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Diocese of Buffalo schools to train staff in Edge Foundation coaching to help students with ADHD and Adverse Childhood Experiences succeed

Buffalo, NY (March 15, 2019): Nine Diocese of Buffalo schools this week will train their staff to provide specialized one-on-one coaching to students with executive function challenges, such as the ability to plan, focus attention, remember instructions, and successfully juggle multiple tasks. These challenges are often experienced because of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) or trauma, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and/or non-traditional learning styles.

Teachers, counselors and administrators will be trained March 16, 20 and 21 at Christ the King school in Snyder, New York.

The schools are using a coaching program designed and administered by the non-profit [Edge Foundation](#), which has proven that providing personalized coaching to at-risk students helps them succeed and meet their potential. The foundation was founded by Neil Peterson, who has led public transportation agencies in Seattle, Oakland and Los Angeles and was founding chief executive of Flexcar, now known as Zipcar. He started the foundation after seeing how executives benefit from coaching. The foundation was established to test whether providing this specific style of coaching could turn around students who are at risk of dropping out of school due to Adverse Childhood Experiences and executive function challenges that inhibit

social and emotional learning. The foundation's goal is to provide coaches to all 7- to 24-year-olds in the United States.

Maria Wangler, Vice Principal of Curriculum Instruction and Professional Development for Christ the King School, said two staff members have already been trained and are seeing the benefits of coaching. One student is more willing to speak up in class and is having fewer anger issues. Wangler said she wanted to train more staff and invited other schools to join.

"In schools throughout the country, teachers and counselors work with a significant number of youth whose poor executive function skills inhibit their social and emotional learning. They're creative, disorganized, bright, forgetful, likely to be caught up in school disciplinary problems, and worry their parents day and night," Neil Peterson said. "They have trouble making good decisions and lack the skills needed to succeed in school – the ability to plan, prioritize, initiate, stay on task, focus, follow up, and adjust to change."

In the school setting, these executive function challenges get in the way of student success. These students:

- Make bad decisions
- Are bright, but underachieve
- Work hard, but forget to turn in their homework
- Try to fit in, but are impulsive and disruptive
- Want to do their best, but don't possess the right executive function tools
- Are struggling at school, yet know that a diploma is critical to breaking the poverty cycle
- Are chronically absent or are at risk of dropping out of school and unlikely to go to college

"Anybody can benefit from coaching," noted Diane Roesch, who oversees regional outreach for the Edge Foundation in Buffalo. "Coaching empowers students, gives them a sense of control and allows them to have better conversations with teachers and other school officials. Instead of telling students what to do, coaches listen, and students feel heard. Coaching teaches students to problem solve and allows them to recognize that failure is just a step toward success."

Adverse Childhood Experiences are common with nearly two-thirds of participants in a landmark study by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Kaiser Permanente. More than one in five in the study reported three or more ACEs. The CDC also estimates that 5.2 million children in the United States have formal diagnoses of ADHD, one of the best-known barriers to social and emotional Learning. The National Health Interview Survey estimates that nearly 10 percent of school-aged children have ADHD. These numbers do not include those who are undiagnosed.

The Edge Foundation helps students succeed at school by training school personnel – teachers, para-professionals, security personnel, counselors and administrators - to provide one-on-one, weekly, 20- to 25-minute coaching to individual students.

“Edge coaches help students develop the executive function skills that allow them to make good decisions in school and in life,” Peterson said.

Edge Foundation coaches currently work in more than 30 schools in Washington State, California, New York, Washington, DC, and North Carolina.

Why are these Diocese of Buffalo schools using Edge Foundation coaching? Because it works. A study by Wayne State University looked at Edge Foundation coaching methods involving students from 10 universities and community colleges. The study was the largest and most comprehensive study of ADHD coaching conducted to date. The research team determined that the Edge coaching model was four times more effective than any other educational intervention in helping students improve executive functioning and related skills as measured by the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory. (LASSI; Weinstein and Palmer, 2002).

About the Edge Foundation: The Edge Foundation aims to give each student a coach so they can complete their education, realize their full potential and pursue their passion. The foundation focuses on teens and adults who are at risk of dropping out of school - non-traditional learners with executive function challenges that can come from ADHD and Adverse Childhood Experiences. Learn more at www.edgefoundation.org.

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