

**BANANA
YELLOW
PIANO™**

How to Better Understand Parents to
Drive Engagement



I need a few volunteers for a
Banana Barometer



Guidelines:

1. Hold Bananas outright
2. Keep bananas upright
3. Keep Bananas in the same hand
4. When you get tired, put bananas down but stay in your spot



Lets take a trip together.....

What comes to mind if I say
BANANA YELLOW PIANO?



One year I was a Cardboard Banana for
Halloween



Painted, of course, Banana Yellow



That year my mom painted our old black, aging piano that same Banana Yellow



She had her reasons I did not understand
at the time

But they were valid
and worked for her
as a coping skill



Later I understood better when learning about what was going on in her life:

- Divorce
- Cancer
- Kids
- Financial
- Returning to workforce
 - Safety
 - Partnership



No wonder she wanted to brighten her surroundings with a Banana Yellow Piano.

Something that glimmered joy in an otherwise dark and challenging time



A photograph of a bright yellow upright piano with a classic, ornate design. The piano is positioned against a light blue wall. The image is slightly blurred, and the text is overlaid on the piano's body. In the bottom right corner, there is a small, semi-transparent inset image of the same piano.

Banana Yellow Piano is
A Metaphor for Families about Empathy

Metaphor:
Symbolic of Something else,
Especially something Abstract

A photograph of a yellow upright piano with a classic design, featuring a decorative top and a large panel on the front. The piano is set against a light blue wall. Overlaid on the image is text in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The text is arranged in three lines, centered horizontally. The first line reads "It may look a little off to you," the second line reads "but it makes sense to someone", and the third line reads "Everyone has a Banana Yellow Piano". Below this, another line of text reads "Find it with Your Families".

**It may look a little off to you,
but it makes sense to someone**

Everyone has a Banana Yellow Piano

Find it with Your Families

A faded, sepia-toned photograph of a room. In the center, a white upright piano stands on a light-colored wooden floor. To the left, a window with multiple panes is visible, letting in light. The walls are a light, textured color. The overall image has a soft, vintage feel.

My mom's concerns are many of the same issues our parents are facing today but with several confounding factors....



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- A faded, sepia-toned photograph of a room. In the center, a white upright piano stands on a wooden floor. To the left, a window with multiple panes is visible. The walls are light-colored, and a door is partially open on the right side. The overall image has a soft, ethereal quality.
- Mental Health issues
 - Physical Abuse
 - Drug Abuse



Suddenly, a
Banana Yellow Piano
Looks not so wacky
or even looks inviting
compared to other coping alternatives



Lets check the Banana Barometers
and Support



Our Story....

My husband and I wanted to expand our family.

We investigated lots of options



Our Story....

- Foster to Adopt program from UMFS
- Resource Parents
- 16 year old
- Residential & Day School DEC 2010
- Officially Adopted OCT 2011 at 17
- Went into 4th Residential placement DEC 2011 after drugs, high risk behaviors, physical altercation and running away



Our Story....

Residential

- Confirmation of RAD/Capabilities
- Provided Family Respite
- Family Engagement: Weekly Family Therapy –ways of communicating as a group (key words)



Our Story....

- Transition home in APR 2012
- Graduated from high school JAN2013
- Enlisted with Marines for Boot Camp to start JUN 2013
- Move of out of house shortly after turning 18 in FEB 2013
- 15 homes with a 2 year old and 9 month old, drugs, multiple arrests



Our Story....

Youth Celebrations:

High school Diploma

Provided Safety and Modeling

Ongoing Resource when stuck

Parent Celebrations

Indirect Rainbows/Unicorns with

High Fidelity Wrap

Family Support Partner

Get to be a Regular Sidekick



Our Bananas....

- No Break
- Lack of Sleep
- Afraid for Own Safety
- Afraid for Child's Safety
- Time
- Support Structure gone or far away
- Financial Concerns
- Note to Husband



We could never understand how
professionals could work with these issues
then it dawned on us:

They get to go home at night



Debrief Banana Barometers



You can do ANYthing for a little while.



If you carry your burdens all the time,
sooner or later you will become a little
bananas.





