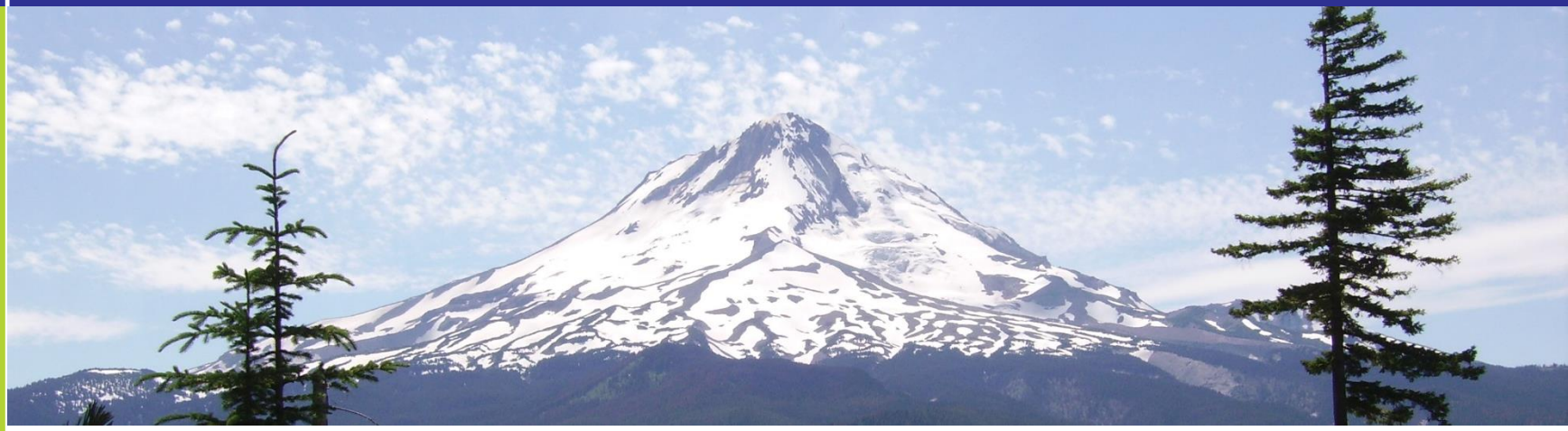
Pathways Webinar

RESEARCH & TRAINING CENTER FOR PATHWAYS TO POSITIVE FUTURES



Drop-in Centers as Low-Barrier Engagement Strategy for Transition-Age Youth and Young Adults

Betsy Edes & Wendy Mancia, YouForward Program, Massachusetts

Kate Tilton & William McPheeters, TAYLRD Program, Kentucky

May 21, 2019

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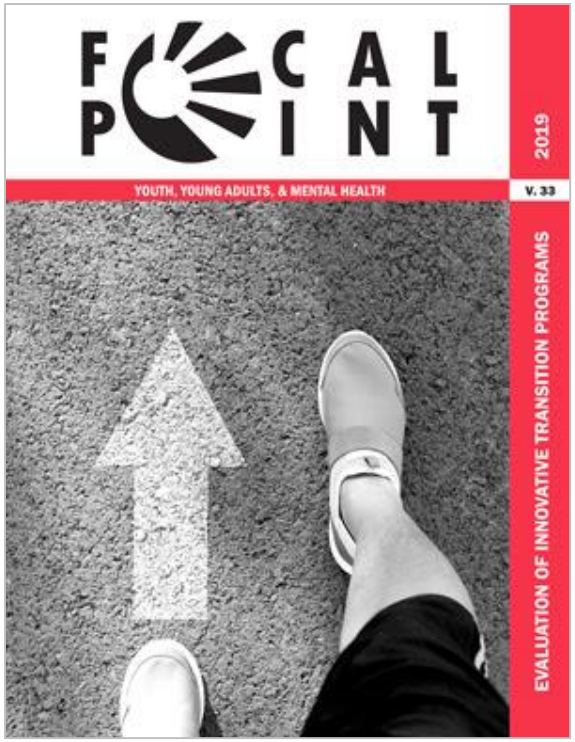
- During the presentation, you can send questions to the webinar organizer, but these will be held until the end
- Audience members will be muted during the webinar

A recording of this webinar will be available online:

https://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/webinars-previous

AGENDA

- Available now!
  2019 *Focal Point* Evaluation of Innovative Transition Programs
  www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/focal-point
- Drop-in Centers as Low-Barrier Engagement Strategy
  - Massachusetts YouForward
  - Kentucky TAYLRD
- Questions



INTRODUCTIONS

Betsy Edes, Program Director, YouForward Program and the MA NITT-HT Grant, Massachusetts Dept. of Mental Health.

