden Perspectives of First-
Generation, Low-Income Students**

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Utilizing Interprofessional Collaboration to Support and Broaden Perspectives of First-Generation, Low-Income Students

Upward Bound is a college prep program that recruits low-income, first-generation high school students. The intention of Upward Bound is to provide support to our students that better prepares them for college and more likely to retain a four-year degree. The program is funded by a federal agency known as TRIO, which was initiated in the 1960's as a component of the War on Poverty (McElroy, 1998). Staff at Upward Bound work with up to 125 high school students from the following counties: Garrard, Estill, Lee, Powell, Wolfe, Lincoln, and Casey County. The required services per the grant include academic advising, ACT/SAT prep, assistance with college admissions, campus visitation, career awareness and info, community service, cultural activities, financial aid assistance, instruction for students with limited proficiencies, peer counseling/mentoring, personal counseling, reading instruction/tutorials, scholarship assistance, study skills, supplemental instructions, and tutoring. During the academic year, students participate in monthly Saturday Academies. During the summer, students participate in a "simulated college experience" while living in a residence hall on campus.

Students take a regular Needs Assessment, as well as complete yearly requirements to keep them on target for higher education. The Student Leadership team consists of individuals chosen through a yearly application process and the group sets collaborative goals and serves as leaders within the program. As a part of a federal agency, TRIO staff attend regular conferences and many commit to advocacy efforts for better funding and resources for TRIO programs. When it comes to these tasks, they are delegated based on expertise and experience shared among the team. For example, my director had many years of TRIO experience related to meeting with elected officials and advocating for funding. She took the lead on this, while my

fellow social worker tended to lead more projects such as the Needs Assessment. Overall, we worked in collaboration with many school staff, educators, and other professionals in order to provide students a well-rounded experience.

Students in our program are first-generation and low-income which puts significant barriers in many facets of their lives (EKU UB, n.d.). In addition to these barriers, the locality of the counties we work with place a barrier on students having access to diverse cultural resources. This must be taken into consideration in order to provide culturally competent services (NASW, 2017). In many cases, participating in Upward Bound introduces students to many “firsts”. This case study will gather information about the impact of cultural competence among the staff and value-led programming on the students at Upward Bound. This experience has the potential to be incredibly influential, as I have witnessed through my time working there. In order to gather information on the experience I interviewed individuals with various links to the program: staff, students, previous students, previous staff, and staff from affiliated programs. I also reviewed research and literature from a variety of services.

Interprofessional Practice at Practicum

Interprofessional work was integrated and emphasized deeply throughout my graduate school curriculum. I collaborated with a plethora of individuals from different backgrounds. This work is defined as “an effective interpersonal process that facilitates the achievement of goals that cannot be reached when individual professionals act on their own” (Bronstein, 2003, p. 299). Students within my cohort had placements at homeless shelters, foster care agencies, schools, rehabilitation centers, and more. At my placement, I worked with professionals from a various background. This experience along with collaborating with my peers in different areas allowed me to broaden my perspective and strengthen my interprofessional collaboration skills.

One of my supervisors has a master's degree in Human Services. I also work frequently with the coordinator, who has background in accounting and bookkeeping. During the first year of my practicum, I worked closely with the previous director, who had a graduate degree in Rehabilitative Counseling services. Throughout the year, I will come in contact with educators, school counselors, nutritional experts, and more. My duties as the social work intern included: organizing a service day for our students to gain volunteer experience, obtaining masks and Covid-19 tests, gathering hygiene products and clothing for students. I collaborated with nurses, public health officials, family resource coordinators from various counties, food pantry volunteers, sustainability coordinators, cemetery workers, and more in order to complete these tasks. This wealth of perspectives allows student assessment to occur in a holistic manner.

One manner in which interprofessional work is implemented at Upward Bound is through regular staff meetings and conferences facilitated by differing levels of leadership and affiliate programs. These intentional spaces allow for colleagues to actively work alongside colleagues. This also opens doors for increasing flexibility among staff approach to mandatory tasks and pressing issues. Flexibility refers to the ability to shift roles and expand perception on behalf of the shared goals of the team and is a key component within the interdisciplinary collaboration model (Iachini et. al, 2018). Within the interprofessional team at my practicum, we have access to different areas of expertise when discussing student issues. This gives us a large foundation from which to pull suggested interventions. We take each situation case by case and ensure that everyone is on same page about decisions and processes. We also consider perspectives of our program as a whole, as well as it's relation to other programs throughout the nation. Throughout the year, staff members will collaborate with educators, counselors, local businesses and staff at establishments such as: museums, restaurants, gyms, cultural centers, non-profit agencies, and

more. These efforts are produced in order to provide an experience that increases program participants cultural and educational perspectives.

Approach to Interprofessional Practice

Social Work Skills

In order to communicate and work with a diverse team, I applied several skills commonly used in the social work profession. This skillset included considering autonomy and intersectionality of our students during planning discussions in order to create a safe and welcoming space (Cournoyer, 2016). While planning for the summer and Saturday Academies, staff had in depth discussions about student needs and how to create a welcoming energy. Research conducted on the efficacy of healing environments is spread among a diverse number of fields. For example, a study found that victims of sexual violence recover quicker mentally and physically in an intentionally healing environment (Kinanthi, 2021). This takes into account the following variables: lighting, color, view, scent, art, and texture (Kinanthi, 2021). This study highlights the healing quality that the environment can have when we are mindful about what is stimulating us. Our intention was to create a space that was safe, comfortable, welcoming. We did this by creating an accessible space and planning interactive activities. This intention can be traced back to two of the core values within Upward Bound: Respect and Growth. It was also to utilize talking and listening skills around verbal and nonverbal communication with colleagues while solving complex situations (Cournoyer, 2016). My social background prepared me to utilize these skills in an interprofessional environment.

Self-Care Strategies

Self-care has definitely been hard for me while balancing classwork, practicum hours, and a source of income. I have recognized this feeling in my peers and colleagues, as well. I have had the pleasure of learning self-care strategies and sharing my own with these individuals. It was immensely helpful that we had space to have these conversations. Several methods have assisted me in working with diverse populations and personalities. Cognitive restructuring is a helpful tool that has been utilized by mental health professionals for decades. Also known as reframing, cognitive restructuring has been used to treat a wide array of mental illnesses and conditions (Uganvarsky, 2020). This technique was developed by Albert Ellis and Aaron Beck in the 1950's and is a key component of cognitive behavioral theory (Uganvarsky, 2020). Cognitive restructuring differs from the psychoanalytical approach (Uganvarsky, 2020). It chooses to focus on the present situations and feelings rather than try to find the root or past experience that has led to the condition or feelings. Cognitive restructuring does this by challenging or reframing negative thoughts. Reframing is defined as changing our perception of the situational events in life (Olpin & Hesson, 2020). This helps individuals suffering with negative thoughts and ideas challenge them in hope for a more positive perspective. This combats cognitive distortion, which makes situations seem more dire, dangerous, and elevates our stress (Olpin & Hesson, 2020).

Personally, I approach reframing by asking myself a series of questions about my feelings and the situations. The way in which individuals perceive the world is their reality, even if their fears are unfounded. While working with diverse individuals and colleagues from other professions, one must be able to view situations from different situations. I have found that this helps in situations with my students as well. As a first-generation student, I relate to many of the barriers and struggles of my students. My students would also benefit greatly by the modeling of

this behavior in the correct manner (Petrocchi et. al, 2021). Without this strategy, it would have been difficult to relate and empathize with the individuals around me.

