COMING IN LOUD & CLEAR:
How to Grow Meaningful Youth Involvement

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INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

Meet Your Presenters!

Themes of the Day

1. Barriers and facilitators to youth participation
2. Balance of youth and family involvement
3. The role of social media and technology

Overview of the Day

Part 1&2:	Housekeeping & Icebreaker
Part 3:	Overview of meaningful youth involvement
Part 4:	Breakout Activity #1- Grow your goal!
Tea Break 10:30-11:00	
Part 5:	Effective Approaches Part 1: Paid Roles
Part 6:	Breakout Activity #2: How to Achieve your Goal
Lunch: 12:30-1:30	
Part 7:	Effective Approaches Part 2: Volunteer/Unpaid Roles
Part 8:	Effective Approaches Part 3: Involving Youth in Their own Care
Part 9:	Breakout Activity #3: Developing Action Steps
Tea Break: 2:45-3:15	
Part 9	Breakout Activity #4: How to Measure Your Success
Part 10:	Wrap-Up

Housekeeping

Stay Connected Through Social Media!

- Twitter/Fbook conference hashtags:

  #IAYMH2015

  #youthmh

  #SGChat

- Conference Twitter Page:

@IAYMH (https://twitter.com/IAYMH)

@TransitionsRTC

Group Disclaimer

- Just our experience (what we have learned…)
- It's okay to disagree!
- Different organizations do youth engagement differently, there is no "best" way, all have strengths and weaknesses
- Youth are heterogeneous – no "one fits all"
- Continuous learning experience – trial and error
- References for this entire presentation: youth who wished to remain anonymous
- Direct youth quotes

- "Honestly, this is a new field of research. And like a lot of research **it's basically going to tell you themes of what might work but it won't actually give you a guide about how youth engagement works best in a specific project**."

Icebreaker Activity!

1. Where are you from?
2. What is your role/title
3. How long have you worked with young adults/youth?

OVERVIEW OF MEANINGFUL YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

Fostering Youth Voice in Own Care/Services

- Important for self-determination skills
- Decision-making skills & planning skills are critical to adult functioning
- Nothing about us without us – buy-in
- All models to increase youth voice in own care: ↑ respectful and active listening
  - Respectful provision of information for informed decisions
  - Non judgemental

PEER WORKER ROLES

Peer Support Defined

- People with lived experience providing services and supports directly to their peers
- Group settings or 1-on-1
- Same-age or near-age
- Can mentor on various life skills/domains
- Utilized in a variety of settings: DMH, Hospitals, Drop-in Centers, etc.

Why Peer Support?

- Research supports positive effects of natural mentoring and near-aged mentoring
- Peers of utmost influence
- Can increase social network
- Serve as a role model
- Instant credibility
- Recovery is a shared experience

Peer Support Illustrated

"You don't have to have all the answers, you just have to be willing to share what you know."

Participatory Research and Evaluation

Definition of Participatory Action Research (PAR)

- A collaborative approach to research that equally involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each brings.[1]

- PAR begins with a research topic that's important to the community with the aim of combining knowledge and action for social change[1]

PAR in the Mental Health Community

Adult Movement

- Strong PAR history with adults with SMHC
- Adults participating in “service-user” research
- Published case studies showcase benefits of PAR with adults with SMI

Innovations with Young Adults

- Little work reported that infuses meaningful youth voice in mental health research and service design however…

Young adults are more engaged and committed to services & supports that they have an active voice in (Kirby et al, 2003; Oliver et al, 2006)

PAR in Youth Mental Health

Active involvement of young adult research staff with serious mental health conditions (SMHC) in all phases of research and evaluation efforts from defining the problem to disseminating results

Hart's Ladder

Key Questions

Which level of Hart's Ladder is our project on?

Which level of Hart's Ladder should our project be on?

What do we need to do to move to the right level on the ladder for our project?

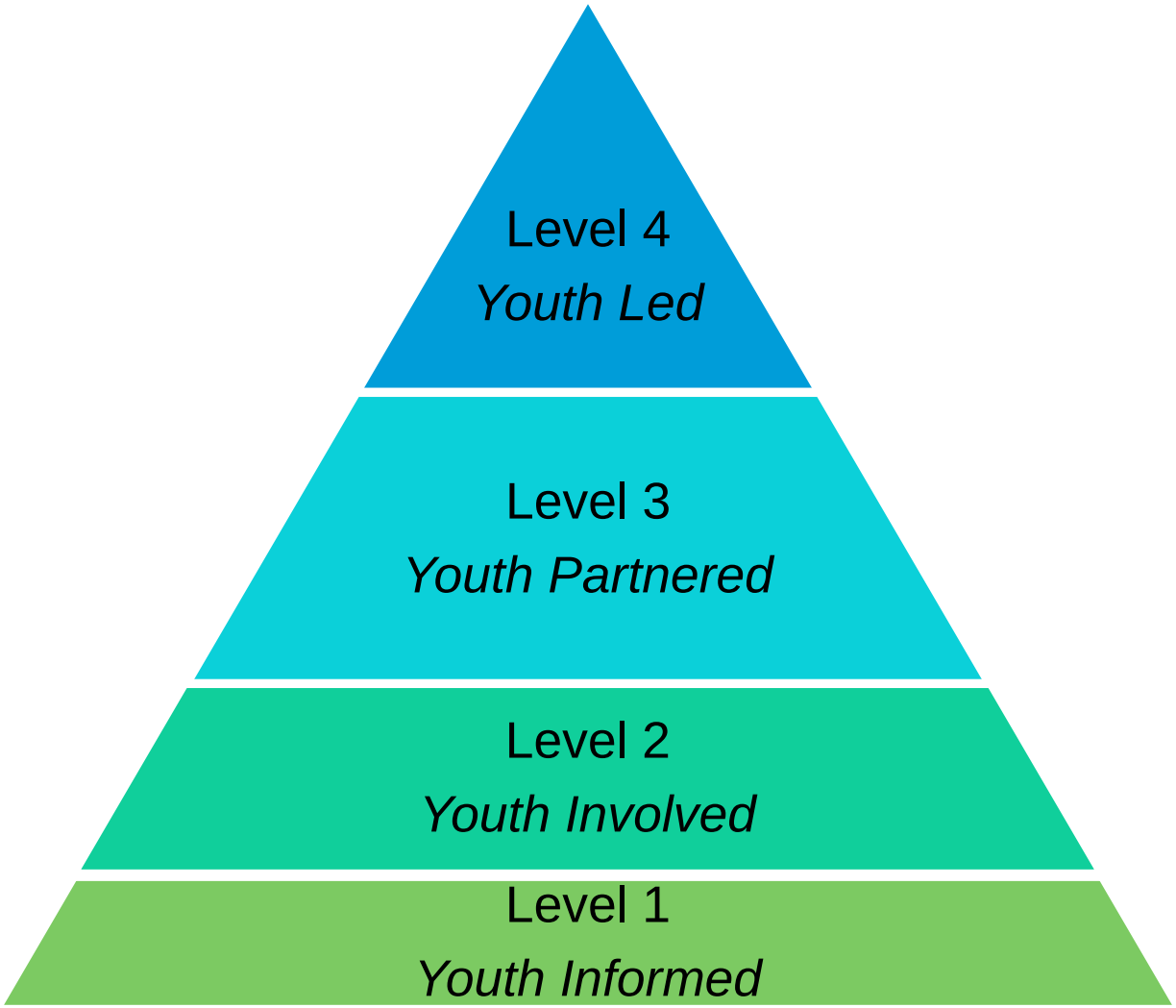
NON-PARTICIPATION

It is important to remember that tokenism, decoration and manipulation are not examples of youth participation. You do have the choice to move away from these methods towards more meaningful participation.

QUALITY OF PARTICIPATION		EXAMPLES
Young people and adults share decision-making	Young people have the ideas, set up the project and invite adults to join them in making decisions throughout the project. They are equal partners.	Young people decide they need a one-stop shop in their community. They partner with adults in different youth organisations and together lobby the government for resources.
Young people lead and initiate action	Young people have the initial idea and decide how the project is to be carried out. Adults are available and trust in the leadership of young people.	A group of students get permission from their principal to run an environmental day. The students make the decisions, and the school provides support.
Adult-initiated, shared decisions with young people	Adults have the initial idea, and young people are involved in making decisions, planning and implementing the project.	A community co-ordinator asks young people for event ideas for Youth Week. The young people suggest having a skating event. The co-ordinator and young people work together to make decisions and apply for funding.
Young people are consulted and informed	Adults design and facilitate the project, and young people's opinions are given weight in decision-making. Young people receive feedback about their opinions.	A local council runs several consultations to get young people's input about a recreation park. Young people tell the council about features in the park they want changed. The council provides feedback to the young people about how their views affected decision-making.
Young people assigned but informed	Adults decide on the project and young people volunteer for it. Young people understand the project and adults respect their views.	A conference creates positions for two young people on a panel of speakers. Young people decide how to select their representatives and work with adults to understand their role.
Tokenism	Young people are given a limited voice and little choice about what they can say and how they can communicate.	A young person is asked by adults to be on a panel and represent 'youth'. The young person is not given the opportunity to consult with peers or understand the role.
Decoration	Young people take part in an event in a very limited capacity and have no role in decision-making.	A group of young people are given a script by adults about 'youth problems' to present to adults attending a youth conference.
Manipulation	Adults have complete and unchallenged authority and abuse their power. They use young people's ideas and voices for their own gain.	A publication uses young people's cartoons; however, the publication is written by adults.

