



Los Angeles County User Journey Mapping Project Refined Presentation of Prevention Findings, Analysis, & Recommendations

November 26, 2025



Agenda

01

Journey Mapping Overview (5 mins)

02

Research Approach (5 mins)

03

Activity: Interactive Gallery Walk – Personas and Journey Maps (20 mins)

04

Key Findings and Recommendations (15 min)

05

Share Out and Discussion (15 mins)



Journey Mapping Overview



Purpose

The purpose of the work is to **map, document, and analyze** LA County's prevention and promotion service delivery system for **identified service areas and populations**, and **inform** the development of a comprehensive, equitable, and responsive service model, in collaboration with the Prevention & Promotion Systems Governing Committee (PPSGC) and the Prevention and Promotion Coordination Implementation Team (PPCIT).

Persona and User Journey Mapping Overview

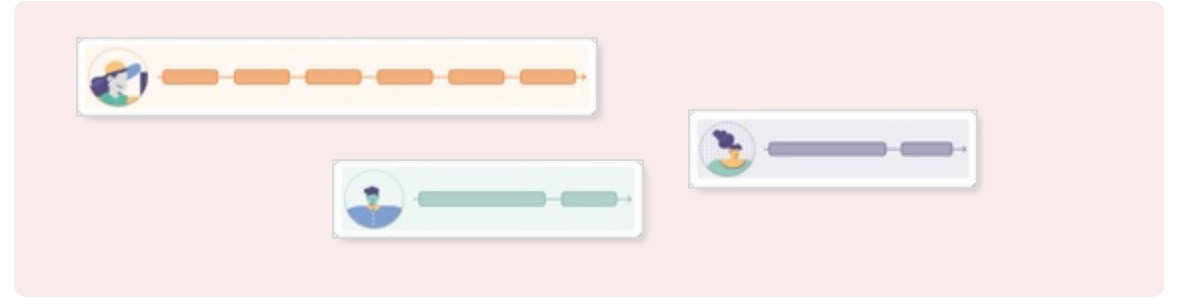


Personas (Who)

Personas are realistic **user representations** that foster team alignment and empathy for a human-centered approach to design and decision-making.

Benefits

- Helps teams understand user needs, motivations, and behaviors, leading to more **tailored services**.
- Provides a **shared consensus** and understanding of who our users are.



Journey Maps (How)

Journey Maps visualize in a timeline **how users complete tasks and goals** with call outs to pain points, opportunities, and emotions with each step.

Benefits

- Identifies **where and how pain points (recurring problems or frustrations) appear**.
- Aligns and educates teams on processes and establishes a **shared model** of how services are delivered.

Persona Overview

Personas are fictional characters **based on understood values, behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, motivations, and demographics of real users** that a researcher experiences in the field.

PERSONAS ARE

- ✓ Representations of real people based on real data
- ✓ Tools to provide context and motivations on goals, behaviors, and beliefs
- ✓ Vehicles to bring customer data to life

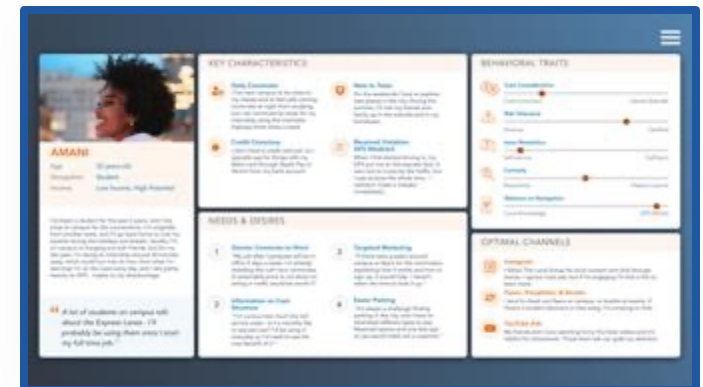
PERSONAS ARE NOT

- ✗ Representations of every possible user
- ✗ Personal perceptions and unproven stereotypes
- ✗ Unrealistic fantasies or difficult to relate to

WHY PERSONAS?

- Create shared understanding
- Build empathy
- Reduce design bias
- Identify & prioritize features by user type

PERSONA EXAMPLES



Journey Map Overview

Journey mapping is a **visual tool** that **outlines the experiences of individuals engaging with services**, emphasizing their needs and emotions to improve service delivery and user satisfaction.

JOURNEY MAPS ARE

- ✓ Framework to put yourself in the shoes of the user
- ✓ Methodology to better understand the user's perception

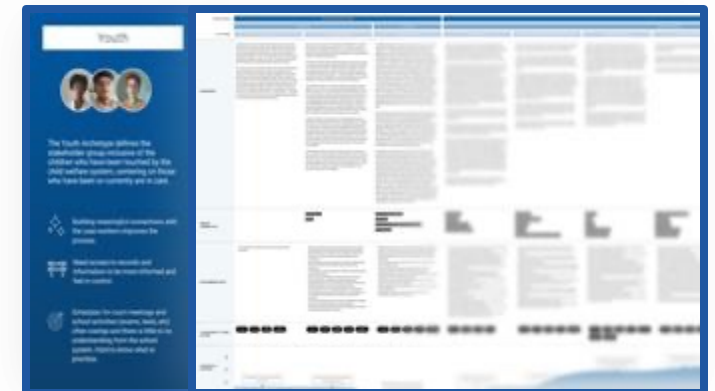
JOURNEY MAPS ARE NOT

- ✗ County-centric view of the user's experience
- ✗ All encompassing that capture all potential journeys that persona has
- ✗ Business process maps or service delivery maps

WHY JOURNEY MAPS?

- Create shared understanding
- Represents true experiences
- Illustrates challenges, pain points, relationships

JOURNEY MAP EXAMPLES





Board-Identified Domains and PPSGC Proposed Populations

Behavioral Health

Disconnected Youth (ages 16-26)

Homelessness and Housing

Systems-Impacted TAY* (ages 18-26) and Older Adults (ages 60+)

Child Welfare and Family Well-Being

Women with Young Children (ages 0-5)

*There is no common accepted TAY definition in LA County. Different departments and agencies define it differently.



Journey Scopes

Based on secondary research and inputs from ongoing conversations with Department Heads and Coordinating Bodies, the following scopes were identified to **serve as a journey map starting point**.

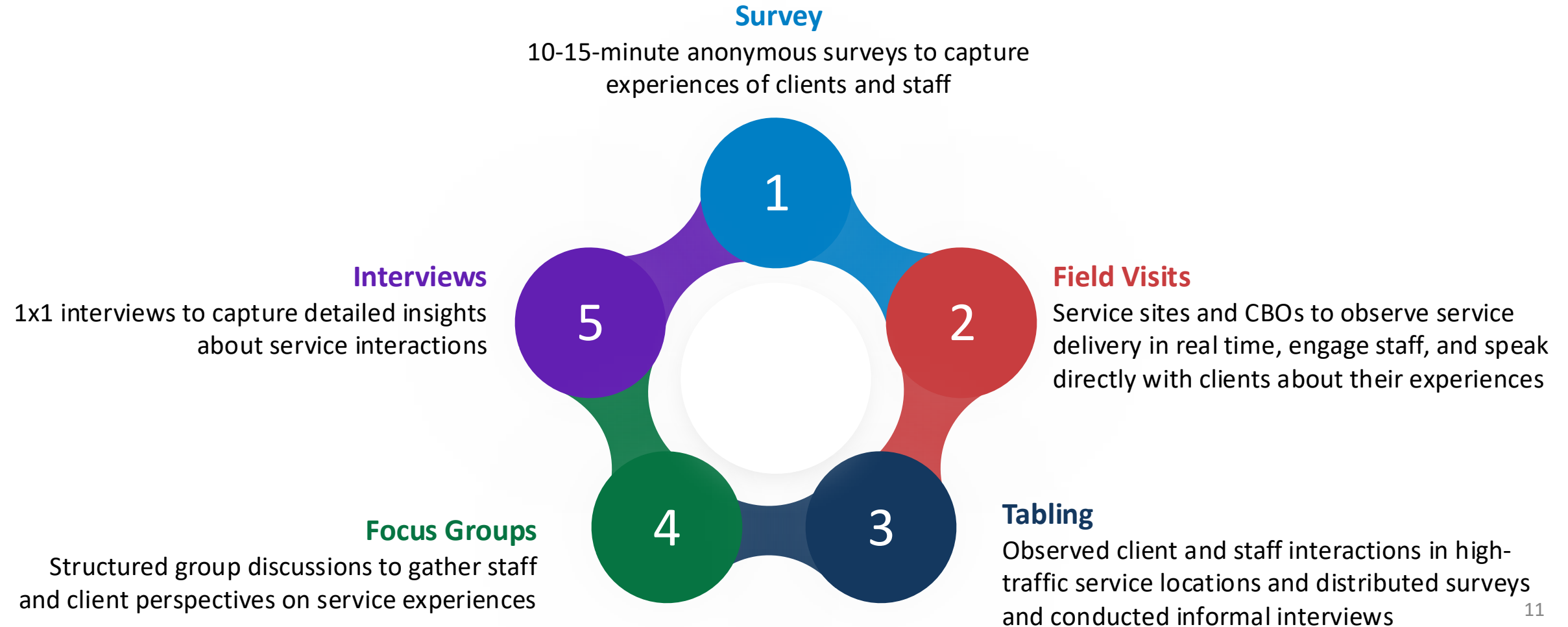
Domain	Behavioral Health	Homelessness & Housing	Child Welfare & Family Well-Being
Population	Opportunity Youth	Transition Age Youth (TAY)	Women with Young Children (0-5)
Journey Scope	Understand the when, why, and how a youth becomes disconnected*, the barriers and challenges to reconnection, and the resources that would be most helpful to achieve positive life outcomes. *Youth between the ages of 18-26 who are not in school/working and not seeking school/work.	Understand the experience of a TAY* who has exited foster care or juvenile justice and what housing supports were effective, why their plan may have failed, and what additional resources would be helpful to achieve stable housing. *Youth between the ages of 18-26. *There is no common accepted TAY definition in LA County. Different departments and agencies define it differently.	Understand the experience of a woman with young children (0–5) who is living at or below 250% of the FPL and not currently involved with the child welfare system and her ability to access comprehensive healthcare and social services* to improve the overall wellbeing of the family unit. *This may include: physical/mental health, food, perinatal and inter-conception care, childcare, education, parenting, and housing stability supports.



