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## Higher Education for At-Risk Youth in Santa Cruz County

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# Higher Education for At-Risk Youth in Santa Cruz County

Abbey Bohon

## Problem Statement

Too many at-risk youth do not pursue higher education in the county of Santa Cruz due to a lack of knowledge of higher education opportunities.

## Background

- Typically youth who keep delinquency habits can stay up to 3 to 5 years in a probation facility (Greenwood, 2008).
- At-risk youth tend to have longer stays in the probation/ juvenile system due to the lack of education (Greenwood, 2008).

## Agency Description

Friday Night Live (FNL) County of Santa Cruz is an adult and youth-led leadership advocacy program that creates positive changes in the county's local communities. FNL caters to all youth populations which include at-risk youth who are in the probation system as well as post-probation.

## Motivation

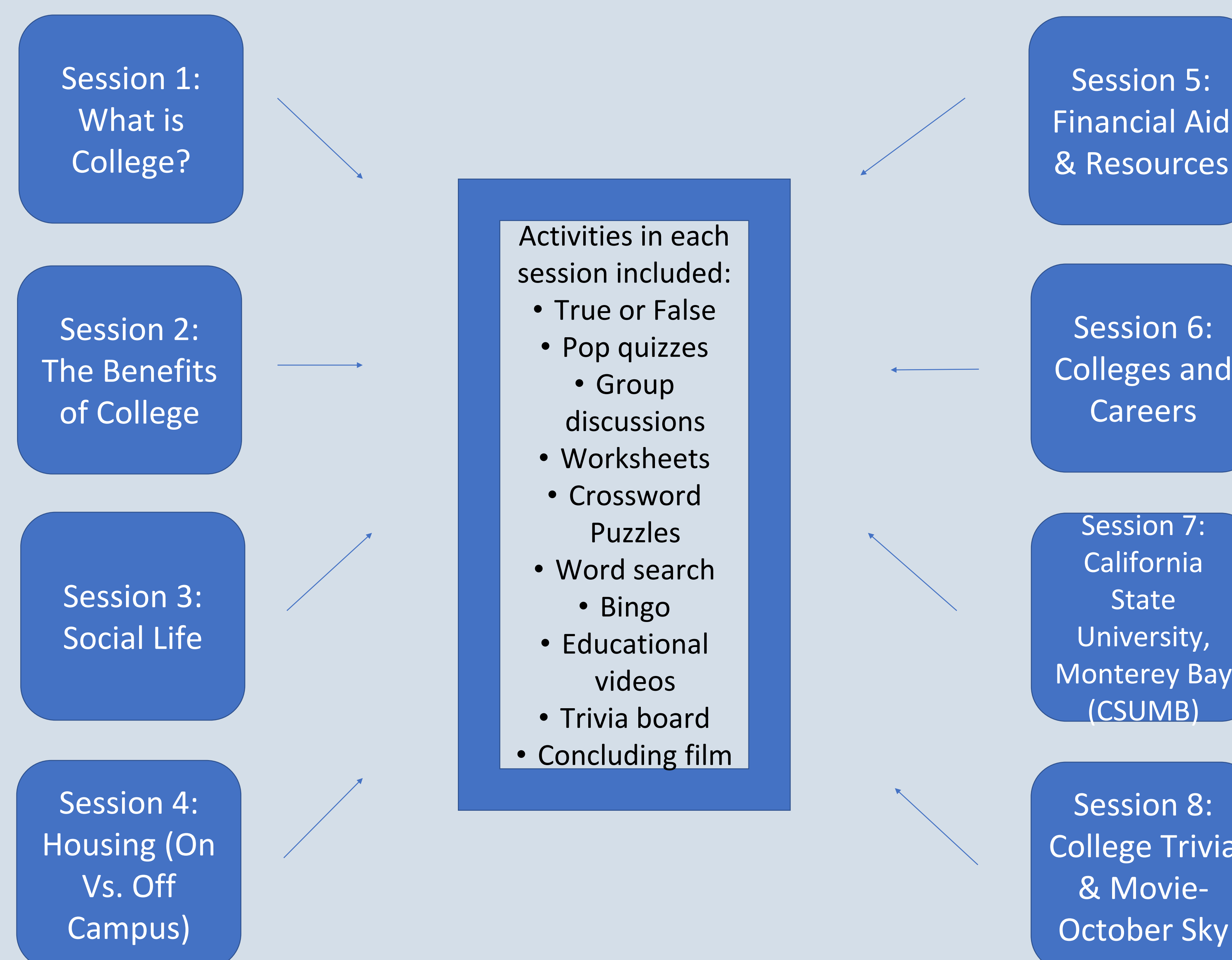
- In the County of Santa Cruz, at-risk youth are not exposed or have minimal to no awareness of higher education (Greenwood, 2008).
- At-risk youth are not receiving the proper resources when it comes to higher education (Greenwood, 2008).

## Capstone Project Description

- This project involved an implementation process of a created curriculum for an 8-week duration that lasts for an hour. Each week covers a different topic that connects back to the Higher Education unit under the curriculum for the chapters of Juvenile Hall and Evening Center.
- Before and after the implementation process, participants are given an evaluation of a pre- and post- survey that tackles questions regarding higher education and background knowledge.

## Capstone Implementation

This capstone implementation process was held at the Juvenile Hall facility in Felton, California. This process consisted of a one-hour, 8 weekly session that happened once a week at the facility. Each lesson plan (session) consisted of at least 4-5 activities that involved the topic of the day.



## Assessment

### Expected Outcomes:

- High participant satisfaction.
- Increased knowledge about higher education.

### Results:

- Around 70% of participants were 'satisfied' with the capstone project.
- Participants also mentioned how much knowledge they have gained after the implementation process has been completed.

## Conclusion / Recommendations

- The unit implemented as part of this capstone surpassed expectations and will be included in future curriculums at the Juvenile Hall and Evening Center chapters for the FNL organization.
- I recommend Friday Night Live implementing similar units in other traditional chapters that we work with, specifically those in the County of Santa Cruz school districts.

## Acknowledgments

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