Wendy Mancia, Peer Mentor, YouForward Program

INTRODUCTIONS

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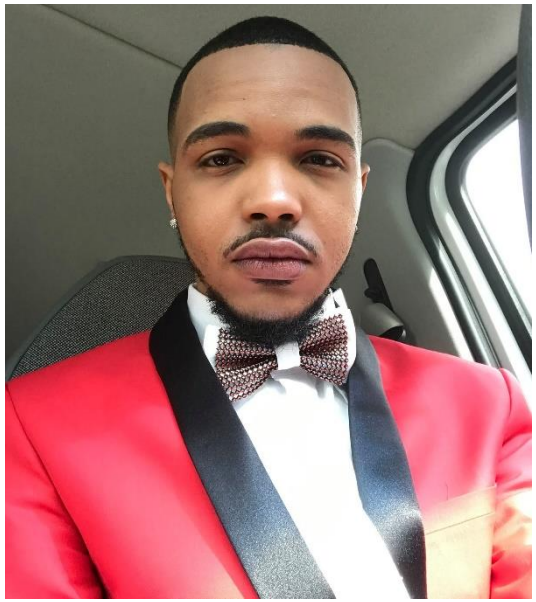
Kate Tilton, TAYLRD Project Director at the Kentucky Partnership for Families and Children, Inc.



Will McPheeters, Peer Support Specialist, TAYLRD

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YouForward
Massachusetts

YouForward
Support. Connect. Inspire.

Program Model

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YouForward

- Drop-in Centers
- Core/Individual Services (TIP, Wraparound)
- Recovery & Employment Preparation
- Youth Leadership

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Support. Connect. Inspire.

YouForward- Who We Serve

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Young adults ages 16-25 with serious mental health concerns who are "falling through the cracks."

- Target subpopulations:
  - Latinx young adults
  - LGBTQ young adults
  - Young adults experiencing homelessness
  - Young parents

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The Data: Engaging Target Subpopulations

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Latinx:

- Almost 60% of young adults serviced to date identify as Latinx*
- 11% speak only Spanish and 25% are Bilingual

LGBTQ:

- In a 2017 survey 17% of young adults enrolled in services identified themselves to staff as LGBTQ.
- In a 2018 survey this number had risen to 37%.

* Many of our young adults don't identify with the racial/ethnic categories typically offered as choices

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The Data: Engaging Target Subpopulations

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Homelessness:

- In a 2017 survey 47% of young adults enrolled in services reported having experienced homelessness at some point in their lives.
- In a 2018 survey this number had risen to 72%.

Young Parents:

- In a 2017 survey 25% of young adults enrolled in services were parents.
- In a 2018 survey this had risen to 35%. More than half had been involved with the Department of Children and Families at some point as parents.

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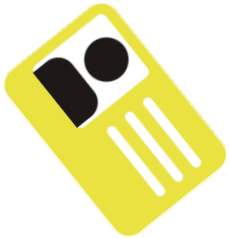
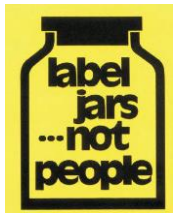
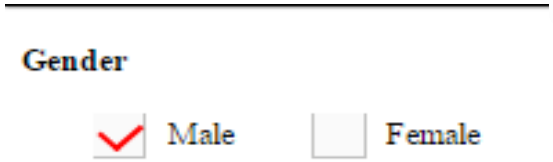
Considering the Problem



What are some of the barriers that keep young adults from accessing mental health services?