Research Approach

Research Types

During September, our team conducted a survey and four different types of research sessions that engaged County staff, Community-Based Organization (CBO) staff and individuals with lived experience.



Research Recruitment

Recruitment strategies targeted both clients and staff through multiple channels and **CBOs played a key role in promoting research activities to clients** via flyers, email outreach, and direct engagement.

Clients (Promoted through CBOs)

Flyers (in 7 languages) were distributed via email and posted. This also included:

- **Email Solicitation:** Flyers were emailed to individuals.
- **Field Visits:** Conducted to engage with individuals directly and perform ad hoc interviews.
- **Direct Opt-In:** Ability to opt-in to research activities by sharing their contact information in the survey.



County and CBO Staff

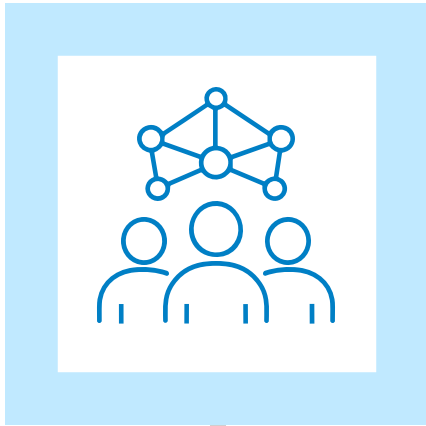
Information was distributed via email and presentations at department or staff meetings. Our target staff populations included:

- **Staff from LA County Departments**
- **Staff from CBOs**
- **Staff with Lived Experience**



Research Overview

Through collaboration with stakeholders, in-depth research sessions, and multilingual surveys, we gathered diverse perspectives to inform journey maps, personas, findings, and recommendations.



Stakeholder Engagement

- **36** CBOs across all 8 Service Planning Areas (SPAs)
- **14** County Departments
- **3** Coordinating Bodies



Research Sessions

- **229** research participants
- **51** interviews
- **41** focus groups
- **5** field visits
- **1** tabling event



Survey Participation

- **1,667** survey respondents
- **1** client survey in **7** languages
- **1** staff survey



County and CBO Engagement

36 CBOs across multiple SPAs, representatives from 14 County departments, and 3 Coordinating Bodies were engaged to capture diverse perspectives.

CBOs

Recognizing LA County’s geographic diversity, we engaged **36 CBOs** across all 8 SPAs:

- **SPA 1:** All for Kids (Children’s Bureau), Antelope Valley Partners for Health, Child Care Resource Center, El Nido Family Services, Sanctuary of Hope, Valley Oasis
- **SPA 2:** Child Care Resource Center, El Nido Family Services, The Village Family Services
- **SPA 3:** Journey House, Sycamores
- **SPA 4:** Children’s Institute, Los Angeles LGBT Center, My Friend’s Place, St. Anne’s
- **SPA 5:** Allies for Every Child, Safe Place for Youth
- **SPA 6:** Black Women for Wellness, Community Coalition, El Nido Family Services, RightWay Foundation, Sanctuary of Hope, SHIELDS for Families, St. Anne’s, The Whole Child, Youth for Justice
- **SPA 7:** Jovenes
- **SPA 8:** Sanctuary of Hope
- **Countywide:** Anti Recidivism Coalition, Association of Community Health Service Agencies, California Youth Connection, CASA LA, Casey Family Programs, Educating Coordinating Council, First 5 LA, Homeless Youth Forum of LA, John Burton Advocates for Youth, Opportunity Youth Collaborative, RAND, Stepping Forward LA, UniteLA, Youth Commission

County

To capture insights that reflected the full scope of the County’s systems and services, we engaged staff across **14 departments, 3 Coordinating Bodies** comprised of County departments and CBOs, and **Department Head-level leadership**:

- **PPSGC**
- **PPCIT**
- **Coordinating Bodies:** Community Pathways, One Roof, TAY Table
- **County Departments:** ARDI - FUSE: Black People Experiencing Homelessness, ARDI - FUSE: LatinX Homeless Initiative, City of LA Workforce Development Board, DCFS, DPSS, DEO, DHS, DMH, DPH, DYD, JCOD, LACOE, LAHSA, OCP, Probation



Interactive Gallery Walk



Prevention Services Journey Maps

This collection of user journeys illustrates the **lived experiences** of both clients and frontline staff involved in the County's efforts to address prevention and promotion efforts.

Client Personas

Opportunity Youth

- **Alexa Garcia** – Youth disconnected from school and work
- **Javier Morales** – Youth disconnected from work
- **Jamal Williams** – Youth disconnected from school and work

Transition Age Youth

- **Em Rodriguez** – Youth exiting foster care
- **Jordan Smith** – Youth exiting foster care with failed housing plan
- **Darius Johnson** – Youth exiting juvenile justice
- **Aaron Rivera** – Youth exiting juvenile justice with failed housing plan

Women with Young Children

- **Lucia Torres** – Pregnant woman seeking services
- **Jasmine Carter** – Woman with children under 2
- **Monique Harris** – Woman with 2+ children under 5

Staff Personas

Opportunity Youth

- **Jordan Alvarez** – GED Program Coordinator (CBO)
- **Jake Thompson** – Career Coach (DEO)

Transition Age Youth

- **Marisol Ortega** – Youth Engagement Section Social Worker (DCFS)
- **David Ruiz** – Eligibility Worker (DPSS)
- **Marcus Jones** – Life Coach (CBO)
- **Maria Sanchez** – Drop-In Center Staff (CBO)

Women with Young Children

- **Dr. Amina Patel** – Obstetrician (DHS)
- **Rosa Jimenez** – Family Support Advocate (CBO)
- **Denise Carter** – Eligibility Worker III (DPSS)



Interactive Gallery Walk – Personas and Journey Maps

The goal of this interactive activity is to discuss the journey maps and personas. This activity aims to:

1. Show how the maps were created and how the information came together.
2. Identify pain points and explore: [What could be done to better address these challenges?](#)

Instructions:

1. **Break into Groups:** PPSGC Members have been preassigned to breakout groups (see below).

PPSGC Member	Station
Dr. Contreras	TAY – Foster Care
Dr. Ferrer	Women with Young Children
David Carroll	TAY – Juvenile Justice
Maral Karaccusian	Opportunity Youth
Karla Pleitéz Howell	Women with Young Children
Cheri Todoroff	TAY – Foster Care
Dr. Scorza	TAY – Juvenile Justice
Dr. Wong	Opportunity Youth

2. **Engage in Discussion:** Review the maps at your station and share your thoughts on pain points and opportunities highlighted in the maps.
3. **Use Sticky Notes:** Write down observations, questions, or ideas and leave them at each station.
4. **If Time Allows:** Visit another group to review their maps and add any additional observations or ideas.
5. **Reconvene as a Group:** After 20 minutes, we'll come back together to review key findings and discuss as a group.

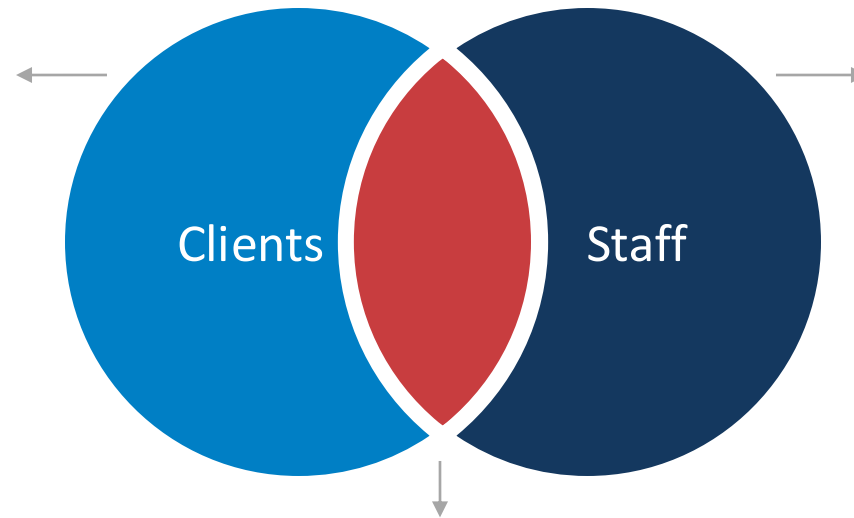


Key Findings and Recommendations

Summary of Commonly Heard Challenges

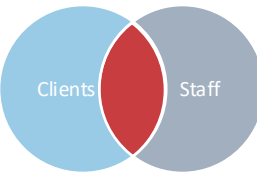
Both clients and staff describe a system that is **difficult to navigate**, **overly rigid**, and often out of sync with **real-world needs**. Although the list below does not capture every finding, it **highlights commonly heard challenges** across clients and staff.

