

REDUCING EARLY EXITS IN TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAMS

Research & Development Project



PROBLEM

Across California, over 3,000 transitional age youth are expected to be housed or served by Transitional Housing Placement Plus (THP-Plus) and Transitional Housing Placement Plus Foster Care (THP-FC) programs. At least one in three youth who leave prematurely will exit these programs on an involuntary basis.

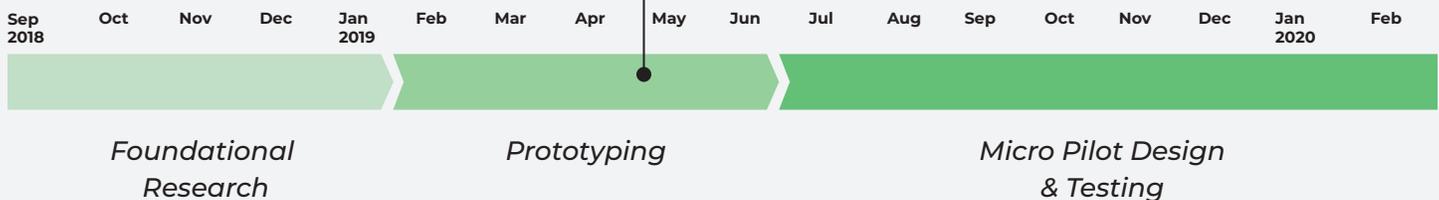
- John Burton Advocates for Youth

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

With a focus on First Place for Youth's housing program, the R&D project will seek to:

- 1 Understand unmet needs and challenges for foster youth who are at higher risk transitioning out of First Place for Youth's existing programs.
- 2 Map out the current journey(s) for foster youth who are at risk.
- 3 Identify in these journeys where new services or interventions are needed; explore the types of services needed and who might deliver them.

Timeline



ABOUT THE PROTOTYPES



Conflict Navigation

Research showed that many youth who were involuntarily exited had multiple instances of conflict in the home that contributed to their discharge.

This prototype is exploring activities that build conflict navigation skills with youth that focus on communication and distress tolerance. These skills are put to practice in a series of one-on-one meetings with staff where youth learn new skills and group meetings with roommates and staff where youth can practice their skills. This prototype focuses on practice with roommates, but can be extended across all elements of a youth's life.



Youth Orient Staff

Research revealed that lack of youth engagement was a common reason for involuntary exit. Youth consistently reported that they didn't feel their staff cared about them in a genuine way.

This prototype is exploring ways to facilitate conversations between staff and youth where youth have control over their initial conversations with staff, providing an opportunity for staff to learn about a youth's needs, interests, and backgrounds in a natural, genuine way. This prototype is testing youth-led conversations coupled with informal outings, a strengths-based reflection moment initiated by staff and action planning that is framed around a youth's passions and dreams.

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ABOUT ONGOING RESEARCH

In addition to the prototypes, the team is exploring housing gaps for youth in the existing continuum of care. We have identified two opportunities that stakeholders believe might have the most impact on lessening the number of involuntary exits.

↓ Youth formally enter a housing program



1 Housing Stabilization



2 Restorative Housing



Housing Stabilization

Who

Youth who need more independent living support before entering a program.

What this could be

Single-site, single unit housing with on-site staff and more supportive services for youth who need help transitioning into a housing program. Services could include access to mental health care, a supportive youth leadership community, and additional time to build the foundational skills necessary to be successful in a housing program of the youth's choice.



Restorative Housing

Who

Youth in a housing program who are in crisis.

What this could be

Temporary, single unit housing for youth in a program that needs to be separated from an existing environment to ensure safety for them and their roommate. It includes crisis support that could include de-escalation assistance, conflict management and housing search support.

NEXT STEPS

Finish prototype implementation.

Continue answering ongoing research questions through stakeholder interviews and discussions with youth.

Synthesize the information into learnings for the project and opportunities for the field.

Share a summary of our findings from prototypes and research in a presentation on **June 7th**.

CONTACT

The team is looking to partner with another housing organization to test ideas in a micro pilot. For more information about the project or partnering, please contact:

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