What Does Low Barrier Access Look Like: Removing Logistical Barriers

1) Drop-in centers allow you to walk right in.
2) If they don't come to us, we go to them
3) Simple eligibility criteria (4 questions)
4) No id, insurance, medical records required
5) No waitlists
6) Minimal paperwork

....because that [paperwork] contributes to the feel of a facility..... These people don't actually have an interest in me... . And it feels more restrictive.

What Does Low Barrier Access Look Like: Knowing Who We Hope to Serve

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1) Being clear about who you intend to serve
2) Designing programmatic elements to engage that specific population

"What I like the most about it is that....all of us here are connected in a way that it's like a second family..."

Engaging LGBTQ+A

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Need to create a space that feels comfortable for them:

- LGBTQ Staff in the space
- Discussing identity as part of getting to know YAs: They can be who they are here
- LGBTQ Group
- Getting the word out in the community

What Does Low Barrier Access Look Like: Creating A Welcoming Environment

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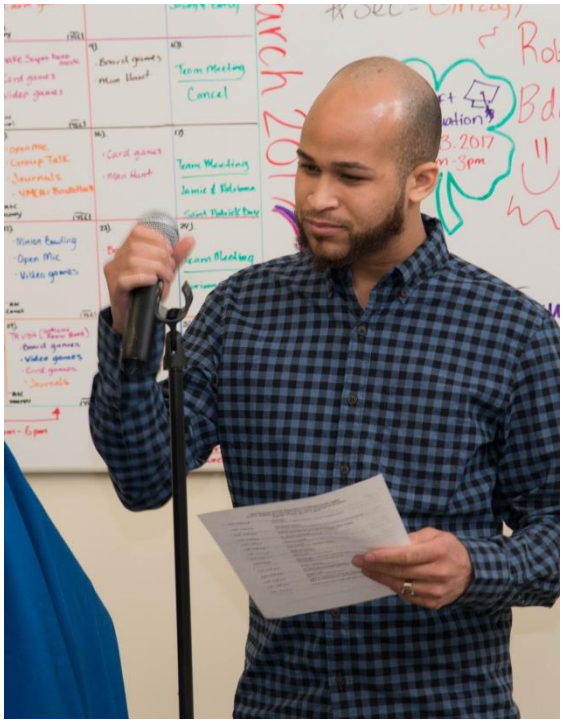
1) Space has things young adults like and need
2) Peer Mentors on staff
3) Positive Frame-Goal Oriented
4) Young adults are leaders
5) Restorative, not punitive approaches to address problems
6) Have fun!



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Peer Mentors

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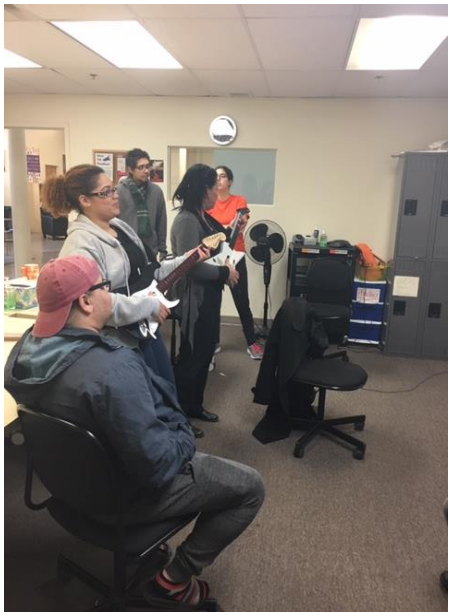
Peer Mentor Role:

- Use my own lived experience to connect and support YA's.

How it makes YAs feel comfortable:

- YA's seem to think life has always been perfect for adults. Once I tell them the reality of what I personally went through in life to be here today, they gravitate to that and have a sense of comfort knowing I was just like them.