- **Eligibility rules are rigid** and misaligned with real life
- **Stigma and fear** block access
- **Rigid systems** feel unsafe
- **Informal networks** fill system gaps



- **Burnout and emotional fatigue** are widespread
- **Training is inconsistent** and reactive
- **Roles are unclear** and overly broad
- **Manual workarounds** are the norm

- Everyone struggles to navigate **fragmented systems**
- Services are **hard to find and understand**
- **Co-location** is a shared bright spot
- **Continuity of care** is missing



Summary of Commonly Heard Challenges: Clients and Staff

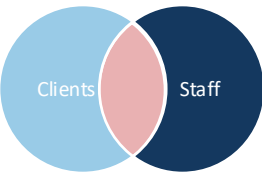
Clients and staff alike encounter a system that’s **difficult to navigate with unclear pathways, disconnected services, and limited follow-up**. The findings below highlight where alignment exists and where targeted improvements can benefit both groups.

Findings

- **Everyone struggles to navigate fragmented systems:** both clients and staff face confusion, delays, and missed opportunities while trying to navigate systems.
- **Services are hard to find and understand:** staff and youth report challenges understanding eligibility for different services and identifying updated resources.
- **Co-location is a shared bright spot:** when services are physically or operationally integrated, both groups report better access, trust, and follow-through.
- **Continuity of care is missing:** once clients exit a system, there’s often no structure for follow-up – staff lose visibility and policy discourages outreach, and youth feel abandoned.

Recommendations

- **Integrate and coordinate systems:** develop centralized platforms and shared protocols to reduce fragmentation and make navigation easier for both clients and staff.
- **Simplify and clarify service access:** create clear, user-friendly resource guides and eligibility tools so services are easier to find, understand, and apply for.
- **Expand and formalize co-location:** increase physical and operational integration of services through co-located sites and cross-trained staff to improve access.
- **Improve continuity of care:** establish structured follow-up practices and supportive policies so clients remain connected after system exit, and staff can maintain appropriate outreach.



Summary of Commonly Heard Challenges: Staff

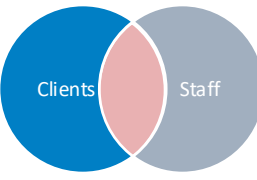
Staff consistently described a system that asks too much and supports too little. From high caseloads and emotional strain to unclear roles and outdated tools, these challenges make it harder to show up for clients. The recommendations below reflect **what staff say would help them do their jobs more confidently and effectively.**

Findings

- **Burnout and emotional fatigue are widespread:** staff report compassion fatigue, high caseloads, and limited support for their own mental health.
- **Training is inconsistent and reactive:** many staff learn key processes through trial and error, with limited onboarding or trauma-informed training.
- **Roles are unclear and overly broad:** staff often feel like “everyone is doing everything,” leading to confusion, inefficiency, and diluted accountability.
- **Manual workarounds are the norm:** without centralized tools or shared infrastructure, staff rely on personal folders, email chains, and informal networks to coordinate care.

Recommendations

- **Support staff well-being:** invest in mental health resources, manageable caseloads, and regular opportunities for staff reflection and peer support.
- **Standardize and deepen training:** provide consistent, proactive onboarding/training and ongoing trauma-informed training to equip staff for their roles.
- **Clarify and align roles:** define responsibilities and workflows to reduce confusion, improve efficiency, reduce duplicative efforts, and strengthen accountability.
- **Modernize tools and infrastructure:** implement centralized, user-friendly systems for information sharing and coordination to replace manual workarounds.



Summary of Commonly Heard Challenges: Clients

Clients described systems that feel rigid, unsafe, and out of touch with their lived realities. Many individuals avoid services not because they don’t need them, but because the process feels inaccessible or harmful. Their feedback points to the **need for more flexible, affirming, and community-rooted approaches.**

Findings

- **Eligibility rules are rigid and misaligned with real life:** clients are often denied services unless they meet narrow definitions (e.g., visibly homeless, in crisis)
- **Stigma and fear block access:** clients often avoid services due to fear of being judged, surveilled, and reported.
- **Rigid systems feel unsafe:** zero-tolerance school policies, punitive program rules, and inflexible eligibility criteria push youth out rather than pull them in.
- **Informal networks fill system gaps:** clients often learn about services through friends, mentors, or community, not formal outreach.

Recommendations

- **Align eligibility with real-life needs:** update eligibility criteria to reflect caregiving responsibilities, cost of living, and diverse pathways to stability.
- **Reduce stigma and build trust:** foster welcoming, nonjudgmental, safe environments and use culturally responsive outreach to encourage service access.
- **Promote safety and flexibility in systems:** replace punitive and rigid policies with trauma-informed, restorative, and human-centered approaches.
- **Leverage and strengthen peer and community networks:** Recognize and support informal networks as vital partners in outreach, navigation, and support.



Share and Discussion with PPSGC



Share and Discussion with PPSGC

1. System Navigation & Coordination

- What would it take to move from fragmented systems to an integrated infrastructure where clients and staff can navigate services without relying on informal workarounds?

2. Eligibility & Access

- How can the County redesign eligibility criteria to reflect real-life circumstances like caregiving, housing instability, and informal employment without compromising accountability?

3. Staff Support & Role Clarity

- What structural changes are needed to reduce burnout and clarify staff roles so they can focus on relational, trauma-informed care rather than just compliance?

4. Continuity of Care

- What would a Countywide model for continuity of care look like especially for youth and families transitioning between systems, exiting services, or changing providers?



User Journey Mapping Project Placemat

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

User Journey Mapping Project

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In partnership with the PPSGC and PPCIT, the User Journey Mapping project mapped real user experiences to analyze prevention services for Opportunity Youth, Systems-Involved Transition Age Youth, and Women with Young Children. Findings showed fragmented systems and barriers to access, leading to recommendations for integrated, trauma-informed, user-centered services.

JOURNEY MAP SCOPES

The following scopes, informed by research and PPSGC input, served as starting points for the journey maps.

Opportunity Youth (OY)

Domain: Behavioral Health

Understand the **when, why, and how a youth becomes disconnected***, the barriers and challenges to reconnection, and the **resources that would be most helpful to achieve positive life outcomes**.

Transition Age Youth (TAY)

Domain: Homelessness & Housing

Understand the **experience of a TAY* who has exited foster care or juvenile justice** and what housing supports were effective, why their plan may have failed, and what additional resources would be helpful to achieve stable housing.

Women with Young Children (0-5)

Domain: Child Welfare & Family Well-Being

Understand the experience of a **woman with young children (0–5) who is living at or below 250% of the FPL and not currently involved with the child welfare system and her ability to access comprehensive healthcare and social services*** to improve the overall wellbeing of the family unit.

PROJECT PARTICIPATION

This project recruited from all 8 LA County Service Planning Areas by partnering with CBO's and County departments and deploying a survey in 7 different languages.

We engaged...

- 36** Community Based Organizations (CBOs)
- 14** County Departments

We recruited...

- 110** Clients in Interviews and Focus Groups
- 1510** Clients in an Online Survey
- 119** Staff in Interviews and Focus Groups
- 157** Staff in an Online Survey

Most Common Challenges

Client & Staff Challenges

- Everyone struggles to navigate **fragmented systems**
- Services are **hard to find and understand**
- **Co-location** is a shared bright spot
- **Continuity of care** is missing

Client Challenges

- **Eligibility rules are rigid** and misaligned with real life
- **Stigma and fear** block access
- **Rigid systems** feel unsafe
- **Informal networks** fill system gaps

Staff Challenges

- **Burnout and emotional fatigue** are widespread
- **Training is inconsistent** and reactive
- **Roles are unclear** and overly broad
- **Manual workarounds** are the norm



Considerations



Considerations

Key considerations for future prioritization by the County were identified during the 11/19 PPSGC meeting by participants and individuals with lived experience.

UJM (User Journey Map) Scope Expansion

- Conduct additional journey mapping for expanded scopes including DV (Domestic Violence) /IPV (Intimate Partner Violence) (Women with Young Children) and CSEC (Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children) (TAY).

Map Out County Steps in Relation to Experiences

- Identify and document the specific county processes that intersect with client experiences. Highlight where these steps create friction or opportunities for alignment with client needs.

Deeper Dive into How School Systems and County Can Connect More

- Explore existing touchpoints and gaps between education systems and county services. Recommend strategies for stronger collaboration, data sharing, and coordinated support for youth and families.

Identify Attributes and Leading Practices Successful THPs (Transitional Housing Programs)

- Define and document the key characteristics and leading practices of effective THPs to inform program design and evaluation.