Information

Eastern Kentucky University Upward Bound (UB) serves high school students in Lincoln, Powell, Estill, Lee, Wolfe, and Casey County (EKU UB, n.d.). In order to provide the best services to my group, I need to understand their demographics and where they come from. All counties in our area are low-income, ranging from Lee County at a median income of \$29,000 per year to the highest in Lincoln at \$42,000 (Kids Count, 2019). For comparison, other counties such as Fayette or Jefferson have a median income of about \$55,000 (Kids Count 2019).

Acknowledging the data related to educational aspiration and attainment within these areas is also vital. Only 29% of individuals that graduate from high school in Casey County have a postsecondary degree within six years (Kids Count, 2019). Each of the counties in our area are categorized as Appalachia. Students within this geographic area tend to have low graduation rates and upward mobility compared to their urban or financially stable counterparts (Palomer-Lever &Victorio-Estrada, 2017). However, studies have shown that rural adolescents have high educational aspirations (Agger et. al., 2018). This puts them at a disadvantage when it comes to college enrollment, retention, and graduation (Mitchall & Jaegar, 2018). In order to address those aspirations, they need resources. Rural teens are known to have strong family connections, but sometimes this feeling can make it harder for them to go to college (Agger et. al., 2018). By taking these dynamics into consideration, the barriers and backgrounds of individual students and the program as a whole can be better understood. It was important I gathered this context because I am not originally from the area.

Evaluating Evidence for Individual and Collective Action

Literature Review

Historical Context of Upward Bound and TRIO

TRIO was implemented in 1964 as part of the Economic Opportunity Act. This was a component of Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Poverty" (McElroy, 1998). There are several programs within TRIO other than Upward Bound, such as Student Support Services, Educational Talent Search, and McNair programs. Upward Bound has been identified for its humanistic approach since the inception of the program (Bybee, 1968). The first on-campus summer program occurred in 1965 and continue throughout the nation. That is not to say that there have not been cultural changes and issues throughout the decades. Several studies have indicated that minority students were less likely to accept positions and participate within these programs (McElroy, 1998). Discussions about the definition of an "economically disadvantaged" individuals have also taken place in regard to inclusivity and cultural consideration. These conversations continue among program staff to this day.

Upward Bound in the Present

Upward Bound programs work in conjunction with colleges and universities. In Kentucky, there are programs at Eastern Kentucky University, Berea College, the University of Louisville, and more. The main emphasis is still placed on first-generation, low-income students. Within the state, enrollment of first-generation low-income students is higher than it has ever been. However, rates of degree obtainment are still low (Bryant, 2022). Many programs in the state have found success in utilizing strategies like intrusive advising and community service

organization (Bryant, 2022). Upward Bound programs, especially at Eastern Kentucky University, continue to utilize a humanistic approach and act with cultural competence.

Information on Target Population

Research has shown that students benefit from receiving supplemental services from professionals that do not normally work in educational settings (Iachini, 2018). Interprofessional collaboration with educators can occur with mental health professionals, youth leadership programs, social workers, healthcare workers, and others. When working with students, it is crucial to evaluate that the needs that allow them to thrive and learn are met. Issues such as poverty and homelessness are on the rise in isolated rural areas, which the majority of our students call home (Miller & Bourgeois, 2013). Though food and housing security are nonacademic issues, they most definitely influence academic outcomes. Student from rural areas also face barriers when it comes to healthcare. They are more likely to face illness related to obesity and smoking (Hardin et. al, 2021). Collaboration between schools and community resources is crucial to providing students with materials and support needed to attain academic success.

Other than demographic location, adolescents in general are more likely to encounter certain barriers. Mental health issues and awareness among teenagers has certainly become a prominent subject over the last few years. Rates of anxiety and depression among adolescents has spiked, especially since the Covid-19 pandemic (Bagatarhan & Siyez, 2018). Internet addiction has also become a prominent topic in research concerning the mental health of adolescents, linking it to anxiety and depression (Bagatarhan & Siyez, 2018). Mental health awareness is integral when providing services to Upward Bound's target population.

Interprofessional Use of Research

Practice-informed research allows social workers to conduct research that is supported by their practice experience, this is indicated in the fourth CSWE competency. This allows for practitioners to utilize the information they have learned by working directly with individuals and assessing their needs and obstacles. It is equally important that the practices used by practitioners are backed by research supporting its' safety and efficacy. Social workers interconnect the worlds of research and practice, as well as quantitative and qualitative methods in order to gain a holistic view of client issues. In order to gather data on the experiences and impact of Upward Bound, I surveyed and interviewed individuals associated with the program. I spoke with 55 individuals that had/currently participated with the program as staff, student, or Student Leadership Team members. I also summarized data from the student Needs Assessment in order to gain a better understanding of the needs and goals of the program as a whole.

Needs Assessment Summary

Students in Upward Bound take a Needs Assessment every year. This assessment allows staff to identify issues and intervene with individuals and the program as a whole. This year's findings emphasized financial obstacles and issues. 32% of students currently work a job in order to pay their own bills. Money was the most frequently identified barrier to going to college. When it comes to demographics, 15% of students identified as not cisgender. There are many more females in the program than males. 40% of students indicated that they at least sometimes have trouble completing schoolwork and 13% have IEP plans at school. 33% of students indicated they had been intimidated or bullied at school in the last year. 40% of students indicated they did not feel happy at home or school.

Interview Findings

Completing conversational interviews allowed me to take an in-depth look at the way people affiliated with Upward Bound feel about the program and their experience. The first dataset is from students that are currently in the program. I had the chance to speak with 41 individuals. I asked questions relating to their experiences of Upward Bound when it came to topics such as inclusivity and values. Over 85% of participants indicated that they personally felt welcome in the space. When asked about the most impactful activities provided, the most common answers were the mental health minute, senior success requirement, the summer trip and academic program. Over 75% of participants indicated that they felt their personal values had been influenced by Upward Bound and the personality of the program was most frequently described with terms such as “accepting”, “positive”, and “encouraging”. Frequently identified values among the group were respect, growth, relationships, and education.

The next dataset includes staff and previous students. Many students that graduate from the program return to work as tutor advisors. They were able to provide information as both a student and staff members. However, staff members that did not participate in Upward Bound as a student had similar feelings and experiences. Participants consistently identified Upward Bound’s personality using terms like “open” and “supportive”. Every single individual in this dataset indicated that they personally felt accepted in the space. Concerning their personal values, a majority of respondents cited the program expanding their worldview and increasing their acceptance. Another theme that emerged was the comradery of working with other first-generation and low-income individuals. This creates an environment where problems are more easily understood.

Interprofessional Use of Theory and Evidence

When working with colleagues and clients at my placement, I frequently consider the ways in which social capital theory applies to my practice and goals. Social capital theory developed in the late 90's and early 20's and focuses on the support given to individuals be the resources and social networks accessible to them (Skobba, 2018). Social capital is not only important to my clients currently, but they will need to learn how to build it as they go to college and begin their careers. In fact, students that are involved with multiple groups and/or individuals on campus are more likely to graduate and tend to score better in their classes (Piel, 2018). Social capital can be built and assessed from a micro, mezzo, and macro angle. When it comes to leading with values and acceptance, students that can interact successfully in environments that are different than the one they grew up in are more likely to be able to obtain this social capital.