Engaging Young Adults through Leadership

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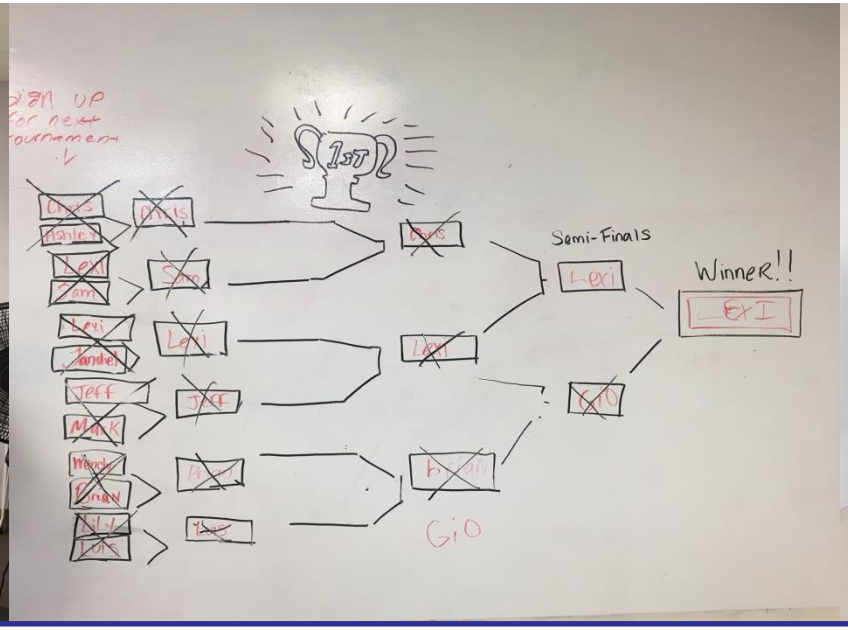
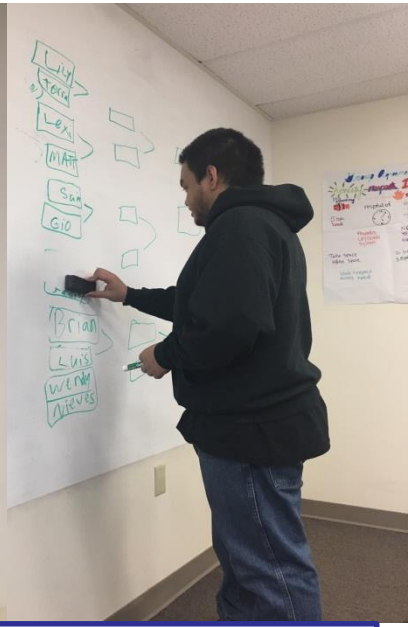
Gaming Tournament





Winner's trophy **Tournament Chart** **Chart Keeper**

What Does Low Barrier Access Look Like: Creating a Welcoming Environment

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So it's... really great that this place is a safe place, and at the same time, not only can you like make friends and just like chill but they help you with things. For example, I got my permit because I came here, I got my GED because I came here, and I've gotten jobs because I came here.

It's a really comfortable area.... where I can just be myself and hang out with everybody. And can talk to people casually and not be nervous about it."

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Drop-in Centers: Getting Started

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- Get young adults involved early
- Partnerships, Partnerships
- Consider the location
- Jump in and get started

Nine tenths of the time they come to us for what our opinions are, what we think would make the drop in better, what we think the staff could be doing better, stuff like that."

Contact us:

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Wendy Mancia:

wmancia@jri.org

Exploration of How Youth Drop-in Centers Can Address Housing Needs of Young Adults