Differentiate Mother and Child Needs

- Separate and address distinct needs of mothers and their children to provide tailored supports that reflect their unique needs.

Increase Flexibility in County Operations

- Adapt county processes and operating hours to better accommodate client schedules and reduce barriers to accessing services.



Appendix



Appendix Table of Contents

01	<u>Lessons Learned</u>
02	<u>Stakeholder Engagement Tracker & Contact Information</u>
03	<u>Formal Research Session Tracker</u>
04	<u>Client Survey Questions</u>
05	<u>Staff Survey Questions</u>
06	<u>Domain-Specific Findings</u>
07	<u>Thematic Analysis of Findings</u>
08	<u>Participant Proposed Ideas</u>



Lessons Learned

Project Planning and Launch

Strong planning and early coordination are critical to avoid delays and support smooth execution. These strategies help align teams, clarify expectations, and integrate lived experience into project design.

Start Contractor Processes Early

- Begin onboarding and contracting with contractors several months before project start to avoid delays in access, fingerprinting, and system permissions.
- Include participant and lived experience subject matter expert incentives in the beginning of project planning.

Review Charter & Timeline Within the First Week

- Conduct a kickoff review of the project charter and timeline with key approvers to align on scope, deliverables, and governance, and approve within the first week to maintain project momentum.

Increase County Team and Contractor Touchpoints

- Especially in remote settings, establish a frequent cadence of communication with the County team, its project leadership, and contractor teams to maintain alignment from project start to close.

Integrate Lived Experience Into Planning

- Engage (and compensate) individuals with lived experience in the design phase to support developing relevant and culturally-responsive (including non-English speaking) research activities and materials (like surveys, interview protocols, etc.).

Governance and Decision-Making

Clear authority and lean processes are essential to avoid delays. Identify true decision-makers early, minimize unnecessary consensus-building, and simplify structures to keep projects moving.

Clarify Decision-Making Authority

- Initial engagement focused on coordinating bodies, but actual decisions were made by PPSGC Department Heads. Future projects must identify and prioritize engagement with true decision-makers.

Avoid Extensive Consensus-Building (if not built into the SOW and project schedule)

- PPSGC approval was not required for certain scopes (e.g., UJM and persona prioritization). Clarify governance structures early to avoid delays and tailor meetings to be informational when approvals aren't needed.

Research Approvals and Deployment

Early planning and thoughtful engagement are key to reducing delays and building trust. These steps help secure approvals, respect participants' time, and support culturally responsive research.

Map Approval Pathways Early

- Each department (DPSS, DCFW, LAUSD) and some CBOs (Safe Place for Youth, St. Anne's) required separate approvals to conduct research, leading to delays. These should be identified and initiated prior to project start.

Engage Lived Experience for Reviews

- Invite (and financially incentivize) individuals with lived experience to review research materials – such as surveys and interview protocols – to confirm they resonate with the communities being engaged. Build time into the project schedule for these reviews to be completed thoughtfully.

Consider Survey Fatigue & Consent Complexity

- Staff and youth are often over-surveyed. Use short, targeted surveys and coordinate across initiatives to reduce burden.

Offer Flexible Hours for Interviews and Focus Groups

- Participants have other commitments and may not be able to meet during traditional business hours. Offer flexible meeting times to drive increased participation and accommodate other commitments.

Leverage Existing Data

- Avoid re-asking questions already answered in prior sessions or previous research. Build on existing insights to respect participants' time and emotional labor.

Communications & Stakeholder Engagement

Clear communication and intentional engagement prevent duplication and foster trust. These strategies help align departments, coordinate with CBOs, and maintain respectful, purposeful participation.

Educate Departments on Project Purpose and Deliverables

- Departments misunderstood User Journey Mapping (UJM), fearing duplication. Provide clear, paced walkthroughs and examples to build understanding and reduce skepticism prior to project initiation.

Cross-Department & CBO Coordination is Lacking

- Many departments and CBOs are doing similar work without communication, leading to duplication. Establish shared infrastructure and regular cross-sector convenings to align efforts.

Be Intentional with CBO Engagement

- Build in flexibility and additional time to engage CBO partners, recognizing that they may face capacity constraints.
- CBOs are frequently asked to participate in research. Engagement must be respectful, coordinated, and purposeful. Avoid overburdening them with duplicative asks.

Offer Capacity-Building Support to CBOs

- Provide tangible resources such as training, dedicated liaisons, and technical assistance to strengthen CBO capacity. These supports should be designed to reduce administrative burden, foster collaboration, and equip partners with tools to effectively participate in shared initiatives.

Incentives and Lived Experience

Clear policies and thoughtful compensation are essential to motivate participation, prevent fraud, and honor the expertise of lived experience contributors.

Compensate Lived Experience Thoughtfully

- Individuals with lived experience provided critical insights. Incentive amounts should reflect their expertise and time commitment while also avoiding tokenism.
- Providing financial incentives was a critical factor in motivating CBOs to actively support client recruitment efforts.
- Participants indicated a preference for physical Visa gift cards or digital gift cards where recipients could select their desired vendor from a catalogue.

Incentives Drive Participation – but Needs Guardrails

- Incentives are key for CBOs to recruit clients and for compensating lived experience. However, they can attract fraudulent activity by bad actors.
- Develop a clear incentive policy that includes:
 - Eligibility criteria (location, age, demographic information, time duration of participation, deadline to redeem gift card)
 - Verification protocols (brief on screen participation, verbal participation)
 - Fraud mitigation strategies
 - Clearly communicate incentive disclaimers and that the County reserves the right to not provide incentives at their discretion, especially if participants don't meet eligibility criteria
 - Only offer gift cards that can be redeemed within the United States (communicating this at the beginning of recruitment helps mitigate overseas bad actors from participating)
 - Limit copy/paste of the video conferencing chat to avoid participants from using AI to answer questions
 - Including road bump questions within surveys to screen for bots and bad actors



Stakeholder Engagement Tracker & Contact Information

Stakeholder Engagement Tracker (1/4)

County/CBO	Department/Organization	Population	SPA	Primary Contact	Status	Follow-Up Dates	Notes
CBO	Allies for Every Child	WWYC	5	Amina Fields	Engaged		
CBO	Antelope Valley Partners for Health (AVPH)	TAY, DY, WWYC	1	Latshall Stevenson	Engaged		Active participant throughout and should be able to connect the team to the broader organization.
CBO	Anti-Recidivism Coalition	TAY, DY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	David Barclay	Engaged		
CBO	Association of Community Health Service Agencies (ACHSA)	TAY, DY, WWYC	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Unknown	Engaged		Engaged by Ron Brown.
CBO	Becoming a Man	TAY, DY	2, 4, 6	info@youth-guidance.org	Unresponsive	9/17, 9/22	"Cold" email sent based on rec. from David Turner III.
CBO	Black Women for Wellness	WWYC	6	Akil Bell	Engaged		
CBO	Books and Buckets	TAY, DY	7	Team@booksandbuckets.org	Unresponsive	9/17	"Cold" email sent based on rec. from David Turner III.
CBO	Brotherhood Crusade	TAY, DY	6	Charisse Bremond	Unresponsive	9/11, 9/17, 9/22	
CBO	C. Ashen Consulting	TAY, DY, WWYC	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Ceth Ashen	Engaged		
CBO	California Youth Connection	TAY, DY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Kate Teague	Engaged		
CBO	CASA Los Angeles	TAY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Aimee Lencsak	Engaged		
CBO	Casey Family Programs	TAY, DY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Justin Lee Tina Rios Alton Pitre	Engaged		
CBO	Child Care Resource Center	WWYC	1, 2	Jose Ramos	Engaged		
CBO	Children's Bureau (All for Kids)	WWYC	1	Ron Brown	Engaged		
CBO	Children's Institute	WWYC	4	Stephanie Smith	Engaged		
CBO	Community Coalition	TAY, DY	6	Leslie Johnson Renee Henderson	Engaged		
CBO	Doheny Foundation	TAY, DY, WWYC	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Lucero Noyola	Engaged		
CBO	Door of Hope	WWYC	3	TBD	Unable to Connect		
CBO	Education Coordinating Council	TAY, DY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Barbara Lundqvist	Engaged		
CBO	El Nido Family Services	WWYC	1,2,6	Deborah Davies Danika Choe	Unresponsive	9/4, 9/5, 9/11	
CBO	FSLA	WWYC	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Connie Preciado-Gonzalez	Engaged		

Stakeholder Engagement Tracker (2/4)