I can help them with this skill independently by helping with interpersonal skills and offer social support. Social support is an innate need across all groups of the human race. Studies have shown that social support from friends, family, and teachers have a significant impact on symptoms of depression in adolescents (Pössel et. al., 2018). This is crucial knowledge considering nearly 20% of adolescents suffer from depressive symptoms (Pössel et. al., 2018). Studies have also found that social support is especially crucial to females, who report higher levels of stress than males (Kneavel, 2021). This is indicative of the “tend and befriend” model of stress response that is commonly associated with females (Kneavel, 2021). Empathic listening is a great way to reach social support in both of these contexts.

The Student Leadership Team will also have the opportunity to learn about group dynamics and personal reflection as a leader. According to Erikson’s psychosocial model, students are in the stage of Identity vs Identity Confusion (Orenstein, 2021). Students on this

team are in a crucial stage in which their egos and feelings about self are developing. From an interprofessional perspective, my colleagues can provide different of aspects of support and together we can create a holistic web of resources.

Another idea that I consider frequently throughout my work is Strength's Perspective. This emphasizes the identification of assets and strengths belonging to an individual in their unique situation (Cournoyer, 2016). Many clients that I work with feel helpless about the aspects of their lives that cause them the most stress. This lack of autonomy can be attributed to the fact that they are still minors. However, I make sure to recognize their accomplishments and strengths in any way I can. I learned that this method is used by my peers for mentoring purposes, as well. I also try to give them to most choice when it comes to their goals and our work together. The Student Leadership Team holds a position in which they can influence the program and other students. This will be supportive to their autonomy and learning about their strengths individually and as a team. This can also be useful in an interprofessional environment to work through the strengths and weaknesses of clients with colleagues in different areas. Strength's Perspective can be tied in with the value of respect. The ability to identify unique aspects and strengths among different kinds of people is helpful when working with an interprofessional team or navigating a new place.

Exercising Social Work Values and Ethics

Applying an Ethical Model

The first competency a set of ethical guidelines that aim to protect the professional relationship between a social worker and their client (NASW, 2017). The professional and ethical boundaries implemented by this competency ensure the client, the social worker, and the agency involved will engage in a considerate and beneficial relationship. This competency also

recognizes that unclear situations may arise and offers behaviors that will lead to an ethically sound resolution. Reamer's ethical model can be used to work through dilemmas faced while in the field. The ethical model applied in this example comes from Social Work Today (Reamer, 2002). This model contains specific steps that help those using it consider many perspectives and values when working through an ethical dilemma.

a. **Identify Issue and Conflicting Values**

The issue concerns the manner in which I interact with clients, since many of them are available only on Facebook. It is vital that I choose a platform that all member of the Student Leadership Team have access to. Staff members are not located within the schools and do not see the students regularly, making it difficult to build relationships with them. This was especially pertinent during the phase of the pandemic in which we only provided online services.

The ethical dilemma arises when I am able to see the content they post and they are allowed to see the content that I post on our personal social media pages. This brings up the issue of privacy for both parties involved, especially depending on the content that is posted. If I believe that the clients could harm themselves or others, I am mandated to report such behaviors and I am also committed to the overall well-being of the client per Standard 1.01 (NASW, 2017). On the other hand, there are other standards that support not reporting: Informed Consent 1.03(f) and Confidentiality 1.07 (NASW, 2017). On top of the privacy-related issues, students seeing the posts made by staff and other students on their personal pages will potentially impact the amount of welcomeness they feel in the program.

b. **Individuals, Groups, and Organizations Affected**

Those affected include myself, my clients, the Student Leadership Team, my supervisor, and Upward Bound as a whole. While staff and students certainly have the right to their own personal social media and beliefs, association with Upward Bound on these platforms can relate back poorly on the program. Likewise, unsavory posts made on Upward Bound's social media may impact the individuals. The lack or presence of these connections impacts the relationships and communication of the program, as well as the culture.

c. **Possible Courses of Action**

1. Do not interact with students on Facebook at all
2. Interact with students in a measured manner
3. Make a separate, professional page
4. Utilize GroupMe, Snapchat, or other media that would allow for more privacy and protection

d. **Pros and Cons of Actions**

1. This would prevent privacy breaches for both parties, but some students would be left with no way to communicate with myself or interact with the program. This also takes away an aspect of getting to know each other and build relationships- due to the sheer distance between our agency and students. Without a line of communication, I would be unable to provide any services to students.
2. This would prevent the student's personal content from appearing on my page and allow them to have a stable avenue to contact me. However, the students still have access to the content I post on my personal page. Though I am careful

about what I post, there is still a potential for me to say something that may make one of my students feel alienated. My silence on certain issues could also make others feel alienated.

3. This would ensure the privacy and boundaries of all parties. It would also give them a consistent way to contact me. This would take up extra time and effort to keep up with. Also, I will be able to still see the content they post. My professional account would contain significantly less of my personal information.

4. GroupMe and Snapchat would allow for more privacy and works well for group communication. However, a couple of my students do not have cellphones that allow these apps to be downloaded, therefore it is not accessible to the whole group. It would be important to utilize a form of media that is easy for students to access and use. One pro of Facebook is its accessibility and ease of use.

e. **Consult with Colleagues and Supervisors**

My classmates and colleagues were immensely helpful in my navigation of this issue. I was validated concerning the need to meet the clients where they are, which is important to the social work practice (E. Adams, personal communication, April 8, 2022). They also validated my feelings about being hesitant to interact with my Student Leadership Team in this way (V. Cromer-Hall, personal communication, April 8, 2022). This reminded me that one of my colleagues had made a separate Facebook account that she utilizes only for work purposes (B. Morrison, personal communication, October 12, 2021). I was also able to speak with individuals from other TRIO programs about the manner in which they communicate with students. They have faced similar issues, and many continue to use Facebook because it is the

only option they have found that meets all the needs they have regarding communication and interacting. When speaking with my team, we recognized that one step that may help is having an “appropriate use of social media” workshop. We also make it clear about what is appropriate to contact us about and what is not. Throughout the pandemic, staff has not had any major issues regarding the use of Facebook for communication.

f. **Make Decision and Document Process**

After completing this framework, I have decided to act intentionally about my social media use and have candid conversations about boundaries with my students. I feel that this will meet the needs and respect the privacy of my students and myself. It also provides students with a model on how to build professional relationships in a virtual world.

g. **Monitor Decision**

I will monitor this decision by determining the frequency in which I come in contact with the personal content of my clients. I will also discuss this decision with my supervisor and determine whether it impacts student accessibility. After completion of the academic year, I will reflect on whether or not this method was more harm than good. This will be done by taking into account issues that pop up and ease of communication.

Comparing Ethical Codes

In my placement, I work with a variety of interprofessional colleagues. One of them has her Master's in Rehabilitation Counseling. This ethical code is very similar to the NASW Code, emphasizing diversity, integrity and client well-being. However, some aspects are specific to

rehabilitation such as independent living and high emphasis on autonomy (CRCC, 2019). This could impact the types of goals she sets with clients. Her emphasis on independence may also impact the way she works with groups and families. I also work with educators. This code of ethics is also similar and highlights a commitment to their students. One difference is the guideline to behave in ways that does not intentionally embarrass or single out students (NEA, 2020). One could imagine that this is especially pertinent in a group setting. This differs from the NASW and may be related to bullying issues within the classroom. Finally, I work with high school counselors regularly. The ACA Code of ethics is similar to the NASW when it comes to client welfare, confidentiality, and informed consent. However, the ACA Code emphasizes the enhancement of human development (ACA, 2016). It also highlights fidelity as honoring commitments and keeping promises (ACA, 2016). This differs slightly from the language in the NASW Code. Overall, it is easy to identify the similarities in ethics and values of the professional I come in contact with.