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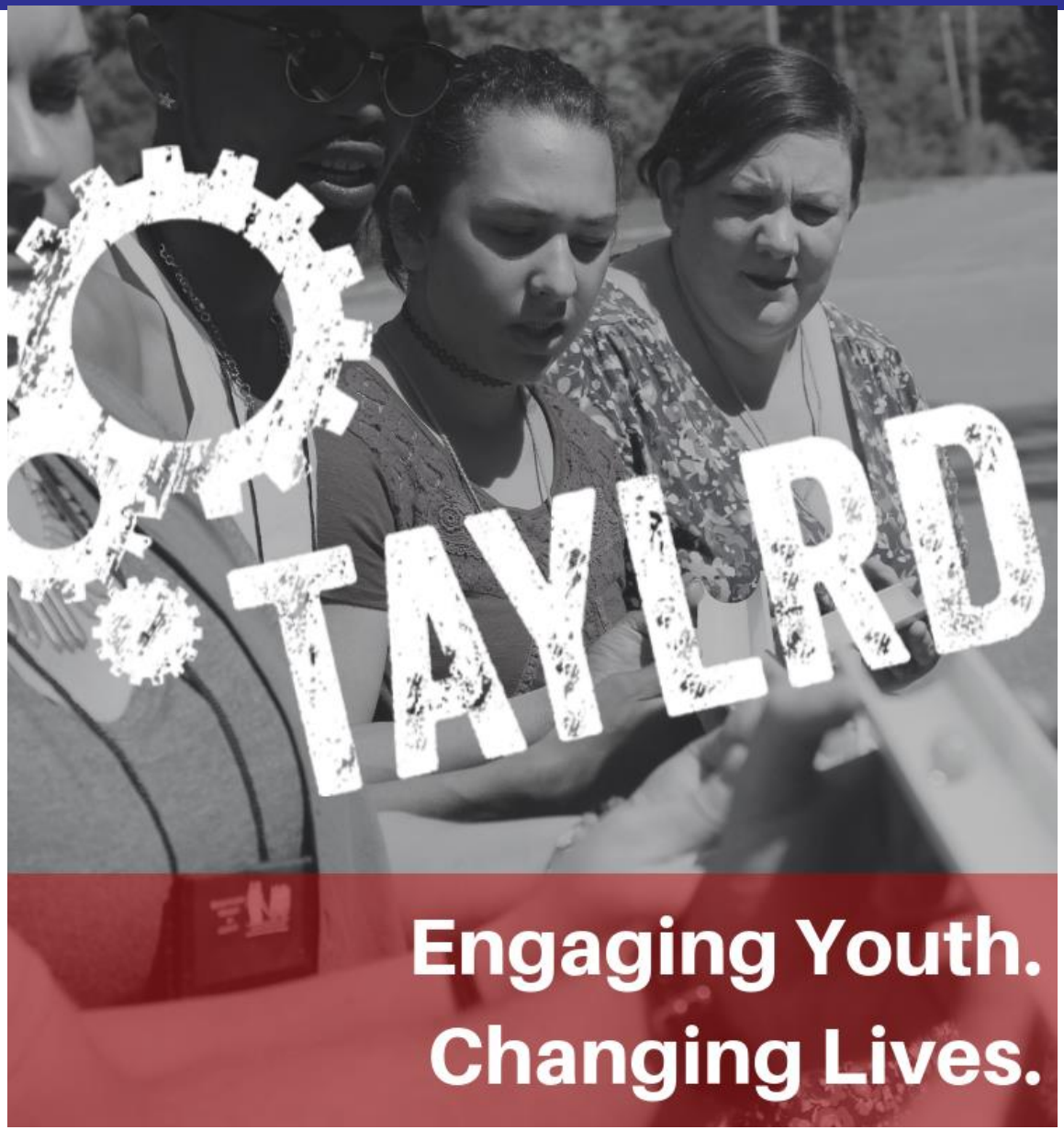