Source: http://www.connecttransmit.org.uk/working-with-young-people/

PAR Levels of Involvement



References

Kirby P, Lanyon C, Cronin K, Sinclair R. *Handbook - Building a culture of participation: involving children and young people in policy, service planning, delivery and evaluation.* Nottingham: Department for Education and Skills;2003.

Oliver K, Collin P, Burns J, Nicholas J. Building resilience in young people through meaningful participation. *Adv Mental Health.* 2006;5(1):34-40

PARTNERING WITH YOUTH TO PRODUCE SYSTEMS CHANGE

What is Systems Change?

"Systems change" is a shift in the way that a community makes decisions about policies, programs, and the allocation of its resources — and, ultimately, in the way it delivers services to its citizens.

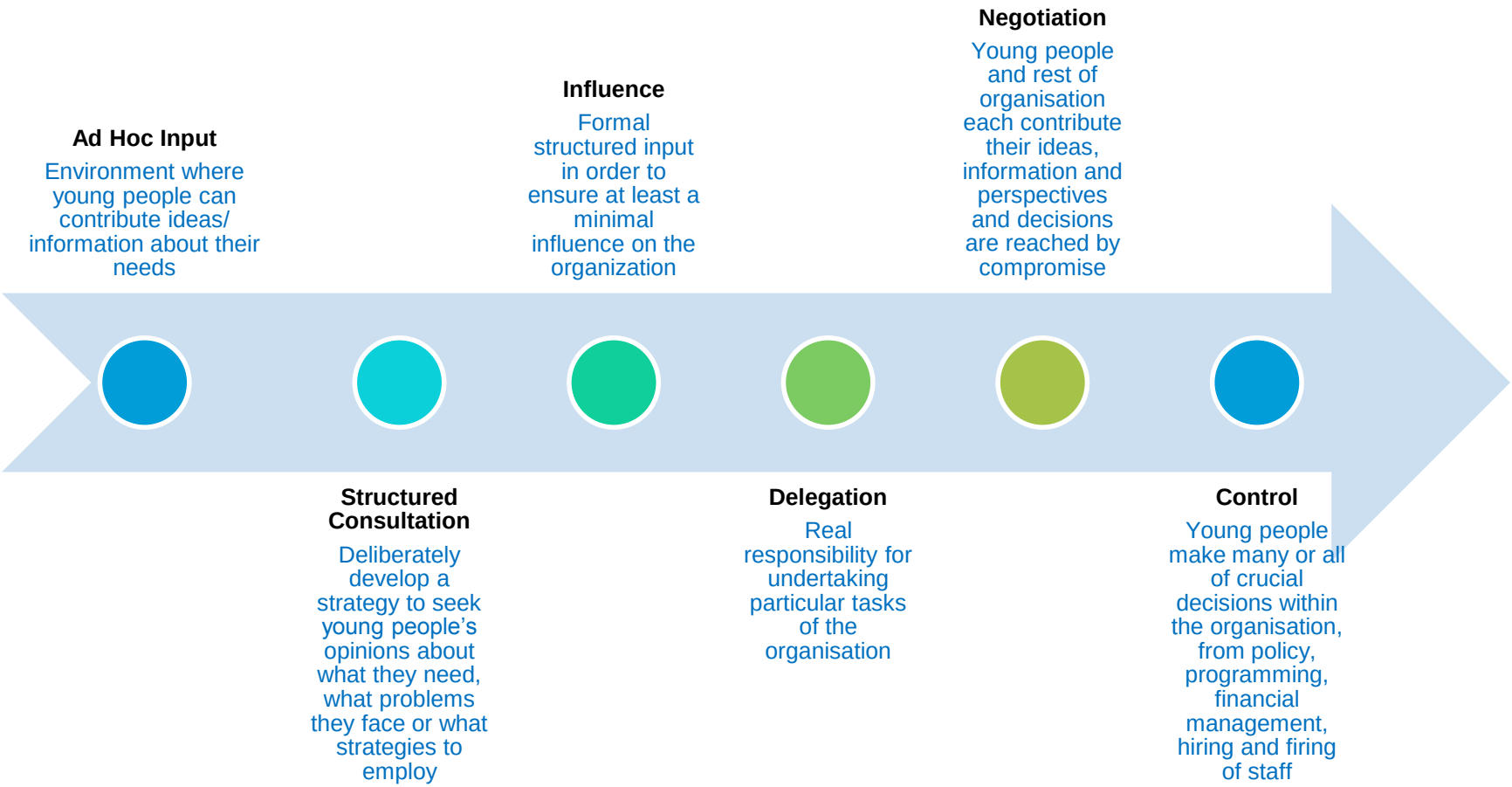
Source: http://www.ccitoolsforfeds.org/systems_change.asp

Systems change

- **Change systems** to change the way a service is deliver to its target audience!
- No to status quo
- Change underlying structures and supporting mechanisms

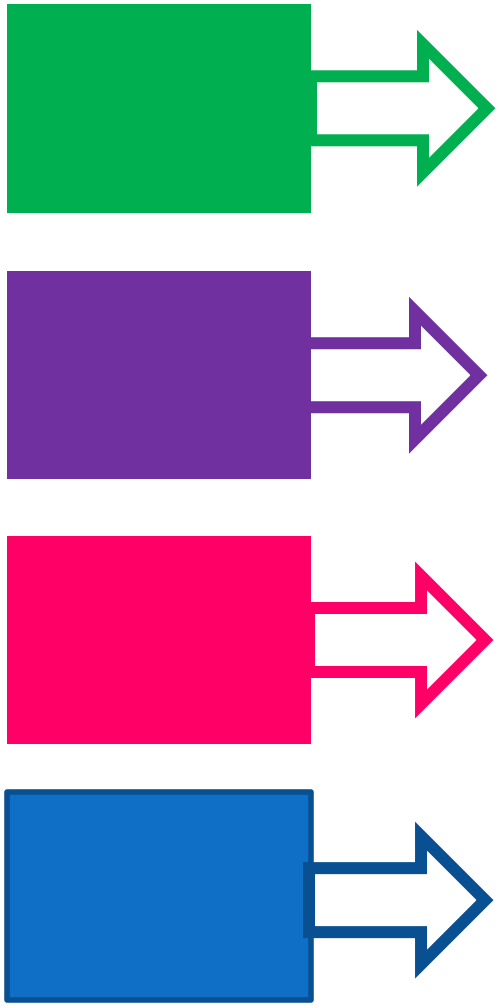
“In Headstrong we have young people participating at all levels including board level. We get expenses paid and accommodation if we need it. Things like that enable everyone to participate”

Continuum of Youth Involvement



1987, Gill Westhorp of the Youth Sector Training Council

Breaking Out Into Groups



Youth's Own Treatment

Peer-Workers

Participatory Research/Evaluation

Systems Change

BREAKOUT ACTIVITY #1

Developing a goal to grow meaningful youth involvement

Breakout Activity #1

1. Break out into the group that matches your colored notecard from the Icebreaker!
2. Work together with your group to identify where your organization currently stands regarding their level of meaningful youth involvement (see goal sheet)
3. Take notes about where you are now AND where you want to see your organization in five years

MAKE YOUR OWN HEADLINE: 5 Minutes Of Fame Activity

THE IAYMH GLOBE

www.IAYMH2015.com | THE WORLD'S FAVORITE NEWSPAPER | - Since 2015-

INSERT YOUR HEADLINE HERE

Develop your news headline: This is your 5 minutes of fame!

1. Take a few minutes and think about where you want to see your organization 5 years from now in terms of growing meaningful youth involvement
2. If a major newspaper in your area decided to interview your organization about it's breakthrough in youth engagement *in 5 years*, what would you hope the headline would say?!

- Make sure your headline addresses where you want to be after 5 years of growth….Things to consider: what do you wish youth involvement looked like in your organization/state/country? How do you get it there?

Example Headline:
"Massachusetts First State to Mandate Youth Voice in all Mental Health Research"

Example Headline:
"ABC Organization Hosts 5 Year Anniversary Party for First Ever Youth-Run Homeless Shelter"

Template from: **www.presentationmagazine.com**

YOUR TITLE HERE

no.203.078 YOUR CATCH PHRASE HERE - Since 1802

INSERT YOUR HEADLINE HERE

Lorem ipsum

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THE
SUN SHINE

CELEBRITY NEWS AND GOSSIP *WORLD EXCLUSIVES*

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Date today 00/00/00

NEWS

ARTICLE HEADLINE

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WOW NEWS

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Tea Time 10:30-11:00

Be back by 11am to start back up!