Impact on Intervention

While working with a myriad of perspectives, one must practice active listening and exploration skills in order to reach common ground. While maintaining one's appropriate professional score, interprofessional social workers should engage in techniques that allow for effective communication while being respectful of all parties involved. This was vital when the program values and mission were decided among staff. The values implemented by the program were agreed upon and discussed at length in detail with staff at this time. This enabled each member of the team to have buy-in and have their say in what the program values are (T. Stewart, personal communication, November 7, 2021). This collaborative effort impacted the way in which programming was approached and included the unique perspectives of all staff members. At

Upward Bound, regular staff meetings are used to facilitate these discussions. Each meeting has an itemized agenda, and each staff member is asked for their input before moving on to the next item. This approach may seem tedious but enables all staff members to have buy in and feel heard. It also allows the team to evaluate the best way to address issues and for individuals to take on tasks related to their areas of expertise. This formula leaks down to the students and discussions we have with them, in an attempt to create a culture that welcomes feedback.

It is important for social workers to comprehend the NASW Code of Ethics before going out into the field, because they will undoubtedly stumble upon an ethical dilemma. An ethical dilemma occurs when two values are contradicting each other, and the decision will ultimately result in an ethical violation (Keeney, 2019). An ethical violation occurs when an ethical standard is gone against or not upheld. Ethical dilemmas can occur with contradicting values within the NASW Code of Ethics or even with the code of ethics utilized by members on one's interprofessional team. An ethical violation will occur as a result of an ethical dilemma. Ethical violations occur simply when a standard is broken, whether there was a dilemma involved or not. A team comprising of diverse professional backgrounds likely include the perspective of the ethical codes associated with the background of the team members. While this broadens the information and perspective, it also may potentially result in codes that are in juxtaposition with each other. This does not mean that one ethical code is simply right while the other is wrong but exemplifies the different values and considerations when working with a client(s).

As I begin my social work career, it is important that I request feedback and evaluation from my supervisors. My supervisors are intended to act as a resource of policy and experience for the supervisee. Utilizing professional judgement is integral to making ethical decisions, such as working through scenarios with supervisors and colleagues. Social workers should create a

dialogue with their supervisors when they feel unsure about policies or how to move forward with a client. These conversations are also important in providing services that are in agreement with the mission of the agency (Kimball, 2013). I utilize supervision by inquiring with my practicum instructor and supervisors when presented with an issue I do not feel confident in solving individual.

Being Culturally Responsive

Approaches to Social Justice

Social workers have a responsibility to society and humanity as a whole. They should work toward an ideal, justified society. They work toward a world in which all basic needs are met, and vulnerable populations are no longer exploited. Social workers have practiced the fight for justice since the beginning of the profession – settlement houses provided the basic needs to poor families and individuals (Morgaine, 2014). Social, economic, and environmental justice create a holistic view of an individual's rights: fair treatment within society, economy, and the environment. This approach from an interprofessional stance includes using leadership practices and promote collaboration between interprofessional teams.

One of the main goals of Upward Bound is to provide a safe place for our students to grow and prepare for college. We take an individualized approach based on yearly Needs Assessments and interactions with students in order to determine the support we can provide. This level of support ranges greatly throughout the programs. In the same day, you can deliver an ACT prep book to one student and a bag of food and clothing to another. Individual needs are regularly discussed at staff meetings and interventions are delegated appropriately.

Two of the core values of Upward Bound are Respect and Relationships. This includes being respectful of all individuals in the program as well as promoting collaboration and

connections. The staff is intentional about creating a space and activities that are inclusive. For example, we make sure if we provide sexual education, that it is not cisgender or heteronormative. In many cases, students interact with people of different races, ethnicities, sexualities, and ideas for the first time through Upward Bound experiences. As a staff, we encourage students to be open to different ideas and people. We also have a zero-tolerance policy for bullying or harassment, especially related to the race, gender, and sexuality.

Our student population is comprised almost entirely of minors. Our affiliation with ECU and this statistic provides several policy guidelines and laws we must adhere to. Campus-wide policies at ECU have had direct impacts on our students. For example, it posed restrictions when it came to our students accessing housing on the floors of the genders they identified with (Crowe, 2022). We worked with members of the campus legal team and continue to advocate with other campus officials in order to promote the rights and consideration of our students that do not identify as transgender.

Upward Bound takes the macro approach by advocating for human rights through grant-writing. Upward Bound is federally funded through TRIO and must successfully submit a grant every five years in order to maintain funding. The grant includes information relating to community needs and issue that validate the funding.

At the Kennessee Conference, I met with fellow TRIO professionals from a variety of areas and discussed policy that would best support TRIO and our target populations. Individuals present at this meeting where staff from various TRIO-funded programs in Kentucky and Tennessee. This population identified the stakeholders and walked through the policy change process and how it can be applied to our individual work (O'Neal, 2021). This workshop included members of many different backgrounds and professional affiliations within

TRIO. These conferences provide a space for individual to travel from various areas in order to share ideas and support. They provide crucial workshops in order to provide a framework to work with students inclusively and competently.

Intersectionality from an Interprofessional Stance

My professional team is made up of five core members. We are all White and four out of five of them are female. The director and my supervisor is a female, she is middle-aged and will retire next year. Three other members of the team are around a decade younger than my supervisor and they come from different areas of Kentucky and West Virginia. I also work with a student worker; she is a sophomore at ECU. While many of my colleagues share similarities, we do come from different age groups and socioeconomic backgrounds. We serve individuals from a variety of rural, Appalachian counties. These individuals come from a variety of backgrounds and are typically low-income and first-generation. These barriers increase their risk for negative outcomes (Cataldi et. al, 2018). Individuals from Appalachia have a unique cultural experience that must be considered as well.

. Social workers must be constantly learning and become competent on issues that are faced by different and diverse population. They must also recognize their biases and emotional triggers that may cloud judgment when assisting clients. The second competency is closely related to multiple standards in the NASW Code of Ethics. Cultural competency is listed as a standard of a social worker's Commitment to Clients and emphasizes the willingness to be a lifelong learner concerning other cultures and ways of life (NASW, 2017). This value is immensely important and often documented in outlines of social work practice and behaviors.

Cultural competence is an ideal the social workers should continue to work towards through all phases of their career. It is explicitly included in the NASW Code of Ethics, under

Standard 1. Commitment to Clients (NASW, 2017). This section highlights the lifelong commitment required and reminds social workers that clients are the best source when it comes to information on their cultures (NASW, 2017). This was highlighted by another classmate during discussion, by explaining that conveying this competence requires social workers to “put in the work” and show up (S. Burris, personal communication, Nov. 7, 2021). This practice has been deeply embedded in the profession. Cultural competence calls for continuous learning and intentional empathy.

Up until a few months ago, I was the only member of the staff that identified as part of the queer community. Since the beginning of my experience, I have felt very supported and accepted from the staff. After the retirement of the previous director, I was fearful about how the new director would approach related issues. Eventually, a new director was hired and he happened to be a member of the queer community as well. I wondered how he would approach his sexuality with students and staff. At his first meeting with the students, he gave a presentation on his background, including a picture of him and his husband at his wedding. I felt personally seen and supported by his willingness to be himself and I suspect that many of our students in the queer community felt the same way. In order to properly exemplify the Upward Bound value of Respect, there must be a space for everyone.