County/CBO	Department/Organization	Population	SPA	Primary Contact	Status	Follow-Up Dates	Notes
CBO	First Place for Youth	TAY, DY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Thomas Lee	Declined ❌❌		Unable to participate due to conference conflicts.
CBO	Good Seed CDC	TAY, DY	6, 8	Jonathan Thompson	Unable to Connect ❌	9/16	
CBO	HYFLA	TAY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Kristen Square	Engaged ✅		
CBO	Jade Strategy Consultants	TAY, DY, WWYC	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Jelani Hendrix	Engaged ✅		
CBO	JBAY	TAY, DY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Jessica Petrass	Engaged ✅		
CBO	Journey House	TAY, DY	3	Jesse Aguiar	Engaged ✅		
CBO	Jovenes	TAY, DY	7	Brittany Mason	Engaged ✅		
CBO	LA LGBT Center	TAY, DY	4	Kris Nameth Onyinye Alheri	Engaged ✅		
CBO	Mental Wellness Center	TAY, DY	N/A – Santa Barbara	Gabriela Dodson	Engaged ✅		
CBO	My Friend's Place	TAY, DY	4	Laura Onasch-Vera	Engaged ✅		
CBO	Noah's Foundation	TAY, DY, WWYC	6	Bri Frazier	Unresponsive ❌	9/11, 9/17, 9/22	
CBO	OYC	TAY, DY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Lauri Collier Angel Rading Melanie Ferrer-Vaughn	Engaged ✅		
CBO	Penny Lane	TAY, DY	1,7	TBD	Unable to Connect ❌		
CBO	Filipino Migrants Center	TAY, DY, WWYC	6	info@filipinomigrantcenter.org	Unresponsive ❌	9/17	"Cold" email sent based on rec. from David Turner III.
CBO	RAND	TAY, DY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Dr. Sarah Hunter	Engaged ✅		
CBO	RightWay Foundation	TAY, DY, WWYC	6	Daniel Castillo	Engaged ✅		
CBO	Safe Place for Youth	TAY, DY	5	Dexter O'Connell Darren Tooke	Engaged ✅		
CBO	Sanctuary of Hope	TAY, DY	1, 6, 8	Christian Green	Engaged ✅		
CBO	SHIELDS for Families	WWYC	6	Kathy Icenhower	Engaged ✅		
CBO	St. Anne's	TAY, DY, WWYC	4,6	Gina Peck	Engaged ✅		
CBO	St. John's	TAY, DY, WWYC	3, 6	Alisha Jackson Darryn Harris	Unresponsive ❌	9/11, 9/17, 9/22	
CBO	St. Joseph	TAY, DY, WWYC	4, 5, 6	Sonya Grey	Unresponsive ❌	9/11, 9/17, 9/22	
CBO	Stepping Forward LA	TAY, DY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Beth Ryan Pat Conlon	Engaged ✅		

Stakeholder Engagement Tracker (3/4)

County/CBO	Department/Organization	Population	SPA	Primary Contact	Status	Follow-Up Dates	Notes
CBO	Sycamores	TAY, DY	3	Sam Gonzalez	Engaged		
CBO	The Village	TAY, DY	2	Claudia Zamora	Engaged		
CBO	The Whole Child	WWYC	6	Jeremy Goldstein	Engaged		
CBO	Twinspire	TAY	6	staff@twinspire.org	Unresponsive	9/17, 9/22	"Cold" email sent based on rec. from David Turner III.
CBO	United Friends of the Children	TAY	4, 6	info@unitedfriends.org	Unresponsive	9/17, 9/22	"Cold" email sent based on rec. from David Turner III.
CBO	UniteLA	TAY, DY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Carrie Lemmon	Engaged		
CBO	Valley Oasis	TAY, DY	1	Elvia Salazar	Engaged		
CBO	Watson Consulting	TAY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Lisa Watson Niarah Stansberry	Engaged		
CBO	Youth Commission	TAY, DY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Tiara Summers Ashley Carrillo-Lopez	Engaged		
CBO	Youth Justice Coalition/Youth 4 Justice	TAY, DY	6	Kruti Parekh	Engaged		
CBO	Youth Moving On	TAY, DY	3	TBD	Unable to Connect		
County	ARDI - FUSE: Black People Experiencing Homelessness (BPEH)	TAY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Ni Kal Price	Engaged		
County	ARDI - FUSE: LatinX Homeless Initiative	TAY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Susana Santana	Engaged		
County	Board of Supervisors	WWYC	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Anna Potere	Engaged		
County	CEO-HI	TAY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Neetu Singh	Declined		Deferred participation to LAHSA and Pathway Home.
County	City of LA Workforce Development Board	TAY, DY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Gerardo Ruvalcaba Bryson Gauff Donny Brooks	Engaged		
County	DCFS	TAY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Amy Kim Dr. Tamara Hunter Minsun Meeker	Engaged		
County	DEO	TAY, DY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Cheren Kochen	Engaged		
County	DHS	TAY, DY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Dr. Tracey Samko	Engaged		

Stakeholder Engagement Tracker (4/4)

County/CBO	Department/Organization	Population	SPA	Primary Contact	Status	Follow-Up Dates	Notes
County	DMH	TAY, DY, WWYC	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Robert Byrd Kanchana Tate Erica Reynosa Jasminder Chahal	Engaged		
County	DPH	TAY, DY, WWYC	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Dr. Priya Batra Dr. Melissa Franklin Rachel Baker Devine	Engaged		
County	DPSS	TAY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Maria Rivera	Engaged		
County	DYD	TAY, DY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Taylor Schooley Nana Sarkodee-Adoo	Engaged		
County	JCOD	TAY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Yvette Willock	Engaged		
County	LACDA	TAY, DY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Myk'l Williams	Declined	9/5, 9/8*, 9/11*	Declined as LACDA doesn't have any staff who engage directly with clients.
County	LACOE	TAY, DY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Alicia Garoupa Sandra Naranjo	Engaged		
County	LAHSA	TAY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Stephanie Grijalva Sharonda Bush	Engaged		
County	LAUSD	TAY, DY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Joel Cisneros Elsy Rosado	Unresponsive Declined	9/5, 9/11, 9/18	LAUSD has a 3-month approval process for research which will not fit within the timeline of this project.
County	Pathway Home	TAY, DY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Kimberly Barnette	Declined	9/8, 9/11, 9/18	Declined due to competing priority projects.
County	Probation	TAY	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Lisa Campbell-Motton Jessica Magliolo	Unresponsive Engaged	9/5, 9/11, 9/18	



Formal Research Session Tracker

Formal* Research Session Tracker (1/10)

* Formal, scheduled sessions that were conducted. These do not reflect in-person ad hoc conversations.

Name	Role	Date	Duration (mins)	Virtual or In-Person?	Status	Notes/Population
Session #1: Field Visit & Interview - The Village Family Services						
Ernesto Hernandez	Employment Specialist	8/20/2025	60	In-Person	Completed✅	- Disconnected Youth - TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care
Lori Gomez	Peer Support Specialist					
Session #2: Interview - Carrie Estelle Doheny Foundation						
Lucero Noyola	Program Officer	8/25/2025	90	Virtual	Completed✅	- TAY – Juvenile Justice - Women with Young Children
Session #3: Interview – First 5 LA						
Connie Preciado-Gonzalez	Senior Program Officer	9/2/2025	60	Virtual	Completed✅	Women with Young Children
Session #4: Mental Wellness Center						
Gabriela Dodson	Director of Wellness & Recovery	9/2/2025	60	Virtual	Completed✅	- Disconnected Youth - TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care
Session #5: Interview – Casey Family Programs						
Justin Lee	Sr. Director of Strategic Consulting	9/3/2025	60	Virtual	Completed✅	- General Systems - TAY – Juvenile Justice
Alton Pitre	Lived Experience Consultant					TAY – Juvenile Justice
Tina Rios	Lived Experience Consultant					- TAY – Foster Care - Women with Young Children
Session #6: Valley Oasis						
Elvia Salazar	Director of Communications and Community Impact	9/5/2025	60	Virtual	Completed✅	- Disconnected Youth - TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care

Formal* Research Session Tracker (2/10)

* Formal, scheduled sessions that were conducted. These do not reflect in-person ad hoc conversations.

Name	Role	Date	Duration (mins)	Virtual or In-Person?	Status	Notes/Population
Session #7: Field Visit – St. Anne’s		9/8/2025	90	In-Person	Completed✔	- Disconnected Youth - TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care - Women with Young Children
Session #8: Field Visit – Safe Place for Youth		9/9/2025	60	In-Person	Completed✔	- Disconnected Youth - TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care
Session #9: Tabling – The Village Family Services		9/11/2025	240	In-Person	Completed✔	- Disconnected Youth - TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care
Session #10: LAHSA						
Stephanie Grijalva	Youth CES Coordinator	9/11/2025	60	Virtual	Completed✔	TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care
Sharonda Bush	Youth CES Coordinator					
Session #11: Children’s Institute						
Stephanie Smith	Community Relations Specialist	9/11/2025	60	Virtual	Completed✔	- Women with Young Children - Disconnected Youth - TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care
Soleil Delgadillo	Director, Volunteer & Community Engagement					
Session #12: Anti-Recidivism Coalition						
David Barclay	Project Impact Peer Navigator	9/12/2025	60	Virtual	Completed✔	TAY – Foster Care
Session #13: Social Justice Learning Institute						
Derek Steele	Executive Director	9/15/2025	60	Virtual	Completed✔	TAY – Juvenile Justice
Session #14: Focus Group – CBO Staff						
Safe Place for Youth	Director of Youth Policy & Advocacy	9/15/2025	60	Virtual	Completed✔	TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care



Formal* Research Session Tracker (3/10)

* Formal, scheduled sessions that were conducted. These do not reflect in-person ad hoc conversations.

