



**The National
Evaluation and
Technical
Assistance Center**

for the
Education of Children and Youth
Who Are Neglected, Delinquent
or At-Risk (NDTAC)

**Helping System-Involved Youth
Rewrite Their Stories:
Strategies That Motivate**

www.neglected-delinquent.org



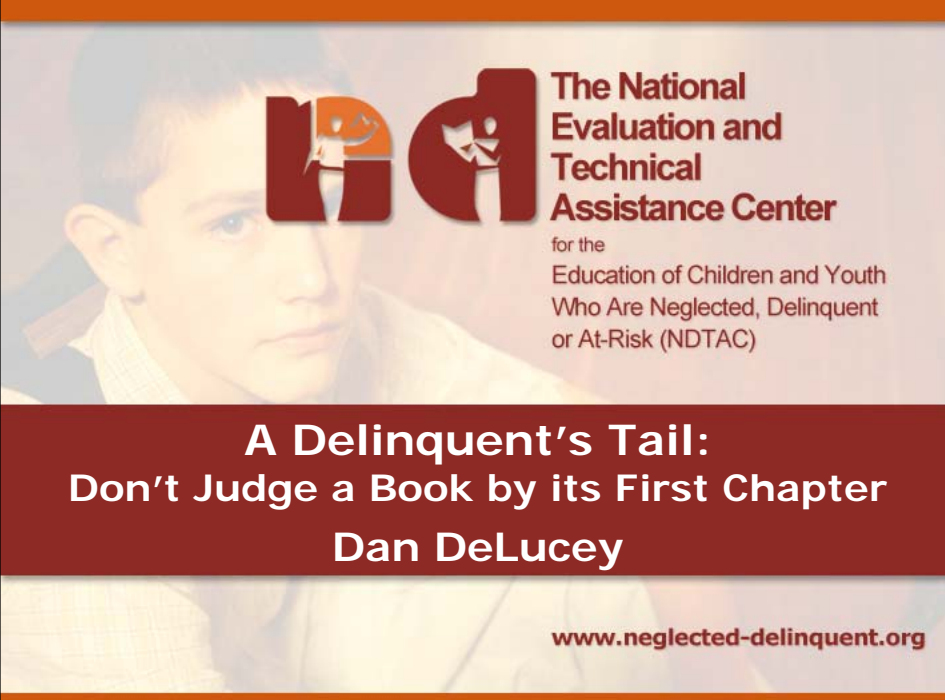
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Introductory Remarks

Simon Gonsoulin

www.neglected-delinquent.org



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**A Delinquent's Tail:
Don't Judge a Book by its First Chapter**
Dan DeLucey

www.neglected-delinquent.org

THE BACKGROUND

I was...

- looking for acceptance
- lacking in resources
- unaware of opportunities

Suggestions

- ✓ Offer afterschool and weekend activities
- ✓ Identify and connect youth with supports
- ✓ Create a nonjudgmental and respectful culture
- ✓ Identify programs through social marketing activities
- ✓ Build self-esteem, self-respect and self-worth

THE CONTEXT

I was...

- egocentric
- living where other people visit
- in need of someone to believe in and to believe in me

Suggestions

- ✓ Help youth understand the impact of their actions
- ✓ Remember that personal experience make a difference
- ✓ Provide youth with the opportunity to do something productive
- ✓ Recruit, retain, and provide professional development to high quality staff

THE SYSTEM

I encountered...

- systemic trauma
- continued punishment
- labels

Suggestions

- ✓ Engage youth by proving yourself
- ✓ Ensure that the program includes strong rehabilitative components (rather than only punitive)
- ✓ Help youth develop a clean slate that will enable them to move forward
- ✓ Don't judge youth based on the actions of others or the youth's past

THE TRANSFORMATION

- I had an epiphany
- Metamorphosis

Suggestions

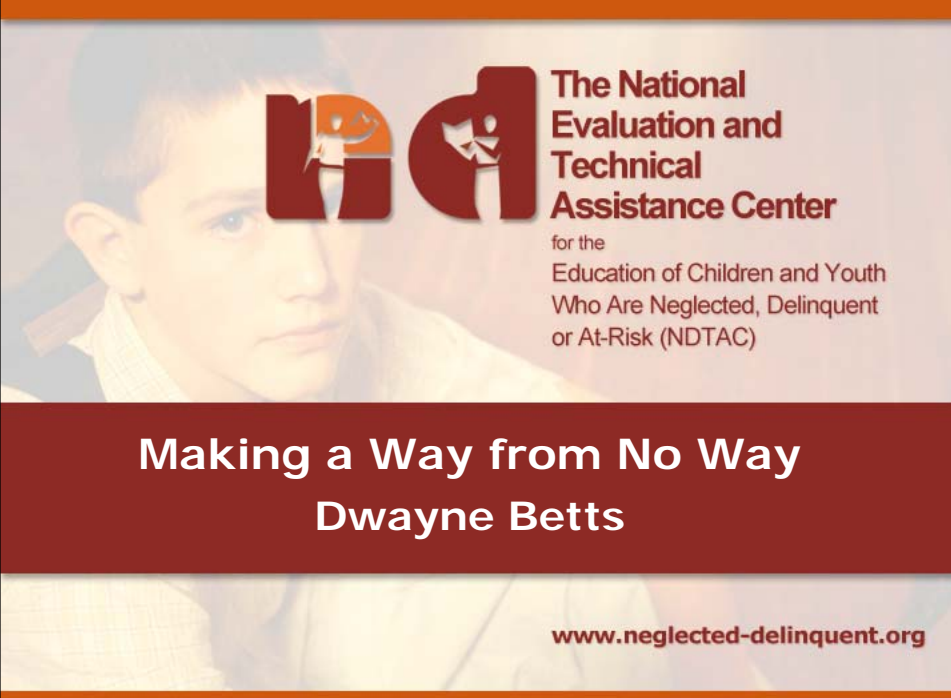
- ✓ Remember you cannot be a "prophet in your own town" and real change can only come from within
- ✓ Ensure that youth have access to resources (e.g., career, alternative schooling, postsecondary supports, community services, faith-based programs, and drug and alcohol programs)