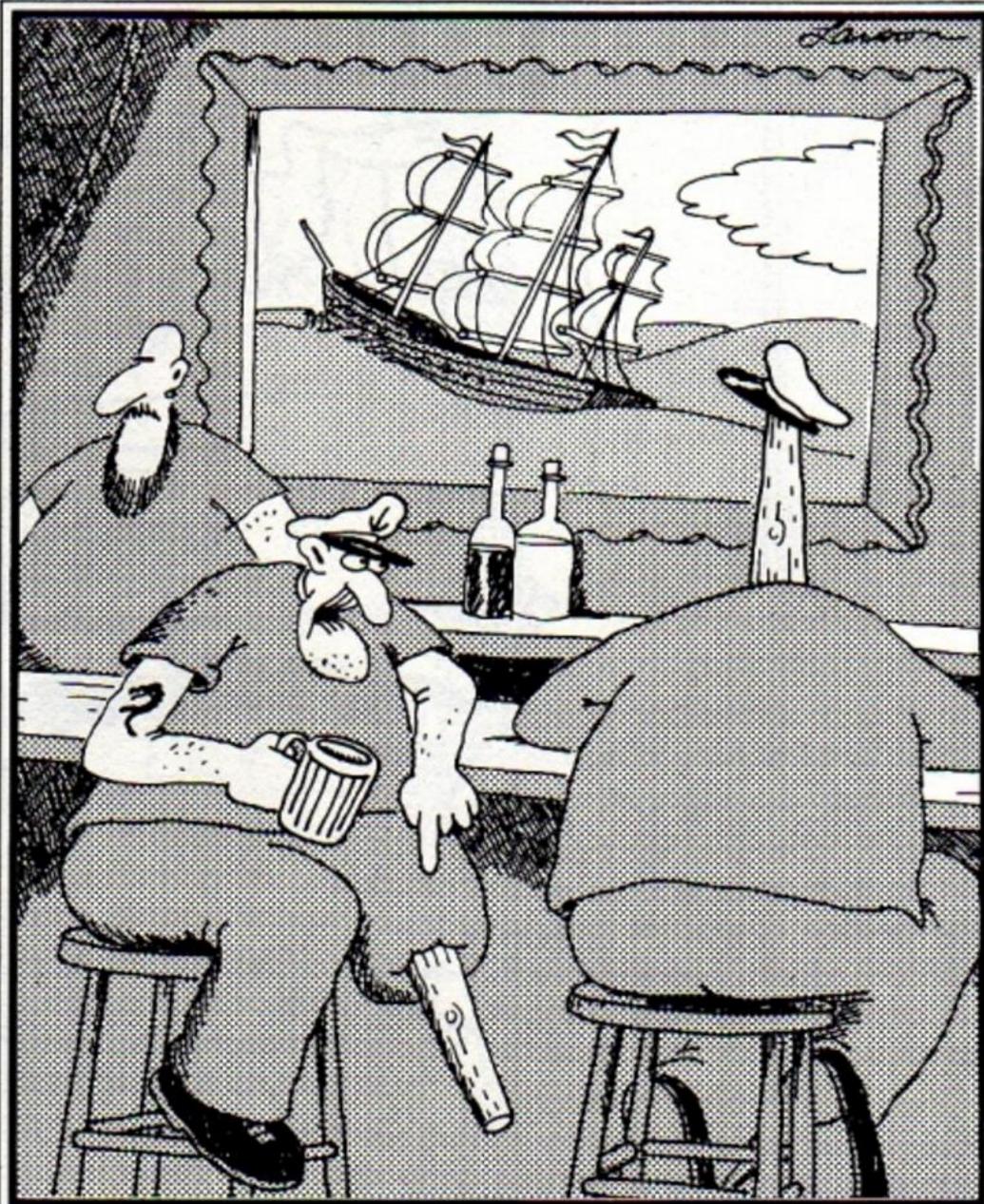
How Can We Better Engage with Families?



How can we be a source for our families to help put the bananas down?

Practice finding their
Banana Yellow Piano and
make it ALL ABOUT THEM





"Well, I guess that ain't a bad story—but let me tell you about the time I lost *this!*"



Banana Barometer Thoughts

Find the Family's Banana Yellow Piano

- Start Easy: First Name
- Then the hard gritty questions
- Listen!
- Sleep?
- Safety?
- Finances?
- What's in your way?
- What do YOU need?



Banana Barometer Thoughts

Engage: Tools to Manage Bananas

- THEIR needs, not yours
- Empathy, Remember the Bananas
- Training
- Meet them where they are
- Team/Parent Support Partner
- Respite



Everyone has a Banana Yellow Piano

It may look a little off to you,
but it makes sense to someone

- Find it with your Families
- Meet them where they are
- Ask the tough questions
- Make it all about THEM



Thank you!

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