Name	Role	Date	Duration (mins)	Virtual or In-Person?	Status	Notes/Population
Session #15: Focus Group – County Staff						
OCP	Project Director	9/16/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	- Disconnected Youth - TAY – Foster Care
	Project Director					
DCFS	AB 12 Social Worker					
	AB 12 Social Worker					
	ILP Coordinator					
	Youth Permanency Coordinator					
Session #16: My Friend’s Place						
Laura Onasch-Vera	Data & Impact Manager	9/16/2025	60	Virtual	Completed✔	- Disconnected Youth - TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care
Session #17: Focus Group – County Staff						
DCFS	AB 12 Supervisor	9/17/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care
	AB 12 Social Worker					
	ILP Coordinator					
	SHD Social Worker					
	SHD Social Worker					
Session #18: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 1		9/17/2025	60	Virtual	Completed✔	TAY – Foster Care
Session #19: Focus Group – CBO Staff						
El Centro Del Pueblo	Mentor	9/17/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	TAY – Juvenile Justice

Formal* Research Session Tracker (4/10)

* Formal, scheduled sessions that were conducted. These do not reflect in-person ad hoc conversations.

Name	Role	Date	Duration (mins)	Virtual or In-Person?	Status	Notes/Population
Session #20: Focus Group – Client (California Youth Connection)						
Participant Count: 8		9/17/2025	120	In-Person	Completed✔	- Disconnected Youth - TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care
Session #21: LA City Economic and Workforce Development						
Gerardo Ruvalcaba	Asst. General Manager	9/17/2025	60	Virtual	Completed✔	Disconnected Youth
Bryson Gauff	Senior Project Coordinator					
Donny Brooks	Asst. Chief Grants Admin.					
Session #22: Focus Group – County Staff						
DCFS	AB 12 Worker	9/18/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	Disconnected Youth
Session #23: Journey House						
Jesse Aguiar	Executive Director	9/18/2025	60	Virtual	Completed✔	- Disconnected Youth - TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care
Kim Ruiz	Administrative Assistant					
Briana Barcena	Case Worker					
Session #24: Stepping Forward LA						
Beth Ryan	Executive Director	9/18/2025	60	Virtual	Completed✔	TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care
Pat Conlon	Director of Programs					
Session #25: Sycamores						
Sam Gonzalez	Chief Business Development Officer	9/18/2025	60	Virtual	Completed✔	- Disconnected Youth - TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care
Session #26: RAND						
Dr. Sarah Hunter	Director of Housing	9/18/2025	30	Virtual	Completed✔	- TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care - Women with Young Children

Formal* Research Session Tracker (5/10)

* Formal, scheduled sessions that were conducted. These do not reflect in-person ad hoc conversations.

Name	Role	Date	Duration (mins)	Virtual or In-Person?	Status	Notes/Population
Session #27: Field Visit: Children’s Institute		9/18/2025	90	In-Person	Completed✔	• Women with Young Children
Session #28 Focus Group – Client		9/19/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• Disconnected Youth
Participant Count: 1						
Session #29: Focus Group – CBO Staff						
OYC	Youth Mentoring Coordinator	9/19/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• Disconnected Youth
	Managing Director					
Session #30: Focus Group – CBO Staff						
Antelope Valley Partners for Health	Relative Support Supervisor	9/22/2025	90	Virtual	Completed✔	• TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care
OYC	Youth Mentoring Coordinator					
	Managing Director					
	Director					
	Opportunity Youth Assistant					
Session #31: Focus Group – County Staff						
DCFS	Family Preservation Social Worker	9/22/2025	90	Virtual	Completed✔	• Women with Young Children
	Birth – Five Social Worker					
	AB 12 Social Worker					



Formal* Research Session Tracker (6/10)

* Formal, scheduled sessions that were conducted. These do not reflect in-person ad hoc conversations.

Name	Role	Date	Duration (mins)	Virtual or In-Person?	Status	Notes/Population
Session #32: Focus Group – County Staff						
DPSS	GAIN Services Worker	9/22/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• Women with Young Children
	GAIN Services Worker					
	GAIN Services Worker					
	GAIN Services Worker					
	GAIN Services Worker					
	Eligibility Worker					
	Eligibility Worker					
	Eligibility Worker II					
Session #33: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 1		9/22/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• Disconnected Youth
Session #34: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 1		9/23/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• Women with Young Children
Session #35: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 3		9/23/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• Women with Young Children
Session #36: Focus Group – County Staff						
DCFS	AB 12 Social Worker	9/23/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• Disconnected Youth
Session #37: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 1		9/23/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• TAY – Foster Care
Session #38: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 2		9/24/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• Women with Young Children



Formal* Research Session Tracker (7/10)

** Formal, scheduled sessions that were conducted. These do not reflect in-person ad hoc conversations.*

Name	Role	Date	Duration (mins)	Virtual or In-Person?	Status	Notes/Population
Session #39: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 2		9/24/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• TAY – Foster Care
Session #40: Focus Group – CBO Staff						
Participant Count: 5		9/25/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• Women with Young Children
Session #41: Focus Group – County Staff						
Participant Count: 5		9/25/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• Disconnected Youth
Session #42: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 6		9/25/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• TAY – Juvenile Justice
Session #43: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 5		9/25/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• Women with Young Children
Session #44: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 2		9/25/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• Women with Young Children
Session #45: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 9		9/26/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• Women with Young Children
Session #46: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 7		9/26/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care
Session #47: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 10		9/26/2025	90	In-Person	Completed✔	• TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care
Session #48: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 6		9/26/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• Disconnected Youth

Formal* Research Session Tracker (8/10)

* Formal, scheduled sessions that were conducted. These do not reflect in-person ad hoc conversations.

Name	Role	Date	Duration (mins)	Virtual or In-Person?	Status	Notes/Population
Session #49: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 5		9/26/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care
Session #50: LA LGBT Center						
Mandy Litwin	Associate Director	9/26/2026	60	Virtual	Completed✔	• TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care • Disconnected Youth • Women with Young Children
Onyinye Alheri	Drop-In Director					
Ariel Bustamante	Capacity Building Manager					
Session #51: Focus Group – County Staff						
DCFS	AB 12 Social Worker	9/29/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care
Session #52: Focus Group – County Staff						
DPSS	GAIN Services Worker	9/29/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care • Disconnected Youth
	GAIN Services Worker					
	GAIN Services Worker, Youth Liaison					
	GAIN Services Worker, Youth Liaison					
	GAIN Services Worker, Youth Liaison					
	GROW Case Manager					
	GROW Case Worker					
	Case Manager, Youth Program					
	DV Liaison					
Session #53: Focus Group – CBO Staff						
Social Justice Institute	Community Youth Organizer	9/29/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• Disconnected Youth

Formal* Research Session Tracker (9/10)

* Formal, scheduled sessions that were conducted. These do not reflect in-person ad hoc conversations.

Name	Role	Date	Duration (mins)	Virtual or In-Person?	Status	Notes/Population
Session #54: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 3		9/29/2025	120	Virtual	Completed	• TAY – Foster Care
Session #55: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 1		9/29/2025	120	Virtual	Completed	• TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care
Session #56: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 7		9/29/2025	120	Virtual	Completed	• Disconnected Youth
Session #57: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 4		9/29/2025	120	Virtual	Completed	• Disconnected Youth
Session #58: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 5		9/29/2025	120	Virtual	Completed	• TAY – Foster Care
Session #59: Focus Group – County Staff						
DPSS	GAIN Services Worker	9/30/2025	120	Virtual	Completed	• Women with Young Children
	CalWorks Eligibility Worker II					
	CalWorks Eligibility Worker II					
	Specialized Services Eligibility Worker II					

Formal* Research Session Tracker (10/10)

* Formal, scheduled sessions that were conducted. These do not reflect in-person ad hoc conversations.

Name	Role	Date	Duration (mins)	Virtual or In-Person?	Status	Notes/Population
Session #60: Focus Group – CBO Staff						
Stepping Forward	Executive Director and Founder	9/30/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• TAY – Juvenile Justice and Foster Care
	Director of Programs					
	Program Coordinator					
	Housing and Data Team Lead					
	Social Media and Marketing Coordinator					
	Program Manager					
	Program Creative Manager					
	Housing and Employment Support					
Session #61: Focus Group – CBO Staff						
CCRC	Parent Educator	9/30/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• Women with Young Children
	Parent Educator					
Session #62: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 8		9/30/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• TAY – Juvenile Justice
Session #63: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 5		9/30/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• Women with Young Children
Session #64: Focus Group – Client						
Participant Count: 6		9/30/2025	120	Virtual	Completed✔	• TAY – Juvenile Justice

Total Session and Participant Count

Outlined below are the final survey and research session participation counts by population and participant type.

Session Type	Population		Session Count	Participant Count
Interview	Client	Youth	11	14
		WWYC	1	1
		Total	12	15
	Staff	Youth	27	38
		WWYC	12	14
		Total	39	52
	Total		51	67
Field Visit	Client	Youth	3	N/A
		WWYC	2	N/A
	Total		5	N/A
Tabling	Client	Youth	1	N/A
		WWYC	0	N/A
	Total		1	N/A
Focus Group	Cilent	Youth	17	68
		WWYC	7	27
		Total	24	95
	Staff	CBO	8	25
		County	9	42
		Total	17	67
	Total		41	162
Survey	Client	TAY	N/A	908
		DY		373
		WWYC		229
		Total	N/A	1,510
	Staff	CBO	N/A	53
		County		104
		Total	N/A	157
	Total		N/A	1,667
Total			98	1,896



Client Survey Questions



Client Survey Questions (1-3)

Los Angeles County User Journey Mapping Survey - Clients

Start of Block: Welcome Message

We want to hear about your experiences with services in Los Angeles County! By sharing your opinions, you can help us understand what works and what doesn't. This survey is optional, anonymous, and should take around 15 minutes to complete.