TAYLRD
WWW.TAYLRD.ORG

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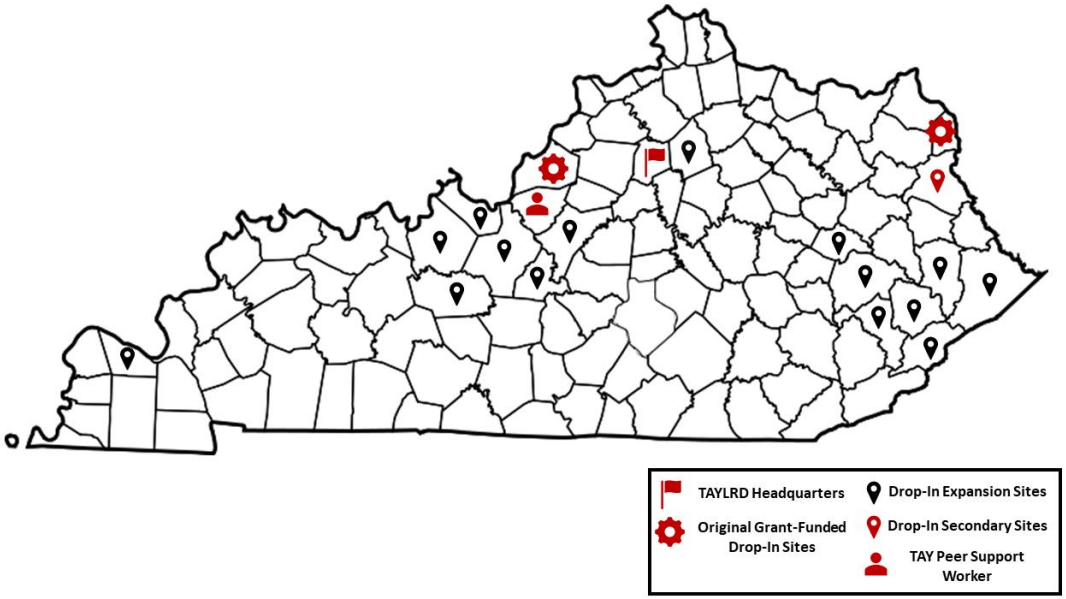
- Healthy Transitions Initiative (Oct. 2014)
- Specialized Behavioral Health Supports for Transition Aged Youth (TAY)
- Started with 4 drop-in centers… now at 17



TAYLRD Seeks to….

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..positively impact the lives of Kentucky's 16-25 year olds who have or are at risk of developing behavioral health challenges by improving access to high-quality, culturally and developmentally appropriate supports and services.

TAYLRD Works to Do this By:

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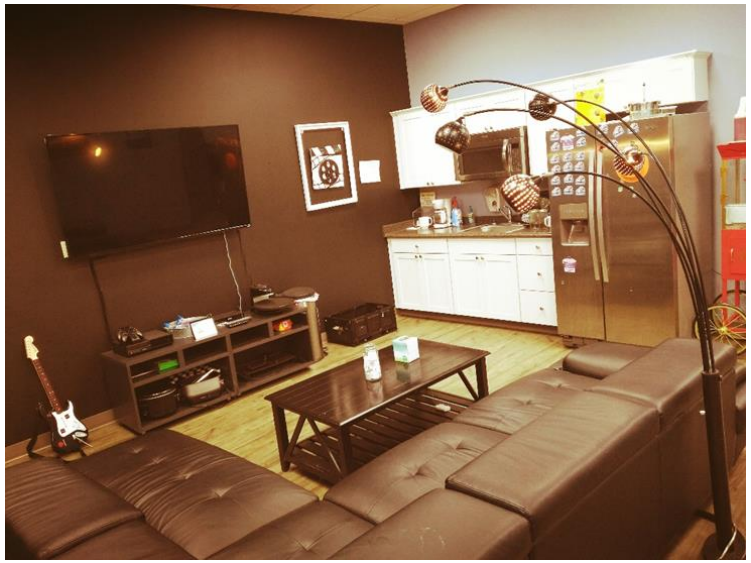
- Employing Youth Peer Support Specialists
- Offering a variety of services, supports, resources, and activities
- Connecting young people to services based on what they choose, not what the provider chooses for them
- Providing quick and easy access to services
- Reducing stigma for TAY seeking behavioral health services



Drop-In Centers are Engagement Tools

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What Is a TAYLRD Drop-In Center?

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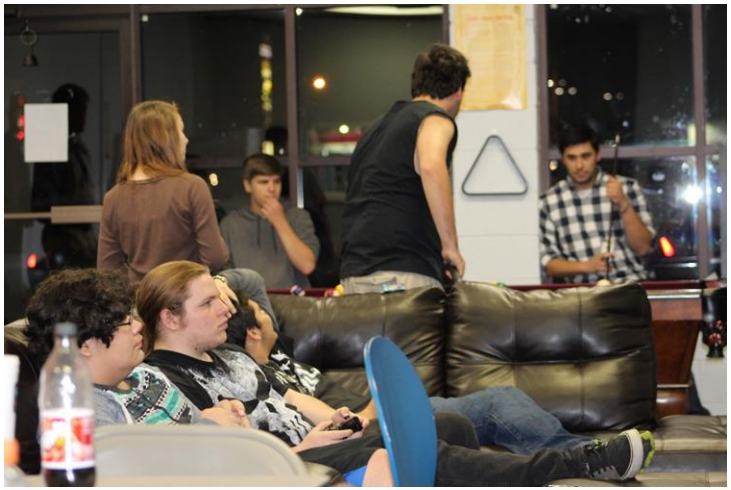
- Drop-in centers serve as an engagement tool for offering specialized services and supports for transition-age youth
- Drop-in centers are staffed by behavioral health professionals
- Drop-in centers reduce barriers to connecting to behavioral health services
- Drop-in centers are in youth friendly and designed spaces
- Drop-in centers are helping places that assist youth and young adults with identifying and reaching personal goals