In the past year, many of our students have come out as transgender or non-binary. As a social worker and member of the queer community, the staff looked to me for input and ideas on how to best provide services to the students. The first step I implemented was the use of pronouns on name tags at the Saturday Academies and other events. Each staff member included their pronouns on their name tag, and we gave the students the option. Many students included their pronouns, regardless of their gender. This gave the space for the transgender and non-binary

individuals to express themselves without having to have a conversation or requiring any other actions. The staff has established protocol for how to implement to correct name and pronouns and support from our program when it comes to paperwork as well. Concerning on campus housing, the new director has begun initiating conversations and in order to adequately prepare for our students next summer. This is a sensitive issue because many of the students do not feel it is safe for them to come out at home and it is crucial that we do not out them. However, it is just as crucial that we make a space that they can exist authentically.

Overlaps and Unique Perspectives

One social work skill that overlaps with my coworkers is the ability to connect our clients to vital resources and build social capital. This is done in many ways, such as ACT prep, college visits, or mentoring. A couple of my coworkers are from the same counties our client base is from. This gives them a unique perspective on where our students come from and the culture of their hometown. I have found that I have similar values, such as Confidentiality and Dignity, with the school and rehabilitation counselors I work with (NASW, 2017 & ACA, 2014). The administrative officials on the team definitely share a unique perspective. They have a tendency to look at issues through a financial or technical perspective, which is a much-needed balance the people-oriented people on the team.

Throughout my time at Upward Bound, I frequently collaborated with an individual that is currently obtaining a doctoral degree in Public Health. This was the first time I had interacted with someone from this background and we found that our skills and background knowledge were highly complementary. While she approached problems from the physical and health perspective, she also took into consideration where the students are coming from. This draws from the Public Health Code of Ethics, which identifies Inclusivity, Human Rights, Solidarity,

and Interdependence among its core values (APHA, 2019). The wealth of perspectives and professional backgrounds creates a staff that is prepared to assist with a diverse population of students. This means that students that feel underserved in traditional settings may feel more at-home at Upward Bound. This is intentional.

Preparing, Engaging, and Assessing

Use of Theory

Social Capital Theory

When working with colleagues and clients at my placement, I frequently consider the ways in which social capital theory applies to my practice and goals. Social capital theory developed in the late 90's and early 20's and focuses on the support given to individuals be the resources and social networks accessible to them (Skobba, 2018). Social capital is not only important to my clients currently, but they will need to learn how to build it as they go to college and begin their careers. In fact, students that are involved with multiple groups and/or individuals on campus are more likely to graduate and tend to score better in their classes (Piel, 2018). I can help them with this skill independently by helping with interpersonal skills and offer social support. The Student Leadership Team will also have the opportunity to learn about group dynamics and personal reflection as a leader.

From an interprofessional perspective, my colleagues can provide different aspects of support and together we can create a holistic web of resources to provide to students. It also allows for students to have exposure and access to a wealth of experiences when determining their potential career path. Building social capital requires an ability to form meaningful relationships (Skobba, 2018). Students that participate in the program may not have context for building relationships within the context of a university. Social capital in this setting includes

mentoring relationships, as well as friendships and collaborating with people of different backgrounds.

Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory is the idea that individuals learn and repeat behaviors that they witness in other individuals and groups (Bandura & Huston, 1961). Individuals learn how to behave in relationships based on how those close to them behave in relationships- this is especially pertinent in intimate relationships (Forenza et. al, 2018). This can manifest in a lack of positive social support and participation in abusive intimate relationships (Forenza et. al, 2018). Many students I work with have experienced some form of trauma. This year's needs assessment indicated that more than half of the current student population has moved more than five times in the last year, living with an average of nearly six people in their households. Furthermore, many of our students indicated that they felt they did not have a positive adult role model.

The students in Upward Bound need positive, healthy behaviors modeled to them. The staff does this by considering values when creating programming and being aware that students look to us to learn how to do things. This covers all areas, from academics to relationships. Therefore, it is vital that we model healthy relationships between staff members and healthy mentoring relationships with students. For example, I have noticed the influence that social learning and observation has had on students when it comes to interacting with staff at restaurants, hotels, and on campus. We show them how to tip properly and remind them to be respectful and considerate of all individuals in an area. Unprompted, our students put their money and effort together to give a gift to the custodian that worked in the dorm they lived in last summer. Within the dorm, we created a brag board. This was a space where individuals could write anonymous compliments about students or staff. At the end of the week, staff would

make messages for students that did not have one and we would distribute them to the individuals.

Model for Interprofessional Collaboration

Bronstein, Mellin, Aidyn provide a model for interprofessional collaboration for social workers within various settings. While this collaboration may look different depending on the setting, they have identified several general components. These include: Interdependence, Newly Created Professional Activities, Flexibility, Collective Ownership of Goals, Reflection on Process (Iachini, 2018). Interdependence and Collective Ownership of Goals refer to the reliance individuals have on team members and the buy in that each of these individuals have, respectively. Newly Created Professional Activities and Flexibility can be related to approaching situations holistically and with an open mind (Iachini, 2018). These components provide a strategy for social workers to engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate along with their interprofessional time. The program values at Upward Bound are goals of which the staff take collective ownership. They were created collaboratively and operationalized in detail. This creates a level of trust among staff because they know they are on the same page. During the summer, the staff was one member down after the retirement of the director. This required her responsibilities and other staff responsibilities to be redistributed. Flexibility to take on new roles and take on new tasks were integral to the success of the team and program. The Assistant Directors had to take on many administrative tasks and it was important that myself and the head Tutor Advisor take the lead with some student activities and interactions. These delegations and decisions were made with keeping in mind that student needs should come first. It was vital that we were on the same page about what was most important when completing tasks separately.

The Youth Thrive Framework was created by the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) in an effort to provide support to youth aging out of the foster care system. Research was conducted on developmental biology, the impact of trauma and stress, and resiliency theory (Mishraky et al., 2019). We have a large number of students within our program are within foster care or not living with their biological parents. The core characteristics of the Youth Thrive Framework are youth resilience, social connections, knowledge of adolescent development, concrete support in times of need, and cognitive/social/emotional competence. Upward Bound provides in-depth and critical training to all staff members, including a week-long training for summer student advisors. This training provides new staff with an introduction to program values, developmental considerations, policies, and procedures. There are also presentations on recognizing and reporting child abuse, mental health, student barriers related to poverty, growth mindset, and a trauma toolkit. This allows all staff members to have broad, informed perspective when working with students.

Skills to Promote Collaboration

Engagement is an integral piece of the social work process and listed as a CSWE competency. Social workers utilize engagement in a continuous manner to promote understanding and supportive relationships with clients. In order to engage with clients effectively, social workers must be knowledgeable of theoretical frameworks relating to their client base. They must also engage with clients in a trustworthy and understanding manner; by using empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills.

In order to meet program goals, staff at Upward Bound must create trusting relationships with students and colleagues. In most cases, individual students are not going to seek out a staff member to get to know them. It is important that staff reaches out to let the students know that

we are glad they are here and want to help. One way that I have implemented this with the Student Leadership Team is through icebreakers. Instead of jumping straight into programming, I take a second to check in with students and interact with them. Taking time to build connections and create space for students to share is crucial to fostering positive youth development (Richardson et. al, 2017). My favorite one to start the year off with is asking the students to share their zodiac sign, or their birthday if they do not know it. I give them the option not to if it offends their beliefs, but I have yet to come across this situation. I have found that this low stakes method to encourages students to talk about themselves and learn about their peers, usually involving laughter.