If you would like to receive a \$5 gift card for completing the survey, you **must** provide your name and email address on the next screen so we can contact you. Your name and email address **will not** be used for any other purpose. You can still complete the survey without providing your name and email address but you **will not** receive a gift card.

Your voice matters, and your answers will help us find ways for the County to better serve those in need. Together, we can make our community a better place for everyone.

Thank you for your time!

End of Block: Welcome Message

Survey Opening, Demographics, Population-Level Characteristics

Start of Block: Key Population Indicator Questions

1. What is your preferred name? (optional)

2. What is your email address? (optional)

3. What is your age?
 - Under 18
 - 18-26
 - 27-34
 - 35-44
 - 45-54
 - 55-64
 - 65+

IF 'Under 18' END SURVEY

[Display Logic: Show Q4 if Q3 is '18-26']

4. Please select your age.

- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25
- 26

5. What gender do you identify as?

- Male
- Female
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q6 if Q5 is 'Female']

6. Are you currently pregnant?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q7 if Q6 is 'Yes']

7. How far along in your pregnancy are you?

- First trimester (1 month – 3 months)
- Second trimester (4 months – 6 months)
- Third trimester (7 months – 9 months)

[Display Logic: Show Q8 if Q5 is 'Female']

8. Do you have any children (if you have previously shared that you are pregnant and do not have any other children, please select "No")?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q9 if Q8 is 'Yes']

9. How many children do you have?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 or more

[Display Logic: Show Q10 if Q8 is 'Yes']

10. How many of these children are currently under the age of five?

- 1

- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 or more
- None

[Display Logic: Show Q11 if Q10 is NOT 'None']

11. How many people live in your household?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6 or more

[Display Logic: Show Q12 if Q11 is '6 or more']

12. Please select how many people live in your household.

- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12 or more

[Display Logic: Show Q11 if Q10 is NOT 'None']

13. The next question is about your household income which means the total income from everyone living in the household including roommates or those on disability income.

Is your household's total annual income from before taxes...?

- Above \$[250 FPL BASED ON Q9/10 ANSWER]
- Below \$[250 FPL BASED ON Q9/10 ANSWER]

[Display Logic: Show Q11 if Q10 is NOT 'None']

11A: Have you had previous interactions with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)?

- Yes
- No

14. Are you now or have you ever been involved with any of these systems? (Select all that apply)

- Foster System
- Juvenile Justice/Probation
- Other (please specify)
- None



Client Survey Questions (4-6)

[Display Logic: Show Q15 if Q14 is NOT 'None']

15. At what age did you enter the system you answered in the last question?

[Display Logic: Show Q16 if Q14 is NOT 'None']

16. If you feel comfortable, please share what led you to enter that system (such as parental drug use, neglect (lack of basic needs like food and water), behavioral issues, etc.)

17. Are you **currently** in school or have a job?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q18 if Q17 is 'No']

18. Are you **actively** looking for schooling (high school diploma/GED, trade school, college, etc.) or a job?

- Yes
- No

19. Do you identify as an individual with a disability?

- Yes
- No
- I prefer not to say

[Display Logic: Show Q20 if Q19 is 'Yes']

20. Do any of the following apply to you? (Select all that apply)

- Physical disability (such as mobility impairment, vision impairment, or hearing impairment)
- Mental health condition (such as anxiety, depression, or bipolar disorder)
- Cognitive or learning disability (such as dyslexia, ADHD, or an intellectual disability)
- Chronic health condition (such as diabetes, epilepsy, or multiple sclerosis)
- Sensory disability (such as blindness or deafness)
- Developmental disability (such as an autism spectrum disorder)
- Temporary disability (such as injury or surgery recovery)
- None of the above
- I prefer not to say

End of Block: Key Population Indicator Questions

Start of Block: Demographic Information

21. Which race or ethnicity best describes you?

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Black or African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- White/Caucasian
- Multiple races/ethnicities/Other (please specify):
- Prefer not to disclose

22. Do you identify as part of the LGBTQIA+ community (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, or other identities)?

- Yes
- No
- I prefer not to say

23. What type(s) of education have you completed?

- Some high school but no diploma
- High school diploma
- GED
- Some college but no degree
- Associate's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Technical or trade school degree
- Advanced degree (master's, doctoral, etc.)

24. What is your zip code?

25. What best describes your current living situation?

- In a house, apartment, or trailer that is my own, and is a regular, long-term place for me to stay (e.g., my name is on the lease)
- In a house, apartment, or room that is someone else's that is a regular, long-term place for me to stay
- In a shelter or temporary housing (such as A Bridge Housing, Tiny Home Village, PodShare, hotel, or motel using a voucher or similar program)
- In a house, apartment or room that is temporary or short-term place for me to stay ("couch surfing")
- In my own room in a hotel, motel, or SRO
- In a group home or residential treatment center
- In a dormitory
- In a treatment or institutional setting, such as a hospital, treatment or rehab facility
- In jail or prison
- Outside, including tent or makeshift shelter, in a car, truck, van or RV, abandoned building, or totally unsheltered location
- Other (please specify)

Page 4 of 24

26. How do you access the internet?

- I own a cell phone
- I own a computer or laptop
- I use a computer at a library
- I use a computer at a community-based organization (CBO)
- I use a tablet or other device
- I do not have regular access to the internet
- Other (please specify)

End of Block: Demographic Information

Transition Age Youth (TAY)

[Branching Logic: Show Block if Q1 is '16-26' AND Q14 is NOT 'None']

Start of Block: Homelessness & Housing

----- **START TRANSITION PLAN QUESTIONS** -----

The following questions are about your housing plan for **after** you left foster care or juvenile detention.

27. What option below best describes your original housing plan?

- **Transitional Housing:** Temporary housing with programs to help young people practice living on their own and learn important life skills. Housing is in supervised apartments or houses with all utilities paid.
- **Supervised Independent Living Program:** Short-term programs (12-18 months) that help young people get ready to leave foster care and live on their own.
- **Supportive Housing:** Housing with rental assistance and support services to help people, especially those who are homeless or have disabilities, achieve stable housing.
- **Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA):** Long-term plan for youth in foster care when other options are not possible.
- **Other (please specify):** Any other housing or living arrangement not listed above.

28. After you exited foster care or juvenile detention, did your housing change from what was planned during your exit planning?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q29 if Q28 is 'Yes']

29. How soon after exiting foster care or juvenile detention did your housing plan change?

- Within the first week
- Within the first month
- Within the first three months
- More than three months later

Page 5 of 24

26. How do you access the internet?

- I own a cell phone
- I own a computer or laptop
- I use a computer at a library
- I use a computer at a community-based organization (CBO)
- I use a tablet or other device
- I do not have regular access to the internet
- Other (please specify)

End of Block: Demographic Information

Transition Age Youth (TAY)

[Branching Logic: Show Block if Q1 is '16-26' AND Q14 is NOT 'None']

Start of Block: Homelessness & Housing

----- **START TRANSITION PLAN QUESTIONS** -----

The following questions are about your housing plan for **after** you left foster care or juvenile detention.

27. What option below best describes your original housing plan?

- **Transitional Housing:** Temporary housing with programs to help young people practice living on their own and learn important life skills. Housing is in supervised apartments or houses with all utilities paid.
- **Supervised Independent Living Program:** Short-term programs (12-18 months) that help young people get ready to leave foster care and live on their own.
- **Supportive Housing:** Housing with rental assistance and support services to help people, especially those who are homeless or have disabilities, achieve stable housing.
- **Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA):** Long-term plan for youth in foster care when other options are not possible.
- **Other (please specify):** Any other housing or living arrangement not listed above.

28. After you exited foster care or juvenile detention, did your housing change from what was planned during your exit planning?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q29 if Q28 is 'Yes']

29. How soon after exiting foster care or juvenile detention did your housing plan change?

- Within the first week
- Within the first month
- Within the first three months
- More than three months later

Page 6 of 24

Client Survey Questions (7-9)

[Display Logic: Show Q30 if Q28 is 'Yes']

30. Why do you think your original housing plan changed?

[Display Logic: Show Q30A if Q28 is 'Yes']

30A. Did you find new housing after your housing plan changed?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q31 if Q28 is 'Yes']

31. Did you reach out to anyone for help to find new housing?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q32 if Q31 is 'Yes']

32. Who helped you find new housing? (Select all that apply)

- Social worker/Probation officer
- Community support groups and/or organizations
- Family
- Friend
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q33 if Q32 is NOT 'Social worker/Probation officer']

33. Why did you not reach out to your social worker/probation officer for support?

- I didn't think they would be able to help me
- I didn't know how to contact them
- I felt more comfortable seeking help elsewhere
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q34 if Q28 is 'Yes']

34. Was your new housing safe (free from physical dangers like violence or unsanitary conditions **AND** emotional support without bullying, threats, or verbal abuse)?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q35 if Q28 is 'Yes']

35. Was your new housing stable (a reliable place to live for at least 6 months without worrying about moving often or being asked to leave)?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q36 if Q28 is 'Yes']

Page 7 of 24

36. What option below best describes your new housing?

- **Transitional Housing:** Temporary housing with programs to help young people practice living on their own and learn important life skills. Housing is in supervised apartments or houses with all utilities paid.
- **Supervised Independent Living Program:** Short-term programs (12-18 months) that help young people get ready to leave foster care and live on their own.
- **Supportive Housing:** Housing with rental assistance and support services to help people, especially those who are homeless or have disabilities, achieve stable housing.
- **Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA):** Long-term plan for youth in foster care when other options are not possible.
- **Other (please specify):** Any other housing or living arrangement not listed above.

