FRAMEWORK: RESEARCH ON LEARNING AND WORKING DURING YOUNG ADULTHOOD

For Those with Psychiatric Disabilities

Acknowledgements

The Transitions RTC aims to improve the supports for youth and young adults, ages 14-30, with serious mental health conditions who are trying to successfully complete their schooling and training and move into rewarding work lives. We are located at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, Worcester, MA, Department of Psychiatry, Center for Mental Health Services Research.
Visit us at:

http://labs.umassmed.edu/transitionsRTC/index.htm

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Transitions RTC

University of Massachusetts Medical School

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A Life in the Community for Everyone SAMHSA Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Conference Goal

SHARE STATE OF THE SCIENCE

TO IMPROVE THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT

OF YOUNG ADULTS

WITH PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES

IN ADULT SYSTEMS

Extensive Reviews

- Reviews of the Research Literature in
  - Education/Training
  - Working/employment
  - Systems/Policy
- Each paper included young adults with lived experience
- Each paper has a “response” paper
  - Reviewed by a panel of experts with a variety of perspectives
  - Summarized by a “lead” responder
- Each topic includes a research agenda

“Career Development”

- *Careers* are occupations with opportunities for growth, that are undertaken for a significant period of a person's life
- *Career development* is comprised of the learning and cognitive elements that influence career choices, activities, performance and attainment

“Young Adults”

Chronologically: Ages 18-30 years

“Psychiatric Disability”

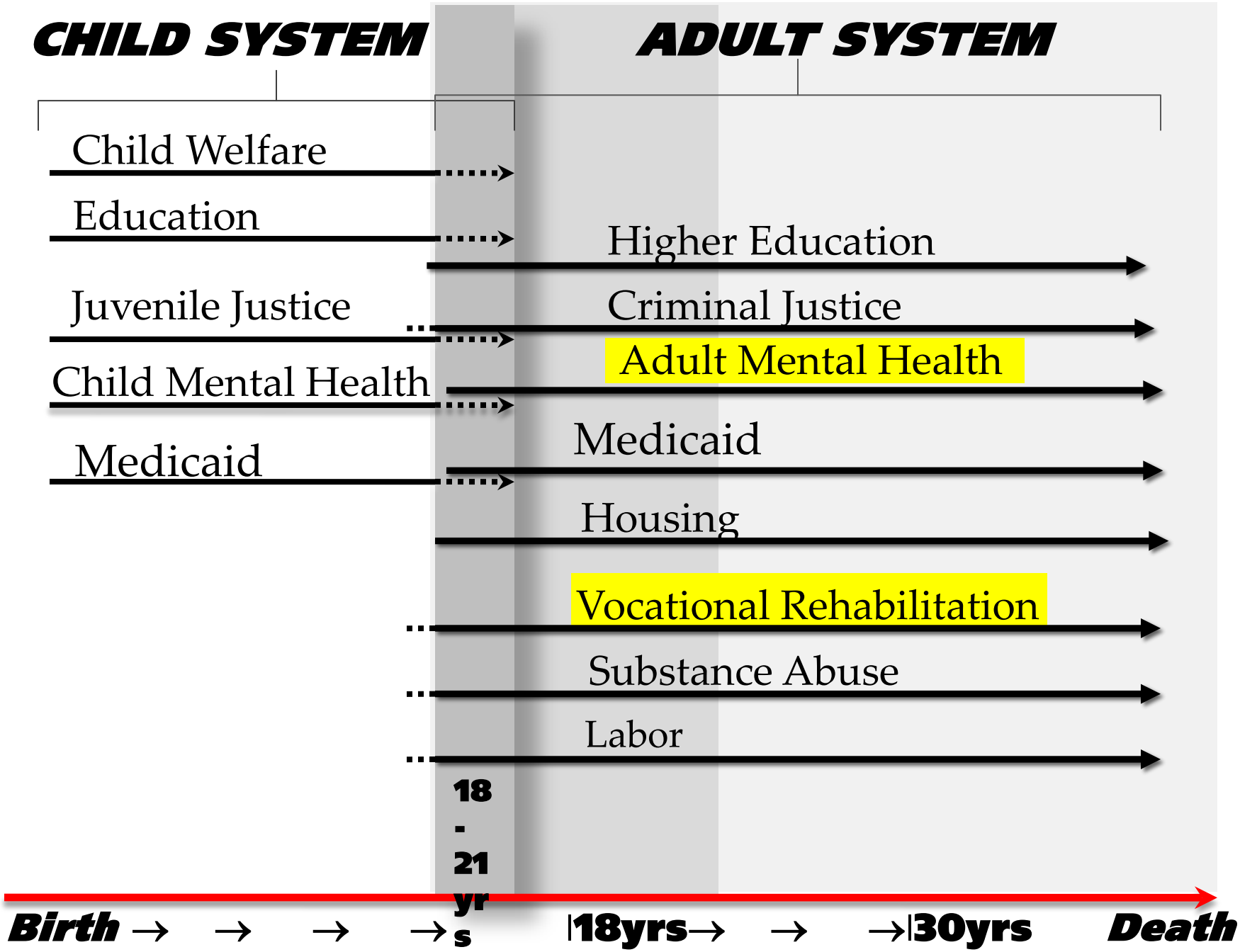
When a mental health disorder causes significant functional impairment