EFFECTIVE APPROACHES

Part 1: Paid Youth Worker Positions

Paid Work vs. Unpaid Advisory Roles

Paid work = employing young adults consistently

- Remuneration sends a message of appreciation for time, effort, dedication, and expertise
  - Adults are paid for work on projects → equality
  - If you don't pay, you exclude youth who may not be able to afford to volunteer
  - Shows youth their work is valuable → they will fee[illegible] → they will be more likely to feel engaged → they [illegible] do great work!
- Allows for ongoing learning opportunities
- Shift in organizational power
- Creates a career ladder vs. stagnant positio

Employer Challenges

- Commitment from all levels of organization
  - Fear of “minimizing rigor”
  - Lack of clarify in role development
- Youth lack of professional experience
  - Professional skills, credentials
- Staff lack of experience supporting youth
  - Lack of education about supporting youth with MHC
  - Shift in “youth culture”

Hiring Considerations

- Identify level of readiness for employment
  - Organization vs young adult readiness
  - Mental Health Management (i.e. WRAP Plan)
  - Self-Awareness
- Provide detailed role description to EVERYONE
  - Responsibilities in role for youth
  - What do youth need to know walking in the door/can learn on the job/provide training as needed
  - Training for staff and supporters on supporting youth

Hiring Considerations cont..

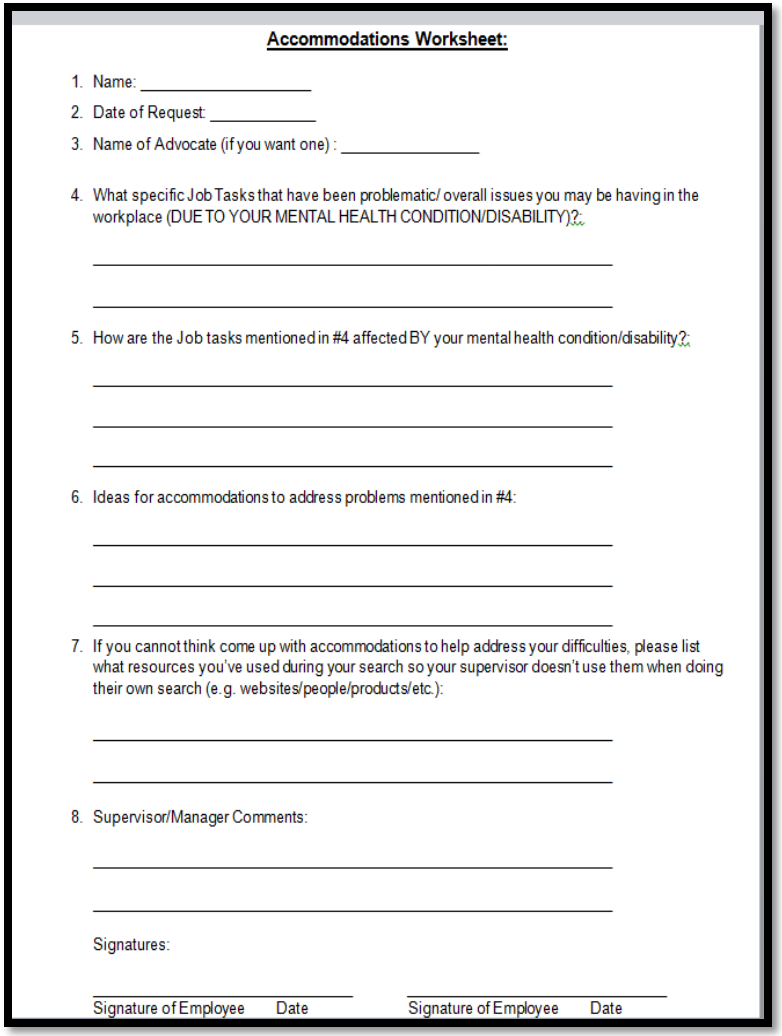
- Developing disclosure comfort agreement/needs pre-hire
  - Boundaries for disclosure levels
  - Disclosure on the web vs. in person
- Organizations need to embody youth as part of the solution and harness their input, as opposed to seeing them as having problems/issues that need resolution
- Be familiar with youth engagement best practices before involving youth

Reasonable Accommodations

- Can be mandated by law
- SHOULD be implemented regardless!
- Definition: A modification or adjustment to the work environment or in the way things are customarily done that enables a qualified person with a disability:
  - to perform the essential functions of that position.
  - to enjoy the same privileges and benefits of employment as are enjoyed by employees without disabilities

Accommodations cont..

- Bring in experts on accommodation process (i.e. ADA, Ask Jan)
- Provide written resources & guidance
- Quarterly review of request/Flexibility



Accommodations Worksheet:

1. Name: _____
2. Date of Request: _____
3. Name of Advocate (if you want one) : _____
4. What specific Job Tasks that have been problematic/ overall issues you may be having in the workplace (DUE TO YOUR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION/DISABILITY)?:

   _____

   _____
5. How are the Job tasks mentioned in #4 affected BY your mental health condition/disability?:

   _____

   _____

   _____
6. Ideas for accommodations to address problems mentioned in #4:

   _____

   _____

   _____
7. If you cannot think come up with accommodations to help address your difficulties, please list what resources you've used during your search so your supervisor doesn't use them when doing their own search (e.g. websites/people/products/etc.):

   _____

   _____
8. Supervisor/Manager Comments:

   _____

   _____

Signatures:

_____ _____

Signature of Employee Date Signature of Employee Date

Considerations for Support

- Cost-effective process (short term pain for long term gain!)
- Formal vs. informal process
- Individualize, individualize, individualize!
- Commonly provided in workplace:
  - Flexibility in work schedule
  - Productivity/organizational resources
  - Working from home
  - Headphones/Music to block distractions
  - Quiet workplace/access to private office
  - Frequent Breaks
  - JOB COACH!

Supervision Considerations

A parallel learning trajectory:
Some young adults with serious mental health conditions are simultaneously learning to live with their mental health condition while also navigating a professional work environment for the first time.
http://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/pdf/fpS1310.pdf

Potentially effective supervision practices:

- Basic understanding of the mental health condition and how it affects work
- Reasonable accommodations negotiated
- Individualized and strength-based approach to supervision
- Make supervision a priority

A Delicate Balance: Supervisio versus Clinical Support

Supervisors should:

- Help manage tasks, priorities, and ensure the work gets done
- Provide a supportive environment but not provide what could be considered clinical care
- Know about an individual's mental health supports and encourage effective use of those supports in times of need OR collaborate with a separate employee in the organization that is tasked with providing that support

PEER MENTORS AND PEER SPECIALISTS

Definitions

Peer Specialists:

- Long history within adult mental health in the United States
- Paid positions with formal trainings used within multiple service settings
- Sometimes/often reimbursable by public health insurance

Young Adult Peer Mentors/Peer Supporters:

- Modeled after “natural” or older mentors & Peer Specialists
- Special considerations regarding Young Adulthood
- Peer can be defined as same- or near-age, with or without a mental health condition
- Diverse tasks/roles in multiple service settings, but becoming more standardized in many areas
- Paid employment opportunities for young adults

Example #1: Vocational Peer Mentors

Test feasibility of adapted Individualized Placement and Supports (IPS):

supported employment + supported education with the use of near-age vocational peer mentors

Single group mixed method pre-post feasibility study

Thresholds Young Adult Program (YAP) in Chicago

THRESHOLDS

Klodnick, V.V., Sabella, K., Brenner, C., Krzos, I., Ellison, M, Kaiser, S., Davis, M. and Fagan, M. *In press.* "Perspectives of Young Emerging Adults with Serious Mental Health Conditions on Vocational Peer Mentors". *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders.* (Published online, December 30, 2014)

Example #1: Vocational Peer Mentors

Peer qualifications:

- Self-identified as having a SMHC
- Experience in YAP or other service systems
- High school graduate with employment or post-secondary school history

40 hours of training:

- Increase knowledge of IPS model
- Learn how to share story
- Build active-listening skills

Weekly Group Meetings and 1:1 supervision

Example #1: Vocational Peer Mentors

- **Work closely with education and employment specialists**
- Provide emotional support & **validation**
- **Engage** young people in vocational services
- **Support** young people in exploring worlds of work & school
- **Teach**, role-model, and **coach** professionalism, maintaining hygiene, and having appropriate boundaries

- 1-6 mentees per mentor
- Weekly meetings in the community

In young people's (mentees) own words

"[My peer mentor is]…*trustworthy. I could talk to him about everything.*"

"she [peer mentor] didn't look at me differently…she didn't put on a phony act."

"someone who was one of us… they can talk about their life, how they get through it and show us how to do it."