Louisville Drop-In Center

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- At baseline, only 13% reported living in an owned or rented house/apartment /trailer/room
- A lot of young people who were homeless visited the drop-in center
- Housing was a pressing need

Services Provided to Young People Experiencing Homelessness:

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- Youth Peer Support
- Supported Employment
- Supported Education
- Therapy
- Case Management
- Medication Management
- Transportation Assistance
- Addiction Services and Aftercare Support
- Leadership Opportunities
- Career planning
- Lifeskills training

Partnerships

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- Coalition for the Homeless
- Home of the Innocents
- Uspiritus
- True Up
- HUD

Youth Experience – Themes in Responses

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- Supportive Environment
- Staff (Caring, Nice, Etc.)
- Mental Health Services
- Referrals to other agencies
- Food

Quotes from Young People:

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"[The drop in center is] a support system, sort of like family... You can come and go as you need to, and they're always there for you."

"I'm glad it was there. I'm glad I was able to have some place to go and spend some time at or get the help I needed."

What the Data Shows

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- Overall at baseline, 13% reported living in an owned or rented house/apartment trailer/room. At six months, this proportion increased to 31%.
- Overall at baseline, 64% reported to be homeless. At six months, this proportion decreased to 39%.

Preparing for a Drop-In Center

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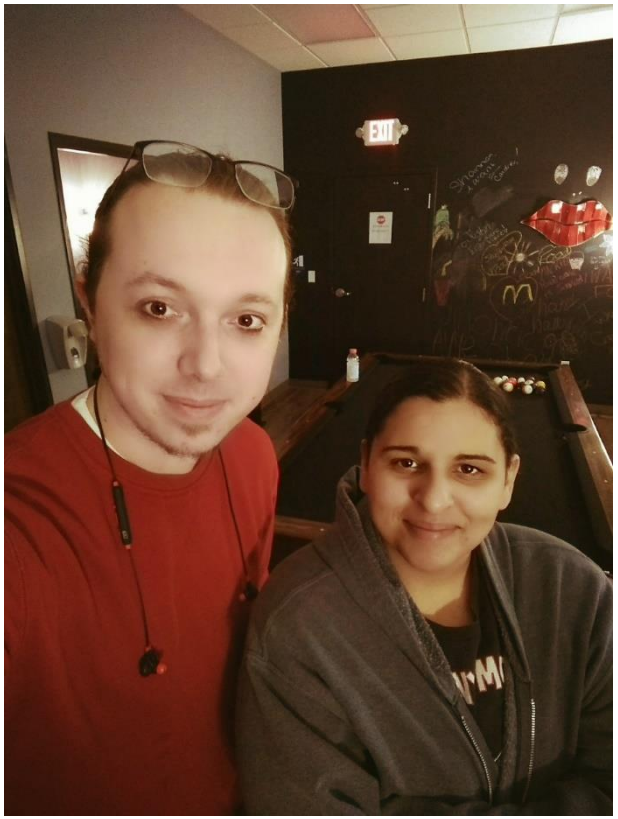
- Assess for community readiness
- Assess for level of youth engagement
- Include community partners, transition age youth, and family members
- Conduct youth focus groups
- Choose a site location based on transition age youth and community input
- Design the look of the site, choose engagement tools, and design programming based on transition age youth input
- Work with youth and community partners to plan for sustainability