- *Mental health disorders*

  Mental, behavioral, or emotional disorders in DSM-V

  NOT

  - “V” codes (temporary conditions)
  - Substance use disorders
  - Developmental disorders
- Functional impairment – reduced abilities in
  - basic daily living skills,
  - instrumental living skills
  - functioning in social, family, and vocational/educational contexts


CHILD SYSTEM
ADULT SYSTEM
Child Welfare
Education
Juvenile Justice
Child Mental Health
Medicaid
Higher Education
Criminal Justice
Adult Mental Health
Medicaid
Housing
Vocational Rehabilitation
Substance Abuse
Labor
18 - 21 yrs
Birth → → → →
|18yrs→ → →|30yrs
Death

IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUNG ADULTS

Young Adults Still Undergoing Pychosocial Development

Identity Formation

Cognitive

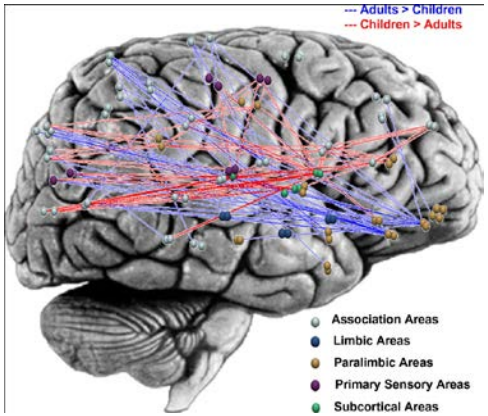
Moral

sexual

Social

Cognitive Abilities Changing

- Anticipation of Consequences (Steinberg,et al., 2009)
- Complex strategic planning (Albert & Steinberg, 2011)
- Behavior & cognitive control towards emotional or distracting stimuli (Hare et al., 2009, Liston et al., 2006; Christakou et al., 2009)



Developmental Characteristics

Identify formation

- Distrusting authority
- Experimentation
- Self-Determination

Social development

- Peer influence (positive and negative)
- Mixed ages can be unappealing

Psychosexual development

- Sexuality and sexual relationships
- Resolving gender identity and sexual orientation
- Common age to have children

Developmental Changes Underlie Abilities to Function More Maturely

Complete schooling & training

Contribute to/head household

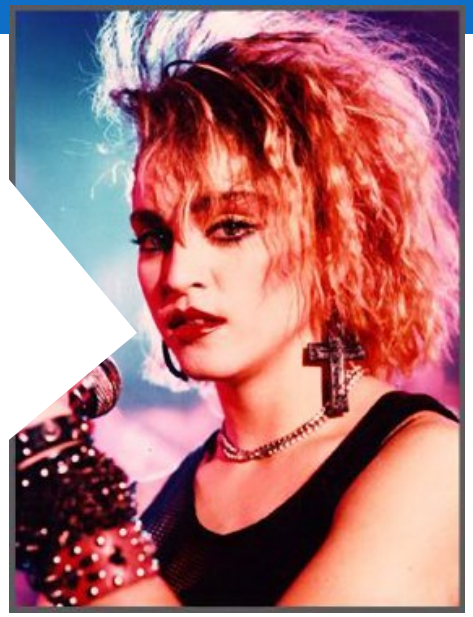
Obtain/maintain rewarding work

Develop a social network

Become financially self-supporting

Be a good citizen

Youth Culture



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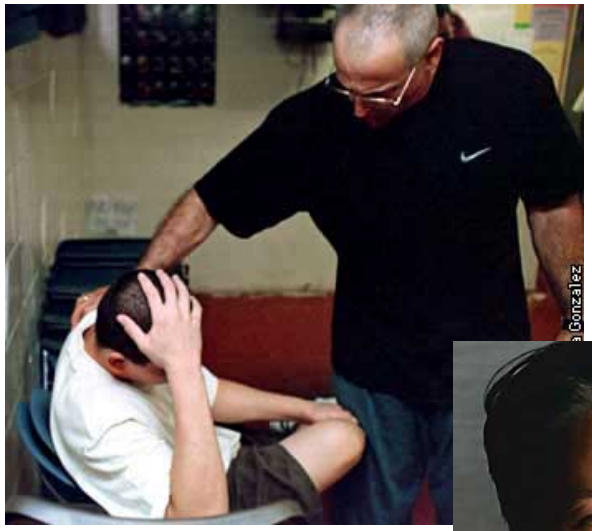
Family



Balance of self-determination and family support

- **More family involvement than older adults**
- **Less family involvement than younger youths**

Age-Typical to Focus on Career-Building

- About half of young adults attend some postsecondary education/training
- Initiate working
- Pursuing education/training while working more common in young than mature adults