Valued Peer Mentoring Experiences

- Receipt of advice
- Feeling related to & understood
- Opportunity to “talk” & be heard
- Relationship Building
- Trust & Safety

Valued Peer Mentoring Characteristics

- “Strong,” “positive,” “honest,” & “trustworthy”
- Have similar life experiences and a capacity to empathize
- Having “overcome” personal struggles

Example #1: Lessons learned

- “Peer” definition can vary
- Fully integrate peer mentors into the service team
  - Promote value and definition of role
- Develop peer mentors
  - Training and definition of role
- Support Mentee-Mentor Interactions
  - Monetary support meetings/calls
- Support Peer Mentors
  - Ongoing regular supervision (1:1 & group)
  - Support around boundaries

Example #2:
Peer Mentors in Mental Health Systems

- Growing in several states
- Massachusetts:
  - Young Adult Peer Mentors in 10 out of 32 Community Service Agencies that provide Intensive Care Coordination services for 18-21 year olds
  - Funded by federal grant to Massachusetts Department of Mental Health (DMH) improve services for this age group

Example #2: Peer Mentors in Mental Health Service Systems

- *"Young Adult Peer Mentors provide **one-to-one support to young adults who are engaged in, or considering engagement in**, Intensive Care Coordination services in selected CSAs…..**use their own lived experience in behavioral health treatment and systems involvement to support their peers in taking positive steps** toward overcoming their mental health concerns".*

Example #2: Peer Mentors in Mental Health Service Systems

Struggles and considerations:

- ~2 year process to implement, still ongoing
  - Supervision structure can be tricky
  - Need to clearly define the role
  - Need full integration into team
  - Offer career growth and career track

Successes:

- Medicaid Reimbursable as Therapeutic Mentors = Sustainability!

Example #3: Peer Support Specialists, Singapore

- Peer support in Singapore's Early Psychosis Intervention Programme started in 2010, having evolved from support groups ran by staff
- Peer Support Specialists became paid staff with roles mainly in peer support and as advisors in service improvement

Example #3 cont..

- Some Peer Support Specialists then took on new roles in effecting systems change
  - Taken up executive roles in hospital's patient advisory committee, and advocacy roles in other non-profit organizations > act as a bridge
  - Employed as full-time staff in Singapore's National Council of Social Services' mental health division (implementation of social service plans affecting individuals with mental health conditions)

PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

PAR at the Transitions RTC

Active involvement of young adult staff with serious mental health conditions (SMHC) in all phases of research and knowledge translation from defining the problem to disseminating results

- 7 PAR staff working 14-40 hours/week
- College internship program
- Engaging local and national community

Learning to Do Research

Interview Training

- Qualitative Interviewing
- Developing a research question
- Safety and research protocols
- Data analysis

The Young Adult College Study

The Academic Experiences and Perspectives of Young Adult College Students with Mental Health Conditions

- Secondary Analysis of Data from the “National Survey of College Students With Mental Illnesses”

  - survey by Mark Salzer, PhD.

- Created the research questions
- Analyzed data using SPSS Statistical software
- Interpreted Findings
- Developed publications

Breaking New Ground (Yrs 1-3)

- 5 Per-diem YA positions
- Generalized job description
- Separate YA meetings
- Supervisor = main support
- Internal Youth Voice

Steering towards Success (Yrs 3-now)

- PAR staff on career trajectories
- Strengths based job descriptions
- Culture Shift
- Supervisor & Career Coach
- National Youth Voice

Successes & Benefits

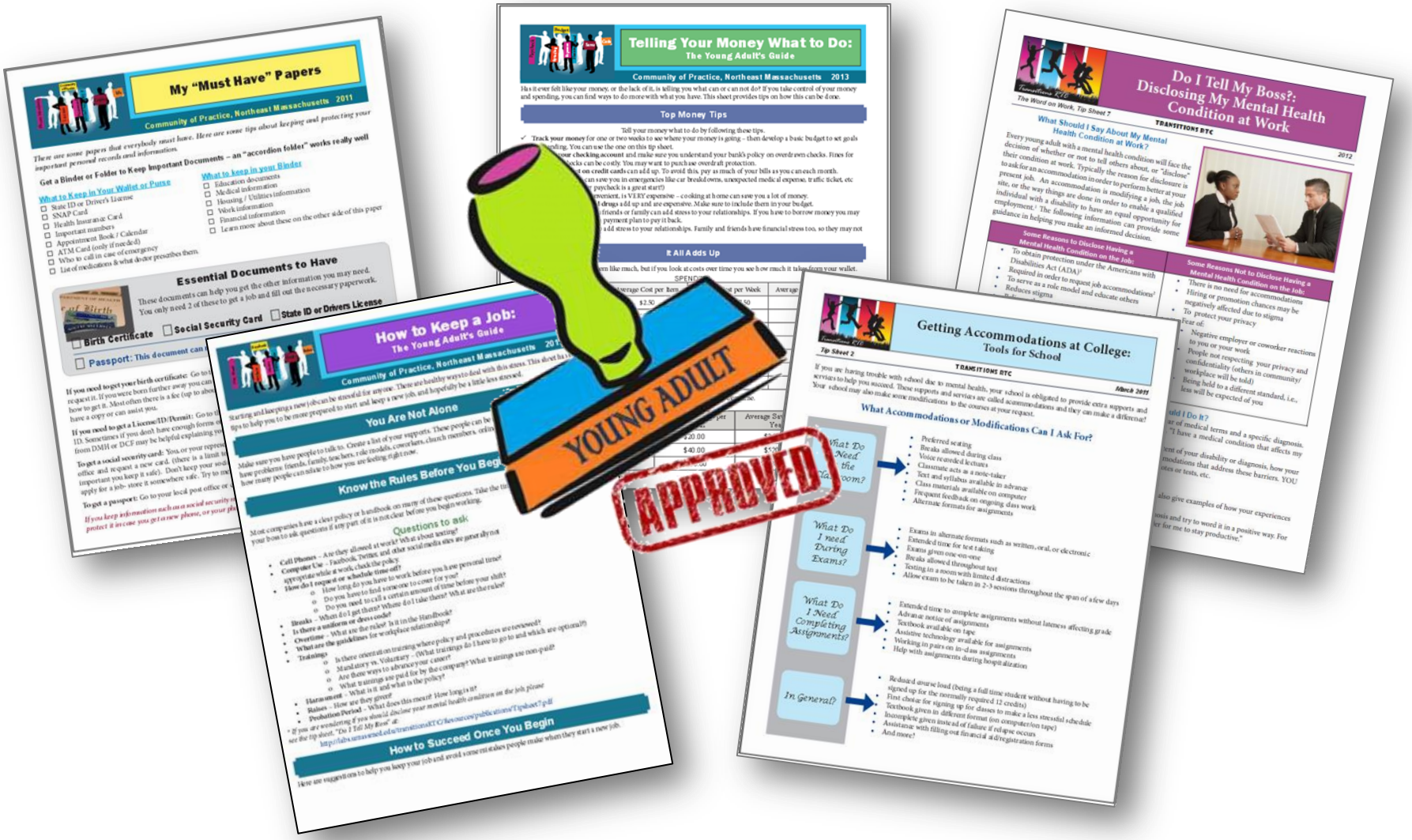
Research Team

- More authentic/rich interviews
- Engaging young adult research participants
- Stronger connection to media/technology
- Strengthened relationship with local mental health community

PAR Staff

- PAR staff transitioning into professional roles
- Strength based work environment
- Increased self-efficacy & self-advocacy skills
- Strengthened youth voice

Tip Sheet Feedback



YAB

Diversity

- Child Welfare
- MH Services
- Foster Care
- Juvenile Justice
- Racial Minority
- College Student
- Homelessness

National Voice

- Youth MOVE
- Home for Little Wanderers
- NAMI National
- Youth Voice Colorado

Ty's Perspective

"Being a part of the YAB, I could see my comments put to good use. My thoughts and opinions felt important and I was treated with respect."

