

Dr. John Seita, Michigan State University



Like few others, Dr. John Seita understands the challenges facing disconnected young people. Academically challenged students and youth who are in out of home settings, such as foster care, residential care and group care are his specialty.

Drawing upon his own leading edge research and evidence-based best practice, Seita powerfully explores how to effectively apply connecting and reclaiming strategies such as positive youth development and strength based approaches. His workshops and keynote presentations will provide insight while working with you to provide research based practical skills for parents, teachers, social workers and others in caring positions.

Dr. Seita himself is a former youth at risk who beat the odds. He was removed from his mother's home at the age of eight and spent the remainder of his childhood and adolescence in multiple foster homes, detention facilities, group care settings and on the streets. Abused and neglected as a child, his journey through children's institutions and countless foster homes was a litany of degradation and humiliation.

His unrestrained anger at his mother and the child welfare system led to a childhood of bitterness, loneliness and one where he fought with adults, counselors, teachers, house parents, childcare workers and anyone else who crossed his path. His understanding of how to reclaim challenging youth is based upon his own journey of 15 placements out-of-home placements.

In addition, Dr. Seita has conducted research on at risk youth and has listened and learned from their views in order to improve your skills and knowledge. He is able to blend his own gritty real world experience with his scholarship and that of other researchers to provide the very best of how to understand and reclaim all youth.

Dr. Seita is the only foster care alumnus who has studied youth at risk and provides research based training, professional development, and insight into the private logic of defiance. His presentations have been called powerful, honest, useful, practical, and visionary. His revolutionary efforts towards policy and practice reform will provide useful ways to improve staff skills in understanding all young people.

There are few trainers and speakers nationwide who have lived in the dependent care system and now share both their insider's view linked with the latest research in positive youth development, resilience, strength based approaches, and brain research. His practical views are blended with inspirations and hope.