When working with the Student Leadership Team and providing training to summer staff, I utilized several components and activities from Brené Brown's, *Dare to Lead*. Each member of the Student Leadership Team is provided with a copy of the book and completes the correlating assessment. Brown defines a leader as an individual that takes a courageous and responsible approach to identifying and developing the potential of people and processes around them (Brown, 2018). Throughout my time with staff and students, I have completed activities to identify behaviors that coincide with program values and create intentional, safe spaces to learn and share. This content coincides with program values by providing a leadership framework that emphasizes vulnerability, effective communication, empathy and the operationalization of values.

Whether I am working with individuals, groups, or the program population as a whole, it is important to consider the larger context and connections. This portrayal of leadership and connection may be foreign to them and I need to take that into consideration when introducing concepts to them. I also approach training other staff members differently than I do students. It is

important that with each task I take into consideration my unique role within the situation (Iachini, 2018). This allows for communication to occur effectively and respect to be maintained. This creates a culture in which individuals feel freer to share information and learn from each other.

Agency Context Shaping Collaboration

Upward Bound is located on the campus of Eastern Kentucky University. As a part of the university, Upward Bound has access to various resources and services. Students in the program utilize the dining hall, classroom buildings, and residence halls. They completed service hours at the Colonel's Cupboard, the Office of Sustainability, and the Transform Closet on campus, interacting with staff in each of those locations.

In previous years, local business donated to the program for various reasons. The local Toyota dealership has donated funds for hoodies in return for including their logo on the design. Many Upward Bound alumni attend EKU or a nearby university and return with donations or to do career spotlights. Alumni have come to speak to our students about criminal justice, counseling, education, psychology, public health, and agriculture. Students also attend college visits and speak with individuals from a wide variety of programs such as cosmetology, engineering, aerodynamics, and more.

Upward Bound's association with TRIO provides connections with other programs and resources across the nation. These connections are helpful when planning trips and cultural learning events. These experiences are crucial in providing students with a schema for life outside their hometown (Skobba, 2018). It is not abnormal for TRIO programs to collaborate or exchange resources in order to meet collective goals. Regional conferences have also provided a

space for policy and best practices for vulnerable students, such as those in the LGBTQ+ community, to be discussed.

Setting Goals, Planning, and Contracting

Setting Goals with Staff and Students

SMART goals provide a framework in which social workers can help clients set meaningful goals that are easy to interpret and evaluate. SMART stands for specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, and timely (Cournoyer, 2016). When working with my Student Leadership Team at Upward Bound, I make sure to regularly check in on their goals and adjust as necessary as we navigate through the year. Each year, the Student Leadership Team is tasked with creating three proposals to adjust the program. In each proposal, they must explain the cost, liability, and logistics. The break-down of the “3 L’s” allows the group to critically assess their plans and ideas.

Studies have shown positive results when goals are set alongside clients and regularly adjusted and reflected upon (Poe et. al, 2021). I do this by having the students make long-term goals at the beginning of the academic year and short-term goals for the summer program. I allow and encourage my students to come up with their own goals and check back in with them regularly. Studies have shown that this approach raised students’ perception of success and felt that the activities improved their performance (Poe et. al, 2021). This process can be utilized with individuals, groups, and program participants as a whole. On my interprofessional team, we have made SMART Goals based around improving our recruitment and community engagement. This goal was completed by the organization of a service day and the initiation of collaborative relationships with other local agencies. This has enabled the program access to more resources

and opportunities for diverse collaboration. Student experiences with the Office of Sustainability and the Colonel Cupboard provided them with context for how those agencies are run and utilized. This makes students feel more supported by the community around them.

Assessing Program and Student Needs

In order to provide holistic support, social workers should gain a deep understanding of their client's strengths and needs. This can be done by utilizing an assessment tool that gathers certain data and explores open-ended topics. It is important that assessment tools are holistic and considerate of diversity and cultural competence. When assessing a client, a social worker should refer to their knowledge in human behavioral theory and apply relevant frameworks to the client. This information allows the social worker and client to develop a plan of action that addresses their unique goals and needs.

Upward Bound has recently began using the Academic Career and Excellence Survey (ACES). This survey uses a Likert Scale to assess student confidence in a variety of areas. The ACES was created by counseling psychologists and provides assessment of both cognitive and non-cognitive skills (Gore et. al, 2016). It gathers information regarding to areas such as: Financial and Personal Health, Information Literacy, Critical Thinking, and Connecting to Others, etc. This is completed in the beginning and end of every school and summer term (Z. Hess, personal communication, November, 10, 2021). The results from this assessment directly influence the interventions completed by staff for individuals and the group as whole. The data from this assessment will allow us to determine interventions and workshops that targets our students' weaknesses as a whole. It can also indicate where our students have strengths and need less assistance.

The overall mission of Upward Bound is to provide services that enable high-school students to enter college and eventually obtain their degree. We see this as a long-term goal for all of our program participants. When it comes to intervention, we plan to utilize the results of the ACES and our annual Need's assessment to determine any trends in student needs and struggle areas. The goal of higher education impacts the way we approach students and the types of resources we give them. For example, we provide services like ACT prep and college visits. Short-term goals are created mostly throughout the summer program. At this time, students are actively on campus going to classes and participating in a "simulated college experience". During the summer, we work with instructors and tutor advisors that help us navigate how to best assist our students.

The grant written by Upward Bound contains goals and intentions related to provided services and student outcomes. These goals are used to design the content we provide and the manner in which we do so. When planning cultural trips, curriculum, and other programming these are taken into consideration. We work closely with educators and counselors within the school systems in order to reach them. These goals are evaluated at the end of each grant cycle as the new goals are assessed and determined.

Impact of Social Determinants

Social factors have an impact on the health of an individual, these factors are referred to as the social determinants of health (Aniciaes, 2021). Our students are low-income and first-generation, they also all come from Appalachian counties which means they are likely isolated from resources that can be more easily attained in urban areas. This means they may lack access to healthcare, housing, transportation, and nutrition. Residents of these counties are at high risk for many adverse experiences such as poverty, homelessness, and addiction (Mitchall & Jaegar,

2018). These are examples of social determinants that can be impactful intervention. When it comes to interacting with students and parents as a group, it is vital to understand a background of where they come from and where they are in order to communicate ideas effectively. When students come to campus, they may interact with members of different communities and identities for the first time. They also have likely been provided with varying levels of familial supports and barriers.

When it comes to this situation, it is helpful to utilize the ecological perspective. For example, it is important to determine accessibility to resources and connection to others when determining the best method of intervention. In order to provide online services to our students, we have to provide hotspots because internet is not easily accessible or affordable to them. It is also important to consider the peer and familial supports in the lives of our students (Mitchall & Jaegar, 2018). This is done as an interprofessional staff, which allows a mosaic of perspectives to be considered. When planning for trips and events, we must factor in transportation costs for families that do not have transportation or cannot afford to bring their students to campus. We can plan a great event as an intervention, but it does not matter if no one can actually attend it.

Encouraging Collaborative Decision-Making

Throughout their careers, it is highly likely that social workers will work on some sort of interprofessional team. These collaborative structures have been proven to increase the likelihood of positive outcomes for clients (Shoemaker et. al., 2016). These teams are brought together by shared concerns (or clients) and goals, as well as tasks that can be viewed as interdependent on one another (Shoemaker et. al., 2016). The collaboration and communication of these goals and concerns are an important foundation for which professional boundaries and expectations are placed within an interprofessional team setting. In the initial phases of the

team's work together, it is vital that they define individual roles as they relate to task (Shoemaker et. al., 2016). This process will create clear boundaries concerning who is expected to complete certain tasks.