THE ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS

- I had...
- time to find myself
 - mentors
 - opportunities

Suggestions

- ✓ Support youth in finding themselves
- ✓ Provide positive role models
- ✓ Provide youth with direction and opportunities
- ✓ Expose youth to new things



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**Making a Way from No Way
Dwayne Betts**

www.neglected-delinquent.org

LIFE AFTER PRISON BEGAN THE MOMENT I WAS ARRESTED

I kept in mind that:

- my worth cannot be based on one egregious act
- education opens up the world of possibilities

Suggestions

- ✓ Begin transition planning from the day of entry
- ✓ Provide wraparound services to youth

THERE IS ALWAYS A PROGRAM

I created a program – using available resources (e.g. the library) when no programs existed

Suggestions

- ✓ Ensure that there are adequate resources and materials for youth (even when there is a lack of available programs)
- ✓ Empower youth by enabling them to create or inform their own program based on their needs

LEARNING TO BECOME A RESPONSIBLE ADULT

Conversations based on my new knowledge, gained through study, writing and reading, transformed my views and perceptions

Suggestions

- ✓ Provide youth with clear options and opportunities
- ✓ Support youth in becoming life-long learners
- ✓ Actively engage youth

PLANNING AND VISION

Beyond gaining knowledge, clearly established goals were critical to my success

Suggestions

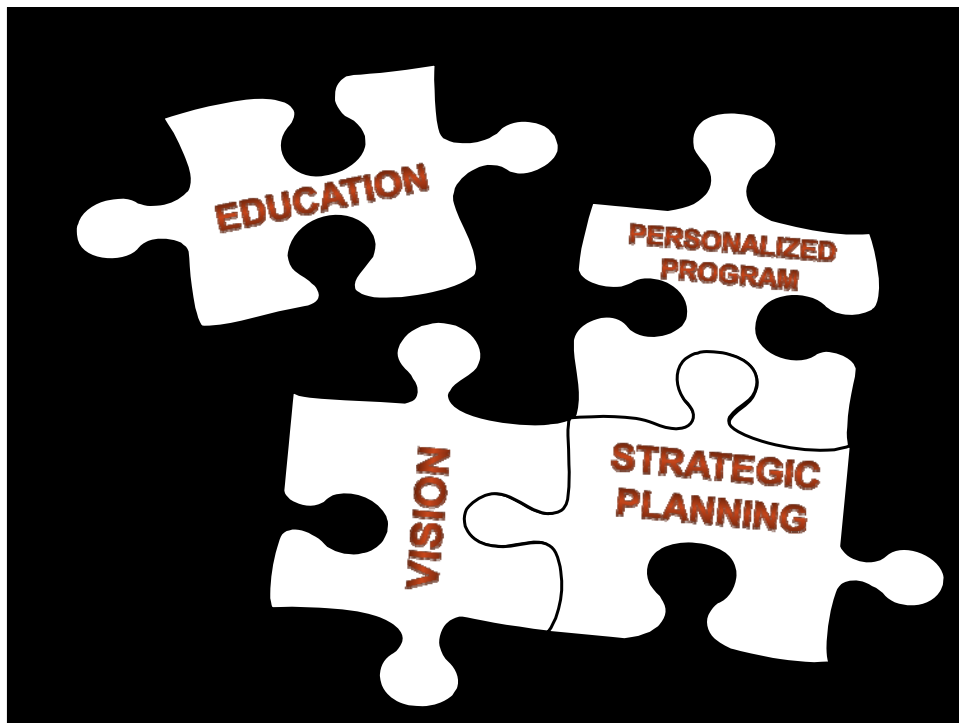
- ✓ Work with youth to document their short- and long-term goals
- ✓ Provide an opportunity for youth to "re-establish" themselves
- ✓ Provide supports youth need to be successful

EDUCATIONAL JOURNEY

- Continued learning
- Teaching others
- Postsecondary opportunities

Suggestions

- ✓ Expand the continuum of educational opportunities
- ✓ Educational opportunities must be adequately funded
- ✓ Educational opportunities must be relevant



Contact Information

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