The Most Important Piece: Youth Voice & Leadership

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- Include youth at every stage of the process and in ongoing quality improvement
- Treat youth as equal partners
- Start youth councils or advisory boards
- Have people and processes in place to support and coach youth in developing their leadership skills
- Train and prepare young people to serve as leaders – public speaking, active participation in meetings, working as young professionals

Contact us:

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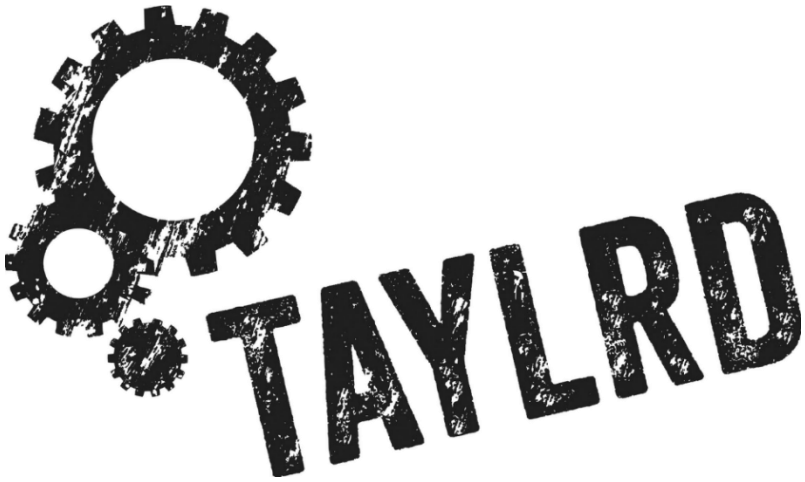

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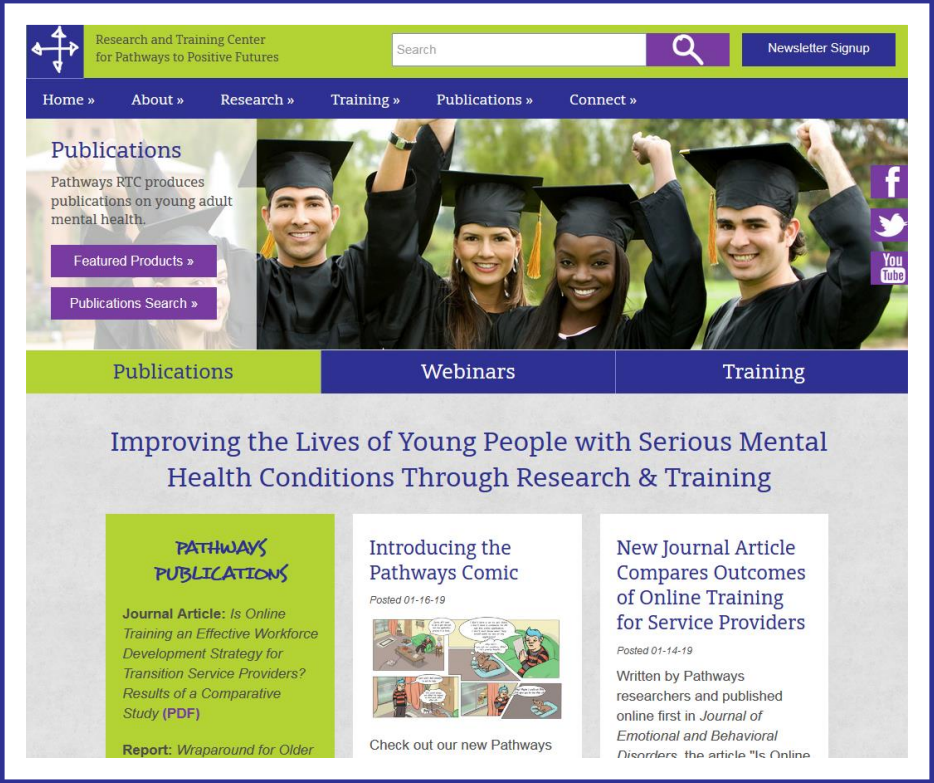
Questions?

Visit Pathways RTC on the web for more information



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