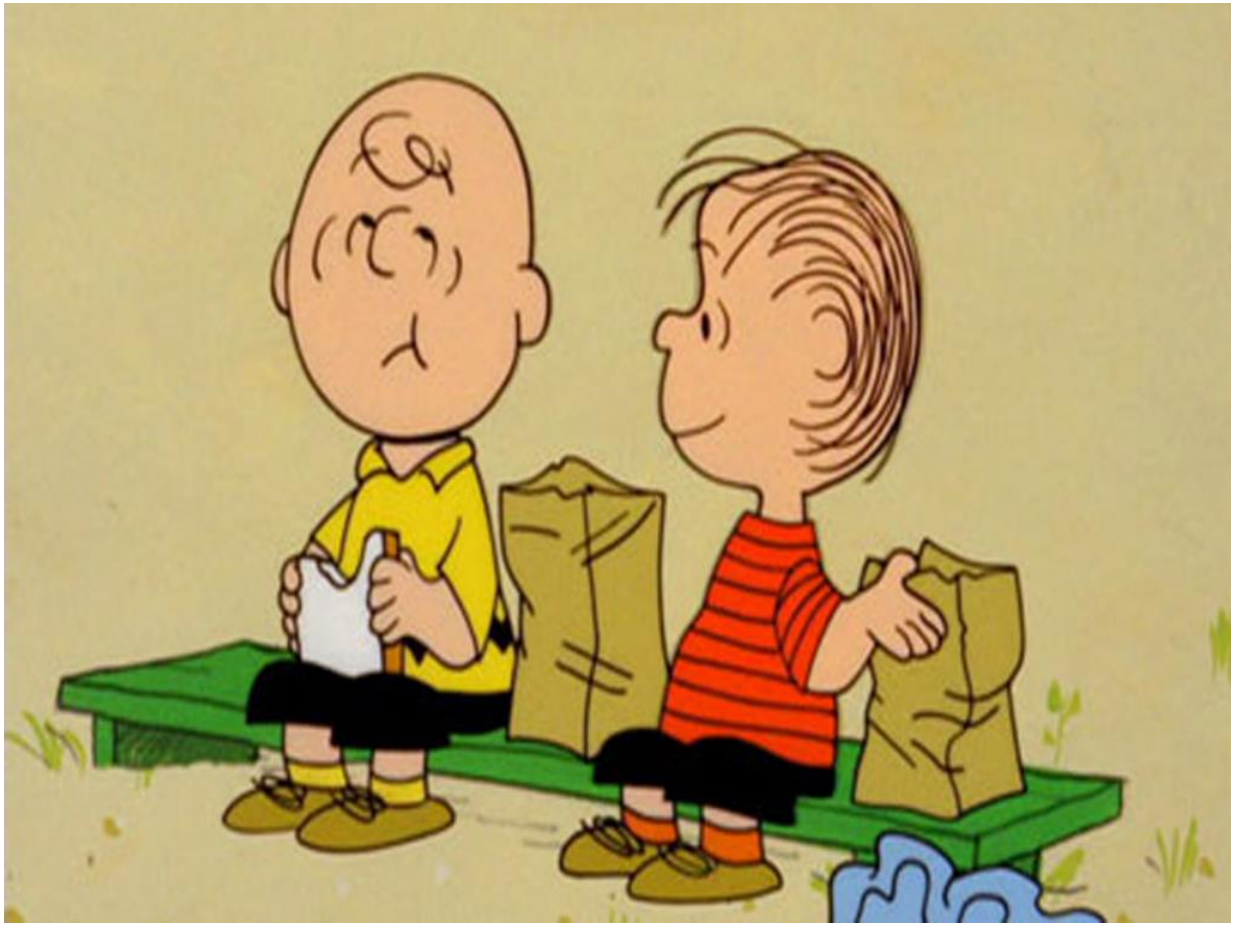
The Power of PAR

Breakout Activity #2

How to Achieve your goal: Identify the biggest action step needed to achieve your goal

1. What do you perceive to be your biggest obstacle?
2. What are the needed steps to achieve the goal?
3. What is the most strategic step?

Lunch Time! 12:30-1:30



EFFECTIVE APPROACHES

Part 2: Unpaid Youth Worker Positions

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camh Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

mindyourmind
reach out get help give help

…And our great youth contributors who provided input/feedback to this presentation

Preparing youth

- Be clear on youth roles before engaging them
  - What are you looking for?
  - How do you envision youth fulfilling that role?
  - What roles do youth want?
  - What are they looking to gain from their experience?
- Decide on a mutually agreed upon role: develop the role together
- Allow young people the opportunity to decide what role(s) they see themselves in

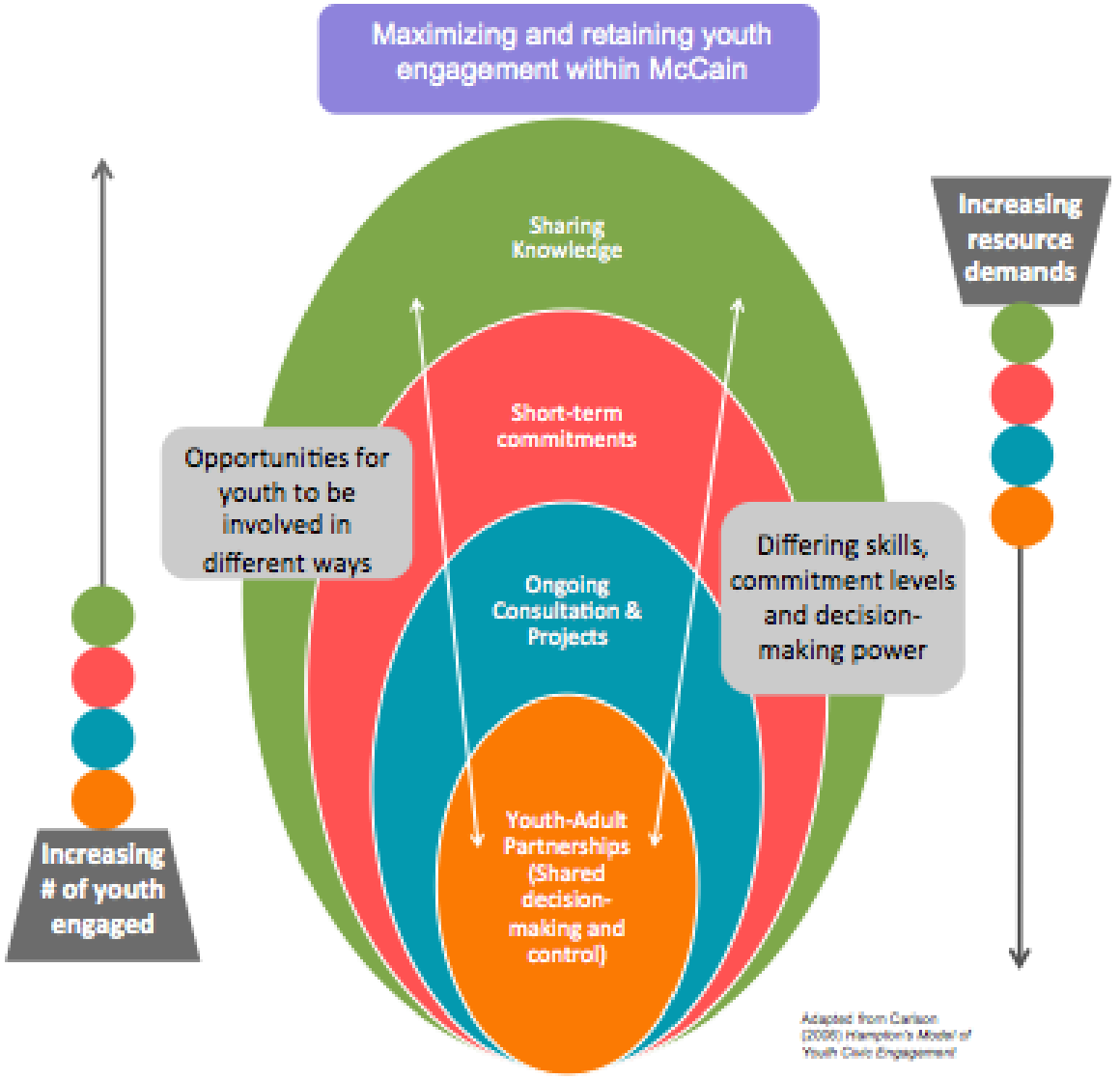
Examples: spectrum of roles

- **Advisor/Consultant**
  - Programs or initiatives are already developed, but asking opinions of youth
- **Developer/Collaborator**
  - Youth are helping to create programs/initiatives, but less of a direct role than creator
- **Co-Creator/Decision-maker**
  - Youth are helping to create programs/initiatives (usually from the beginning stages) in a more direct role, have decision-making power
- **Youth-Led**
  - Youth are primary leaders in project, adults help facilitate youth' goals

Examples: spectrum of roles

Herzog, Heffernan, Chaim, & Henderson. Next Level Youth Engagement: Strengthening research through youth-adult partnerships. 2015 Poster Presentation.

Consider:
Skills involved
Time commitments
Resources required
Targets and goals
And so forth…



Examples: spectrum of roles

- “[The importance of] gating involvement. There is a good balance between having an overly selective group to a completely open group. **I have actually felt more tokenized in big groups of youth because I felt like part of a collection being advertised to funders than actually owning any part of what was created**. Being selective is difficult but accepting everyone can also be quite tokenistic.”

Examples: spectrum of roles

- ***"Nothing for us without us"***
- Ideally, co-creation and involvement that is equal and meaningful
  - This means investing time and money into learning from youth engagement experts on how to do this well
  - Includes all stages of work, i.e., administration, development, etc.
- Equal means understanding that the youth bring a perspective that's equally important
- "They [youth] have to be **respected as experts in their own lives** - they need to be partners."

Preparing youth

- Ensure mutual expectations are clear from the get-go
  - What can they expect from you?
  - What can you expect from them?
  - Be clear on possible outcomes and feasibility of youth participation
- Be careful with wording used to describe youth roles and expectations
  - e.g. “Youth led” implies youth are making decisions; “advisor” opinions may or may not lead to change
  - If expectations are unclear from the beginning, it could lead to disappointment and frustration on behalf of the young person (and the organization!)

Preparing youth

- Establish mutually convenient communication methods and meeting times/places
  - Is the young person in school 9-5?
  - Do they prefer to receive phone calls, or emails?
  - Do they have access to long distance communication?
  - Is your office really far for them to travel to?
  - How often can you expect to hear from each other?
  - Who should youth contact for different matters?
  - Who will pay for big ticket items (e.g. travel expenses)?
  - And so forth…
- Little things may not seem important to a seasoned professional, but can make all the difference to a young person (unanswered emails, considerations for youth' out-of-pocket expenses, etc.)
- Establish confidentiality (if appropriate)

Preparing youth

- Most importantly, establish feedback platforms or channels, both formal and informal
  - Anonymous surveys provide a great, safe way to evaluate how young people feel
  - Can be really hard for young people to express grievances, make sure to be supportive, non-judgmental and encouraging
  - Do something with the survey results (or youth will feel further disengaged) – you want to show them their voices matter and that you take their opinions very seriously

An organization's youth engagement is only as good as their youth say it is.