The Academic Career and Excellence System (ACES) rates the student's perception of proficiency in each skill (Gore et. al, 2016). This allows the students view of themselves and their skills to be presented with the results, rather than more standardized data. Therefore, we utilize these datasets to inform our group interventions. This is then divided depending on the expertise areas present on the interprofessional team. When it comes to deciding the method, Upward Bound emphasizes Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports: focused on social, academic, and behavioral approach. Implementing these on the school-wide and individual level have shown positive effects on school climate (Cox, 2020). This is vital to consider when attempting to create a positive culture and program. Staff at Upward Bound also intentionally create a "safe space to fail". Failure is inevitable and it is important that students learn how to move forward when it happens.

The Student Leadership Team develops three proposals for changes or additions to the Upward Bound program each year. They are responsible for coming up with the "loot, liability, and logistics" for these projects. This means they must engage with their peers and relevant community agencies in order to further their goals. Therefore, I must also be in communication with professionals from these organizations. Social workers rely on working with other professionals to deliver programs and services (Iachini, 2018). For example, our students raise fund for Stand for the Silent. This requires our collaboration with coordinators and public speakers in order to complete the project successfully.

Applying Practice Theories and Skills

Addressing Barriers with Model IDC

One model that is applicable to my work with the Student Leadership Team is the Personal and Social Responsibility Model (TPSR). This involves students taking on responsibilities and decision-making with the intent to increase their leadership skills (Filiz, 2018). As a member of the SLT, students become act as a representative of their peers to the staff, lead activities, and engage with students that may struggle in social settings. These responsibilities are very inclusive of their opinions and feelings, contributing to their sense of autonomy and buy-in. I have also utilized this model with individuals by assigning certain responsibilities to team members. This has increased their engagement and attendance in events. It is important that this is a student-led endeavor.

This practice is also applicable to my interprofessional team. By collectively taking ownership of goals, we feel a responsibility to them and each other. This would not have occurred if staff had not been included in the creation of program goals and values. Students notice when staff members have positive attitudes about their jobs and responsibilities.

Another theory that is utilized frequently at my placement is Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Maslow's Hierarchy of needs can be used to understand social justice and how it applies to individuals and systems. This theory posits that there are certain needs that must be met chronologically in order for self-actualization to occur. The base of the pyramid includes physiological needs, followed by safety and security, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization (Maslow, 1943). The two most basic needs represent the basic needs of an individual: food, clean water, shelter, warmth. The next two needs are more systemic,

representing belonging in community and families and emotional support. When working with the SLT at Upward Bound, I need to make sure my students have secured their basic needs as well as create a safe and inclusive space. This will be crucial to ensuring they can grow and reach towards self-actualization. Concerning the program as a whole, the target population as unique issues and needs that must be considered and addressed. We cannot expect our students to thrive academically if their more basic needs are not met. This issue cannot be addressed without staff members collaborating with local resources and becoming aware of policies that affect the students within the program.

Barriers with Interprofessional Collaboration

Communication is a crucial component of successful teamwork in any capacity. Staff members are working with a finite amount of funding, time, and energy when it comes to completing tasks and goals. The ease of communication or lack thereof is a serious barrier to interprofessional collaboration (Garud et. al, 2021). If staff does not have the time or means to communicate regularly and determine action steps, many projects and intentions can get lost in translation. This is especially pertinent when considering the different approaches and communication methods used by different professionals. These failures can leave individuals feeling less motivated to continue collaboration.

Impact of Policy

While competency working directly with individuals and agencies is important, social workers should also ensure they are well-versed in the legislation or policy impacting their client base. Policy comes in many forms: agency policy, local policy, state policy, federal policy, etc. By understanding and enacting these policies, social workers provide clients with funding,

resources, and information. Social workers should be knowledgeable on these policies, but also advocate for new policy or policy changes that will better serve their clients.

The student population of Upward Bound is diverse in many ways. This means that the program as a whole is impacted by a wide variety of policies. During my practicum, I completed research and initiated many conversations with Upward Bound staff about students in the queer community. This was due to issues regarding housing and privacy with our students who did not identify as cisgender. In order to gather information and make decisions, we worked with ECU Housing Staff, legal counsel, and attended workshops provided by the American Camp Association.

Existing Policy Issues regarding Transgender and Non-Binary Students:

Federal: In recent years, significant progress has been made concerning policy impacting transgender and gender non-confirming individuals. Recent Supreme Court cases have expanded protections for this population and stated that sexual orientation and gender identity are included under “sex” in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Totenberg, 2020). However, Medicaid users are still struggling to find and receive gender-affirming health insurance and providers (Kempf et. al., 2021). There is a lack of federal legislation concerning school environments, public bathrooms, access to health insurance with adequate coverage, and culturally competent healthcare providers.

State: Despite federal progression, many states are still behind when it comes to protection and resource allocation. In Kentucky, there are currently no laws explicitly protecting trans or gender non-confirming students in public or private schools (MAP, 2020). Kentucky Medicaid policy also lacks explicit protecting for trans individuals or a ban from health insurance providers excluding coverage for this population (MAP, 2020).

Like much of the South, Kentucky needs to make some large steps in order to provide protection to trans and gender-nonconforming Kentuckians.

Local: Upward Bound is required to abide by the policies instituted by Eastern Kentucky University. This means that staff collaborated with lawyers and other legal professionals when planning supports and best practices for students, especially those in the LGBTQ+ population. Liability issues are present when it comes to students obtaining gender-affirming housing and also not being forced to come out to their parents in the process.

Engaging with Interprofessional Team

Socio-material theory is applicable to the function and efficiency of interprofessional teams. This theory focuses on the manner in which individuals learn within the larger systems and structures around them (Oates, 2016). Our interprofessional connections create a social structure around us. Interprofessional collaboration is a social behavior and emphasizing strong relationships and positive interactions can increase the ability and likelihood of interprofessional learning (Oates, 2016). This can enhance the functioning of the team in general because individuals feel safe to ask questions and communicate efficiently. By identifying the structures in which each of the team members have expertise, we can take a more holistic perspective. For example, academics versus social issues.

This is exemplified at Upward Bound through regular staff meetings and team-building outings. This creates a scheduled time in which the team can be present together for either connection building or solving program issues. The team-building aspect is helpful because it creates an environment in which staff members are more comfortable to share with each other,

even if the conversation is complex or difficult. This approach trickles down throughout the program, as feedback is valued from part-time staff and students as well.

Impact of Collaboration

Intervention is crucial to the social work process and a listed competency. Intervention strategies should be based on knowledge of theories of behavior in the social environment, as well as practice wisdom. Interdisciplinary collaboration is a key component of practice that social workers must use to remain informed and implement relevant strategies of intervention. It is also vital that social workers facilitate considerate transitions that prevent clients from feelings of abandonment.

Interprofessional care can be helpful in a variety of settings in which professionals are called to meet the needs of clients or families. However, there are a few considerations that should be brought up concerning the dignity of clients being served by an interprofessional team. Some considerations can be generalized, while others may be context specific.

In healthcare settings, social workers are on patient teams with a variety of individuals with their unique professional expertise. While this can benefit the quality of client care, it can also create a power differential (Iachini et. al., 2018). From the patient perspective, they may feel like they must follow the orders of professionals in order to maintain or gain health. This could also be true for individuals that are not on the same page of recovery or progress in a group situation. This could leave the client feeling that they lack autonomy or the ability to make decisions about their own health. Within the education setting, this can manifest when it comes to students making career and academic choices. It is important that we give them information, but let them make decisions themselves.