Considerations for Unpaid Youth

- There are other ways to remunerate young people other than money. There are many ways to show appreciation. Be creative!
  - If no funds for regular payment → other goodies (food, cupcakes, movie tickets, reference letters, money for school books, and so forth…)
  - Volunteering is of course encouraged, sense of giving back

Paid/voluntary

- “[…] So to speak to the paid part: paying youth is a **discussion of equality**. The adults are usually paid by an organization to spend time working on a project. If a youth is volunteering they can't have as much say in it. When you ask someone to volunteer: understand that **you are on their time**. Traditional meetings might not work, especially if they are balancing work and school. Figuring out other means like Facebook groups, etc., are great alternatives.”

Employee vs Paid Consultant

- Depending on the nature of the young person's role, paying young people for their time doesn't mean they are now "employees"
- Young people can feel uncomfortable accepting money, and thus may feel like they "owe" something for it
- Reinforce that they are partners, they deserve to be remunerated for their expertise and what they have to offer – express how valuable they are and show it!
- Encourage them to feel good about their work and that typical "work" dynamics don't apply here

Paid Consultant vs Volunteer Consultant

- If paying youth, make sure expectations are clear (role descriptions developed together can help set this up)
- If youth are volunteering:
  - Should feel as if they can leave at any time
  - Put strategies and processes in place to ensure transitions and continuity of work
- Regardless of volunteer vs. paid, always ensure flexibility
  - Set up mechanisms should youth need a break, have other things going on, etc.
  - Encourage the young person to be honest if they have a prior engagement, like an exam, etc.
  - They should not feel penalized for taking time off (they may feel bad enough already to ask for it!)
  - Encourage self-care, wellbeing and the importance of stating one's needs

Genuine/tokenism

- Tokenism:
- Having youth just to say you have youth
- Having one youth who is approached for everything youth-related
- One young person doesn't represent the voices of all young people
- All youth members should be approached equally for opinions and decisions

- "I think [that] if people feel like there is a token youth who people always listen to/approach for things, and they aren't willing to listen or approach other youth because it's not as convenient, the young adults just won't show up."

- "[…] When a group knows what they want to do, and they just want to check a box that says youth engagement so **they try and convince youth of their ideas rather than listening**."

Genuine/tokenism

Young people had a lot to say about tokenism…

- Tokenism:
- Developing entire proposals, projects, etc., and then involving youth late in the process when things have already been decided
- Getting things rubber-stamped or a seal-of-approval

- "Having youth there, but **the project is already decided and their feedback will only be listened to if it's positive** […] It's honestly a waste of everyone's time and can be really harmful to the young people […] because it can make them feel like they do not matter and that adults don't care about them."

- "At one point I was working on a 'task force' to edit a policy paper. Unfortunately at the time**, I had no idea what a policy paper even was and no one stopped to explain it to me**. I was too shy to stop and ask so I gave feedback on something that I knew absolutely nothing about!"

Genuine/tokenism

And more…

- “I was a part of a project where the group was happy to hear the voice and opinions of young people, but we didn't really have any decision making power. **Instead of letting us into the decision making and problem solving process, they would just make decisions without us** and then would tell us why they couldn't implement some of our ideas - even though they liked them. It felt pretty crappy.”

- “I was a part of something that was so meaningful to me and then, suddenly, I wasn't. […] It's been more than a year now and I still feel so sensitive and upset about not being able to contribute. […] I feel embarrassed that I've been so negatively impacted by it. […] I would say that it has made me lose confidence in myself and made me consider pursuing a different career path due to this experience. […]I think **people sometimes forget the vulnerabilities of engaging people with mental health issues and it can be a really derailing experience for them if it's not done properly**.”

Genuine/tokenism

And more!

The “80%” and the “20%”

- “Youth engagement **needs to access the other 80%** - not the 20% who are already invested and keen...while they are invaluable and need to continue to be a part of the process, broader perspectives are not being heard, and real change isn't happening besides what we choose to look at on the surface.”

- ““…This underlines the importance of increasing organizational capacity for youth engagement. In my opinion, to effectively engage with a truly diverse and representative group of young people (in your target population/demographic), it **requires a well-researched, well-planned, well-supported, and well-funded youth engagement strategy**. People who seek youth input **need resources to be creative, flexible and accommodating enough to capture the voices of those who aren’t being heard**.”

Genuine/tokenism

- Differentiation:
- *"We did this entire proposal… What are your thoughts?"*
  - Be willing to take time to explain each aspect, the reasoning behind each aspect, and to change/compromise on something if youth disagree
  - Give enough time for youth to look it over and really give their opinions (even if you don't like what they may have to say if it means more work for you!)
  - If you ask them to put their name on it…. They should have contributed in a meaningful way (development, creation, changes, etc.)
  - If you ask for their opinion, ensure enough time for them to actually look it over (and ask them prior what a reasonable time frame looks like)

Genuine/tokenism

- Genuine:
- Youth feel valued, heard, and involved
- Youth feel their voices matter, they feel engaged
- They feel their participation is meaningful and impactful
- Youth voices lead to action and change
- Youth feel their expertise are respected
- They feel they are true partners

- “In our current funding structure, grants and funders often want to know how many youth are involved or affected by a project. This has led to the practice of collecting young people, which means that getting young people associated with the project, purely for numbers’ sake and not knowing how to engage them beyond that**. It doesn't matter if you have 100, or even 1000 young people involved if they don't feel like they have any meaningful effect on the project.** Often times, we will say we have 100s of young people involved when what we really mean is that we have 100 emails and only 8 people who are really involved. “

Genuine/tokenism

Youth also got very excited talking about genuine and meaningful involvement!

"I was in a youth committee on mental health and it was one of the most positive experiences ever for me. […] We organized ourselves and had young people chairing the committee. It was really powerful **as we all felt comfortable enough to discuss drawbacks and negative emotions as well as the positive sides to the projects that we were working on.** It was great to work with a strong group of people that truly believed in youth engagement - without having ego or power get in the way."

"I was involved in a project where the people were really flexible and nonjudgmental. They took into consideration the other things I had going on at the time (university, volunteering, etc.). For example, **I wasn't made to feel badly when I showed up late to a meeting**. When I apologized for my lateness, the facilitator just smiled warmly and said "There's no need to apologize - you're right where you need to be. Welcome. We were just talking about..."""

Genuine/tokenism

Really excited!

- Genuine:
- Importance of continuous youth validation

- "I think it's about asking youth. Do you feel tokenized? Do you feel like this project is allowing you to feel ownership of it, like it matters to you? […] Do you feel like people are only engaging youth who talk, act, and believe like them? **Are they keeping youth engaged who make things messy by disagreeing with them**?"

- There is a major difference between:

"*We engaged youth"* and *"Youth were partners"*

vs.

Youth themselves expressing that they feel engaged and consider themselves as partners

Genuine/tokenism

Young people have so many positive, great ideas about engagement…

- How do we create genuine involvement? We ask!
- "A few ways: learning how to create brave spaces, where young people will feel comfortable disagreeing with you or your plan and not feel like their future involvement would be compromised."
- Creating brave spaces means thinking about how a room is set up, what is the environment like, what are the power dynamics that need to addressed, and listening twice as much as you are speaking
- "Always reviewing the youth engagement process and **being honest with what worked and what didn't. A lot of folks want to say they are the best, first, or only, at something** but the truth is we can all improve and learn from many others before us that have done youth engagement."
- "I think it's about **constantly evaluating your process and listening**."

Genuine/tokenism

…That are waiting to be heard and implemented

- How do we create genuine involvement? We ask!

- “Building a relationship with youth - making them feel valued and important, that their opinion is something you truly do value, not just something you seek so you can put down on paper that your initiative "consulted youth" or was "youth created" **when you just threw young people into a room, let them talk, and then did what you wanted anyway.**”

Genuine/tokenism

- Use youth opinions to generate change
- “I think if you don't fix it **people just stop showing up to your meetings**.”
- Importance of reflection, humility, compassion, and follow up
- If something goes wrong, address it as soon as possible with the young person and see what can be done to mend the relationship; do not ignore the issue!
  - If issue is ignored, or person just leaves without follow up, they may feel used/replaceable/unappreciated/vulnerable, etc.
  - To err is human – always address it, learn from it, and move on!
  - An apology goes a long way (and helps address power dynamics, allowing youth to feel more comfortable)

Funded/independent

- For youth who may also represent/be funded by other organizations, who are they beholden to? Important to discuss!
- Should young people be independent representatives?
- How do they balance their perspectives in relation to the organization?

- “Meaningful involvement means when their is a mutually beneficial relationship between youth and the organization. The youth grows, gains connections and isn't afraid to be involved in several different projects. Too often, organizations want to keep youth "in the family" and discourage them from spreading their wings and trying out other organizations. I hope that people understand that **the most engaging experiences for me are places that encourage me to grow and try other things.”**

- **“It's not fair to try and own young people or their stories**; accept the gifts they give you, don't ask for more.”

Balance of youth/family input

- Certain age limits to joining organizations without parental knowledge
- Look up legalities, consider risks
- Having family present can be very overwhelming for youth
- Parents = experienced, can overpower youth voices
- Youth may not feel safe/confident in presence of families (parents)
- Ask youth how they feel with family involvement in a project/group

- “Family members and youth are very separate groups with very different experiences. Combining them [often] means having one voice or experience shine over another. It's important to give them their own spaces and figure out how they can collaborate while not letting the parents take over. It's especially hard because a lot of youth are triggered by parents.”

Summary

- Clear expectations
- Explicit youth-derived goals
- Youth-led projects
- Lots of choices
- Flexibility
- Young, relatable leaders
- Shared decision-making
- Evidence-informed (do your research!)
- Transparency
- Reciprocity and co-learning
- Continually evolving
- Adults as resources/mentors/allies
- Youth-friendly environment
- Opportunities for youth personal development
- Youth recognized for contributions (e.g. honoraria, wages, certificates)

Adapted from: Herzog, Heffernan, Chaim, & Henderson. Next Level Youth Engagement: Strengthening research through youth-adult partnerships. 2015 Poster Presentation.

EXAMPLE #1

Lye Yin

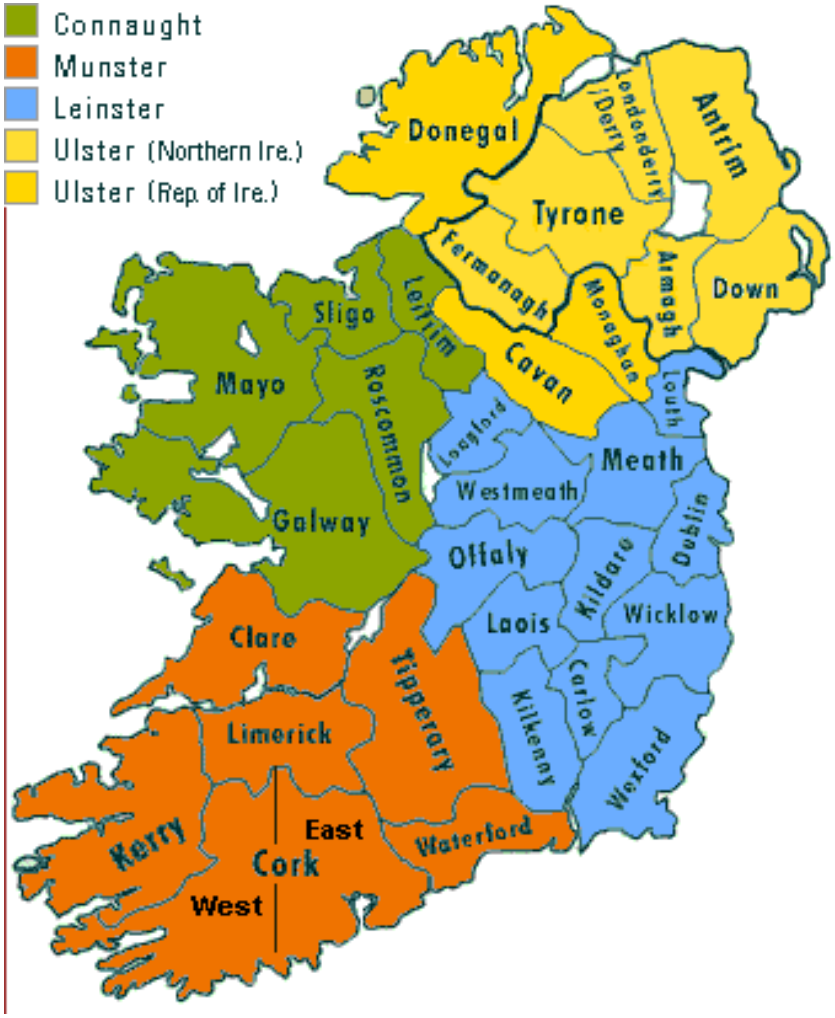
Community Health Assessment Team (CHAT), Singapore

8 Oct 2015

Community Health Assessment Team

Ireland

- In terms of GDP per capita, Ireland is ranked as one of the wealthiest countries in the OECD and the EU-27 as of 2008
- Ireland's National Office of Suicide Prevention reported that Ireland's suicide is 4th highest in Europe
- High rates of suicide and self-harm amongst the young



HEAD STRONG

Leading the change in youth mental health

2006: founding of Headstrong – The National Centre for Youth Mental Health

Focus groups with parents, community members and governments

Large-scale survey (My World Survey, MWS) to establish national baseline of youth mental health in Ireland amongst young people aged 12-25 years

Core values of Headstrong

https://www.headstrong.ie/about-headstrong/

Respect the voice of young people

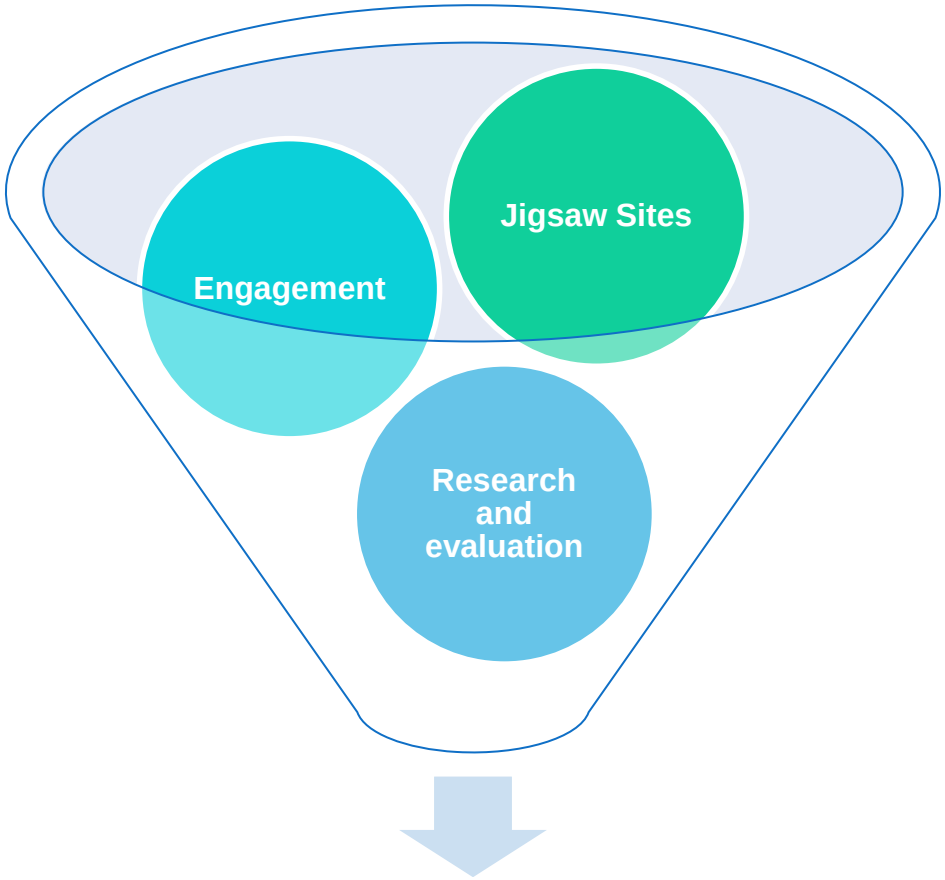
Believe that all young people should be given the supports they need to develop good mental health

Recognise that young people, communities and government **all have a role and contribution** in developing a supportive environment

Strive to **innovate, challenge and apply best practice** in youth mental health in an Irish context

Research and evaluate all of our activities as an **evidence-based led organisation**

Core components of Headstrong

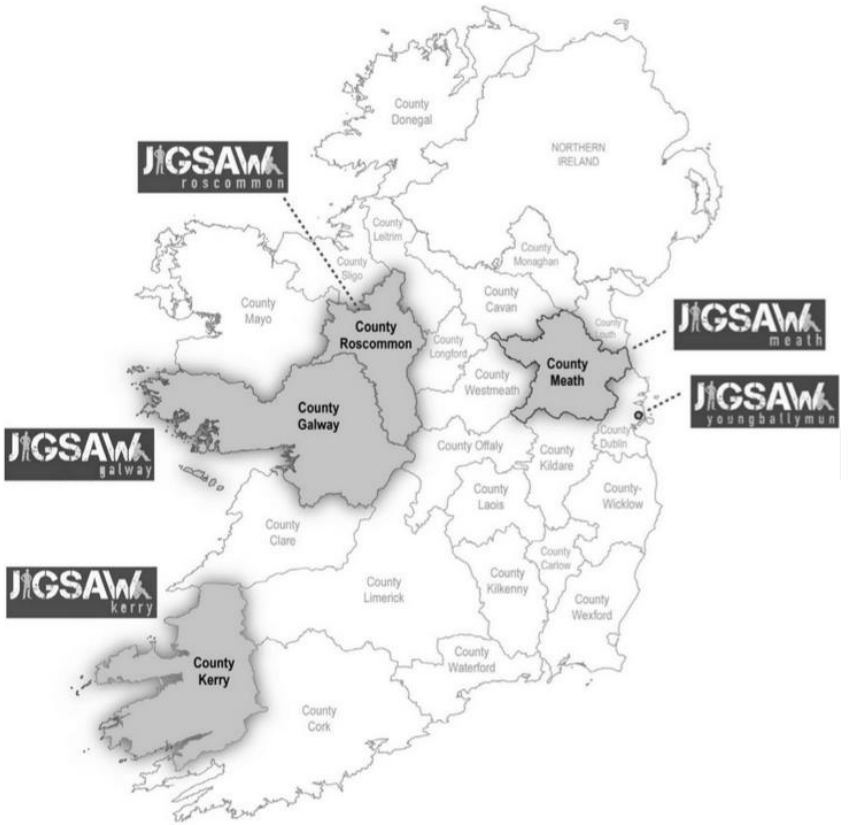


WHERE IS YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN SYSTEMS CHANGE?