Another concern regarding interprofessional care and client dignity involves the manner in which records and patient information is shared. Social workers must keep detailed and accurate records in order to complete their job competently. However, through deep conversations and home visits the social worker may learn very private information about the client (Cairns et. al., 2018). This presents the social worker with a dilemma on how to record such information in situations where an entire interprofessional team has full access to the client's records (Cairns et. al., 2018). When working with client groups and other professionals, it is vital that social workers remain mindful of keeping certain information confidential and not revealing more than needed. In this situation, it is important for the social worker to consider the client's dignity and right to confidentiality. This can be seen in the education setting when it comes to solving student issues. It may not be appropriate to tell the entire staff all of the details, but it is most definitely beneficial to receive their thoughts on the situation. It is also important to consider the trust that students have with staff and hold the stories they share respectfully and confidentially.

Evaluating, Ending, and Documenting

Termination of Services

Termination of services typically occurs naturally as our students graduate high school and move on to what is next for them. Before they complete the program, they must fulfill Senior Requirements. These requirements include applications for schools, Federal Student Aid, and scholarships. Upward Bound students are also required to maintain a 2.5 GPA and apply Student Support Services at their college of choice. Student Support Services is a TRIO program for college students and we value introducing them to further TRIO resources and experiences (McElroy, 1998). Many seniors that took the survey I provided for this paper indicated that these

senior requirements were the most important thing they participated in throughout their time in the program.

This step of the process requires interprofessional collaboration with school counselors, financial aid workers, and other TRIO professionals. Each of the requirements is a tool for students to obtain funding, resources, or connections. This can only be done successfully if staff provide a schema for how to do so. The students wrap up their Upward Bound experience with a graduation ceremony in which we invite educators, family members, staff, and other affiliates to reflect and celebrate the graduates.

Assessing Quality of Intervention

Evaluation allows social workers to determine the efficacy of their practices. The outcome of an evaluation either supports the current methods of the social worker; or indicates the need for a change in practice behaviors. Evaluation is important because without it social workers would be unable to determine the efficacy of their own practice and is listed as a core competency. Self-awareness is vital to social work practice and supports the value of Competence (NASW, 2017). Social workers should request evaluations and feedback from supervisors and clients in order to become the most competent and effective versions of themselves.

Students regularly fill out evaluation surveys related to services. At the end of every summer, we make sure to gather feedback from students and staff. This is discussed at a following staff meeting where the team determines areas of improvement and areas that we were successful. Students also fill out similar surveys upon completion of the program. However, staff places emphasis on gathering feedback from students throughout their time in the program, not

just at the end. Student feedback is crucial to students feeling they have autonomy and buy-in to the program (Cataldi et. al, 2018). The Student Leadership Team also acts as a sounding board when gauging interest and feelings on activities, services, and the general student experience. We often receive feedback about students from parents, educators, and other individuals they connect with throughout the experience. Along with student feedback, we keep track of whether or not our students retain a four-year degree after completion of the program. This information helps us stay on track with our goals and also must be included in the grant in order to secure funding.

Personal Bias and Experiences

As a queer, first-gen student I find it immensely easy to relate to the students. This can most definitely be a strength, however it requires much self-awareness. It is vital that I do not color their personal experience with my own, regardless the similarities. I truly struggled with the housing situation that we occurred with our trans and non-binary students. I also grew up in an urban area, much different than my students. This means I have had many experiences very different than them. My experience at Upward Bound has been impactful and immensely positive. This means that I may be biased when assessing the program as a whole, and some people may not feel the same way I do.

Skills to Develop

Evaluation and Research are two skills that I would really like to develop as I expand my practice. Practicums are time-limited experiences, which prevents the completion of long-term studies and projects. Ideally, I would have been able to gather more information about program outcomes and narratives of students from the past. As a young social worker, I still struggle with imposter syndrome when it comes to my competency. I would like to build confidence through

gaining more experiences and attending more trainings, like the Kennessee Conference. Overall, I feel this placement gave me the opportunity to develop a variety of skills and identify areas of interest I would like to look further into.

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Appendix A

Making Difficult Decisions, Frederic Reamer PhD (2002)

- 1. Identify the ethical issues, including the social work values and ethics that conflict.**
- 2. Identify the individuals, groups, and organizations that are likely to be affected by the ethical decision.**
- 3. Tentatively identify all possible courses of action and the participants involved in each, along with possible benefits and risks for each.**
- 4. Thoroughly examine the reasons in favor of and opposed to each possible course of action, considering relevant (a) ethical theories, principles, and guidelines; (b) codes of ethics and legal principles; (c) social work practice theory and principles; and (d) personal values (including religious, cultural, and ethnic values and political ideology).**
- 5. Consult with colleagues and appropriate experts (such as agency staff, supervisors, agency administrators, attorneys, ethics scholars, and ethics committees).**
- 6. Make the decision and document the decision-making process.**
- 7. Monitor, evaluate, and document the decision.**

Appendix B

Inventory of Questions – ACES Assessment

I am aware of my strengths and weaknesses as a student (Critical Thinking/Goal Setting)

I feel a sense of control over my academic performance. (Motivation/Decision Making/ Personal Responsibility)

It's important to me to understand how I learn (Learning Preference)

When I finish reading, I take time to review what I've learned. (Reading)

I review my notes after class. (Note Taking)

I connect material I am studying to things I already know (Memory/Studying)

I am comfortable with public speaking (Information Literacy and Communication)

I am confident in my ability to decide among several career options. (Academic and Career Planning)

My grades are a reflection of my effort. (Motivation/Decision Making/Personal Responsibility)

I have preferences when it comes to thinking about and organizing information. (Learning Preferences)

I complete assignments at the last minute. (Organization/Time Management)

Reading will be an important part of my future career. (Reading)

I make sure I know what material will be covered on tests. (Test Taking)

I make friends easily. (Connecting with Others)

I know how to gather information about possible careers. (Academic and Career Planning)

I have a regular sleep schedule. (Personal and Financial Health)

I am in control of my future (Motivation/Decision Making/Personal Responsibility)

My notes are legible and well organized (Note Taking)

I'm confident that I can identify the most important information to study. (Memory/Studying)

I believe that I can develop the skills to be an effective writer. (Information Literacy and Communication)

Declaring my college major makes me anxious. (Academic and Career Planning)

I haven't thought much about my learning preferences. (Learning Preferences)

It's hard to find time to focus on homework (Organization/Time Management)

I am aware of several different note taking styles. (Note Taking)

I use several approaches to prepare for my tests. (Test Taking)

I organize my thoughts and make a plan before beginning a writing assignment. (Information Literacy and Communication)

I'm a healthy person. (Personal and Financial Health)

I find a sense of accomplishment to be very rewarding. (Motivation/Decision Making/Personal Responsibility)

The same strategies I use to learn material will be helpful in my career. (Learning Preferences)

I use my time well (Organization/Time Management).

I can tell which information my instructors consider important. (Note Taking)

I make an effort to develop relationships with my instructors. (Connecting with Others)

I know how to develop healthy relationships. (Personal and Financial Health)

I have a clear plan for completing my degree on time. (Academic career and Planning)

When I have a large project and complete I start by making a plan (Critical thinking/Goal Setting)

I'm confident that I understand how to learn new material (Learning Preferences)

I can identify the most important points in my reading (Reading)

I always take notes in class. (Note Taking)

I schedule my study time in the same way I schedule work and class (Memory/studying)

Have you test is a chance to demonstrate my knowledge (Test Taking)

I welcome the challenge of working on group assignments (Connecting with others)