Jigsaw sites

- Where young people, their families, service providers and community agencies can engage with one another to support and intervene for young people's mental health
- Design of Jigsaw sites
- Design, implementation and review of programmes

FIGURE 1. *Jigsaw* demonstration sites in the Republic of Ireland.



Engagement

- Youth Advisory Panel: advise on providing and developing our support services for young people
- Youth Learning Network

“Hello from Ireland! Here is a picture of the Jigsaw Youth Learning Network (YLN) it brought together the Youth Advisory Panels (YAP) from all over Ireland. It was all planned by young people with the support of adults.”

Research and Evaluation

Effectiveness of Jigsaw sites

Foundation Papers

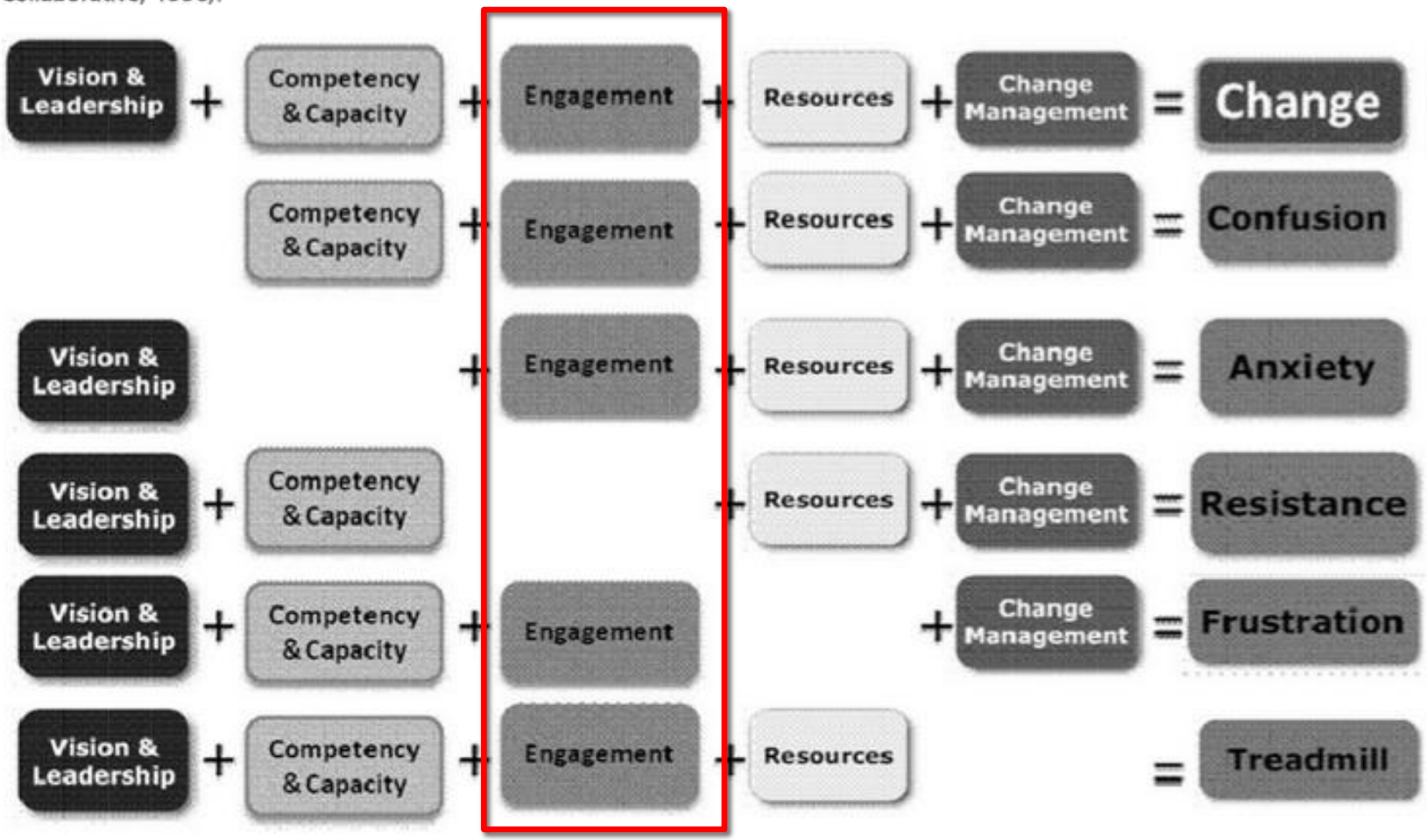
Trends in youth mental health

What have I learnt

- Youth engagement and involvement in systems change:

1. Young people exist in systems!
2. Youth input for systems change can be subtle (e.g. via research surveys, feedback)
3. Build/ Grow active involvement of those with lived experience

FIGURE 2. The Active Ingredients of Systems Change in Youth Mental Health (Adapted from: T. Knosler, 1991 and Human Service Collaborative, 1996).



EFFECTIVE APPROACHES

Part 3: Strategies to Involve Youth in Their Own Care

Models for 1-on-1

- Motivational Interviewing most common
- Shared Decision-making (more medical model)
- Person-Centered Planning

Shared Decision-Making

Key characteristics

- At least two people, acting as partners, are involved - generally, the health care provider and client/patient
- Both partners take steps in sharing a treatment decision
- The two partners share information about treatment options
- The partners arrive at consensus regarding the preferred treatment options (Charles, Gafni, & Whelan, 1997; Schauer, Everett, del Vecchio, & Anderson, 2007)

Shared Decision-Making

- Focused on medication in MH
- https://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA09-4371/SMA09-4371.pdf
- https://www.patdeegan.com/commonground
- No approach specific to young adults

Motivational Interviewing

- An evidence-based treatment that addresses ambivalence to change
- A conversational approach designed to help people identify their readiness, willingness, and ability to change and to make use of their own change-talk
- http://www.motivationalinterviewing.org/

Components of MI Spirit

A = Autonomy (vs. authority)

C = Collaboration (vs. confrontation)

E = Evocation (vs. education)

Basic MI Principles

R = resist righting reflex

U = understand client

L = listen to client

E = empower client

MI based approaches effective in adolescents, young adults, and not-young adults

Team Approaches

Achieve My Plan

- A structured process for implementing
  - Organizational commitment
  - Preparation for youth
  - During the meeting: meeting structures and interactions that promote youth participation
  - Accountability

http://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/pdf/Webinar_AMP.pdf

AMP Ground Rules

- Stick to the agenda (use the parking lot)
- Speak directly to each other, not about one another
- One person talks at a time
- Be respectful of everyone’s voice and ideas
- No side conversations
- AJAA - Avoid Jargon and Acronyms
- Focus on strengths and solutions
- Don’t assume you know what others are thinking- Ask them
- End the meeting with everyone clear about commitments and next steps commitments and next steps

Other Team Approaches

- Open Dialogue

https://www.power2u.org/downloads/becomingdialogiic_ANZJFT11.pdf

- Transition to Independence Process (TIP)

http://www.tipstars.org/

- Project RENEW

http://www.iod.unh.edu/Projects/renew/renew_main.aspx

BREAKOUT ACTIVITY #3

How to Achieve your Goal: Developing a Timeline

Developing a Timeline

Activities	Priority	Deadlines

Tea Time 2:45-3:15

Be back by 3:15pm to start back up!

BREAKOUT ACTIVITY #4

Timeline continued & Measuring Your Success

Breakout Activity #4

1. Finalize your activity timeline and details from Breakout Activity #3
2. Think through how you will know when you have reached success with implementing your goal
    - Indicators of success
    - How to measure level of success

Wrap-Up and Reporting

- What do your goals look like now?
- What resources will you look into moving forward?
- How can you keep up the stamina?

Slides will be made available next week via e-mail!

thank you
danke
謝謝
ngiyabonga
teşekkür ederim
gracias
merci
obrigado
dziękuję
bedankt
спасибо
Баярлалаа
рахмат
dank je
go raibh maith agat
mochchakkeram
sukriya
kop khun krap
terima kasih
감사합니다
ありがとう
grazie
arigatô
takk
dakujem
tapadh leat
мерси
хвала
dankie
hvala
mauruuru
köszönöm
sagolun
taiku
ευχαριστώ
dankon
akun
mersi
barka
welalin
tack
spas
kia ora
faafetai lava
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спасибі
blagodaram
misaotra
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paldies
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dhanyavad
nanni
nandri
bayarlalaa
gràçie
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