[Display Logic: Show Q37 if Q34 OR Q35 is 'No']

37. What challenges did you face with your new housing? (Select all that apply)

- Unsafe neighborhood
- Lack of financial resources (such as ability to pay rent, cost of moving, or unstable employment)
- Unstable living conditions (such as frequent moves or overcrowding)
- Lack of support from family, friends, and/or other people in my life
- Lack of flexibility based on my needs
- Legal issues (such as eviction)
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q38 if Q28 is 'Yes']

38. What services or support would have been helpful to find housing after your original housing plan changed?

[Display Logic: Show Q39 if Q28 is 'No']

39. What do you believe was the main reason your original housing plan worked out? (Select all that apply)

- Safe neighborhood
- Access to community resources
- Stable living environment
- Strong support from family, friends, and/or other people in my life
- Personal motivation and commitment
- Flexibility based on my needs
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q40 if Q28 is 'No']

40. What resources were most helpful in keeping your housing plan? (Select all that apply)

- Financial assistance

Page 8 of 24

- Counseling services
- Job training programs
- Peer support groups
- Other (please specify)

41. Which of the following activities did you complete as part of your exit planning process?

(Select all that apply)

- 90-Day Transition Plan
- Transition Checklist
- Reviewing the Foster Youth Bill of Rights
- Reviewing my foster care rights at each placement and replacement
- Reviewing housing options
- Reviewing education options
- Reviewing job options
- I did not complete any of these
- I'm not sure/I don't remember
- Other (please specify): _____

42. Did you have the opportunity to reconnect with your biological family when you exited foster care/juvenile detention?

- Yes, my immediate family (such as a sibling or parent)
- Yes, my extended family (such as a grandparent, uncle, aunt, cousin).
- No
- Other (please specify)

43. Did you have access to information from your case worker or probation officer about how to connect with your biological family if you chose to do so?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q44 if Q42 is 'Yes']

44. Why did you choose to reconnect with your biological family? (Select all that apply)

- Emotional support
- Financial support
- A sense of belonging
- Curiosity and closure
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q45 if Q42 is 'No']

45. Why did you not want to reconnect with your biological family?

- Past negative experiences
- Desire for independence
- Concerns about losing benefits
- Other (please specify)

Page 9 of 24

Client Survey Questions (10-12)

[Display Logic: Show Q46 if Q42 is 'Yes']

46. Did you successfully reconnect with your biological family?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q47 if Q46 is 'Yes']

47. Did you lose your benefits as a result of reconnecting with your biological family?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q48 if Q47 is 'Yes']

48. What benefits did you lose?

- CalWORKs
- Medi-Cal
- Transitional Housing Program
- Independent Living Program
- Food Stamps (CalFresh)
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q49 if Q47 is 'Yes']

49. How did losing these benefits affect your daily life?

- Impacted my ability to afford housing
- Made it difficult to access healthcare
- Affected my ability to buy food
- Limited my educational opportunities
- No significant impact
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q50 if Q47 is 'Yes']

50. Were you informed that you could lose benefits if you reconnected with your biological family?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

[Display Logic: Show Q51 if Q46 is 'Yes']

51. Did you tell the County that you reconnected with your biological family?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q52 if Q51 is 'No']

52. Why did you not share that you reconnected with your biological family?

- I didn't want to lose benefits
- I didn't know I needed to report it
- Other (please specify)

Page 10 of 24

53. What additional services or support would have been helpful for you during your transition from foster care/juvenile detention?

— END TRANSITION PLAN QUESTIONS —

End of Block: Homelessness & Housing

Opportunity Youth

[Branching Logic: Show Block if Q1 is '16-26' AND Q14 = 'No' AND Q15 = 'No']

Start of Block: Behavioral Health

— START DISCONNECTION QUESTIONS —

The following questions are about your experiences with school and work.

You selected that you are **not** actively looking for school or a job.

— START INCOMPLETE HIGH SCHOOL QUESTIONS —

[Display Logic: Show Q54 if Q23 is 'Some high school but no diploma']

54. What is the main reason that you did not complete high school?

- Personal or family responsibilities
- Health issues
- Lack of interest or motivation
- Financial constraints
- Issues with school environment (such as bullying or lack of support)
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q55 if Q23 is 'Some high school but no diploma']

55. Are you interested in getting your high school diploma?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q56 if Q55 is 'No']

56. What is stopping you now from getting your diploma? (Select all that apply)

- Unaware that it is an option
- Unsure of how to start the process
- Lack of time due to work or family responsibilities
- Health issues (such as physical or mental)
- Lack of motivation or interest
- Difficulty with the coursework or subjects

Page 11 of 24

- Unsupportive environment (such as lack of support from family or friends)
- Transportation issues (such as getting to school)
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q57 if Q55 is 'No']

57. Why are you not interested in getting your diploma? (Select all that apply)

- I do not see the value in having a diploma
- I prefer to enter the workforce directly
- I plan to pursue other educational opportunities (such as trade school)
- I have personal or family responsibilities that take priority
- I have health issues that prevent me from continuing
- I feel unprepared or lack confidence in my abilities
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q58 if Q55 is 'Yes']

58. What type of support would help you get your diploma? (Select all that apply)

- Financial assistance (such as scholarships or grants)
- Academic tutoring or mentoring
- Access to study resources (such as textbooks or online materials)
- Flexible class schedules (such as evening or online classes)
- Counseling or mental health support
- Career guidance and job placement services
- Transportation assistance (such as bus passes or carpooling)
- Childcare support
- Other (please specify)

— END INCOMPLETE HIGH SCHOOL QUESTIONS —

— START HS DIPLOMA/GED QUESTIONS —

[Display Logic: Show Q59 if Q23 is 'High school diploma or GED']

59. What were your plans for after high school?

- Pursue higher education (college)
- Enter the workforce
- Take time off before making a decision
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q60 if Q59 is 'Pursue higher education (college)']

60. What is the main reason that you did not pursue higher education?

- Financial constraints (such as tuition costs)
- Lack of interest in further education
- Personal or family responsibilities
- Health issues
- Lack of information about available options
- Other (please specify)

Page 12 of 24

Client Survey Questions (13-15)

[Display Logic: Show Q61 if Q59 is 'Pursue higher education (college)']

61. What type of support would help you pursue higher education? (Select all that apply)

- Guidance on college applications
- Financial assistance (such as scholarships or grants)
- Academic tutoring or mentoring
- Access to study resources (such as textbooks or online materials)
- Flexible class schedules (such as evening or online classes)
- Counseling or mental health support
- Career guidance and job placement services
- Transportation assistance (such as bus passes or carpooling)
- Childcare support
- Other (please specify)

----- END HS DIPLOMA/GED QUESTIONS -----

----- START SOME COLLEGE QUESTIONS -----

[Display Logic: Show Q62 if Q23 is 'Some college but no degree']

62. What is the main reason that you did not finish college?

- Financial constraints (such as tuition costs or book costs)
- Personal or family responsibilities
- Health issues
- Lack of interest in continuing
- Difficulty balancing work and studies
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q63 if Q23 is 'Some college but no degree']

63. Are you interested in returning to college to complete your degree?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q64 if Q6355 is 'No']

64. Why are you not interested in getting your diploma? (Select all that apply)

- I do not see the value in having a diploma
- I prefer to enter the workforce directly
- I plan to pursue other educational opportunities (such as trade school)
- I have personal or family responsibilities that take priority
- I have health issues that prevent me from continuing
- I feel unprepared or lack confidence in my abilities
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q65 if Q63 is 'Yes']

65. What is stopping you now from getting your diploma? (Select all that apply)

- Unaware that it is an option

Page 13 of 24

- Unsure of how to start the process
- Lack of time due to work or family responsibilities
- Health issues (such as physical or mental)
- Lack of motivation or interest
- Difficulty with the coursework or subjects
- Unsupportive environment (such as lack of support from family or friends)
- Transportation issues (such as getting to school)
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q66 if Q63 is 'Yes']

66. What type of support would help you get your diploma? (Select all that apply)

- Financial assistance (such as scholarships or grants)
- Academic tutoring or mentoring
- Access to study resources (such as textbooks or online materials)
- Flexible class schedules (such as evening or online classes)
- Counseling or mental health support
- Career guidance and job placement services
- Transportation assistance (such as bus passes or carpooling)
- Childcare support
- Other (please specify)

----- END SOME COLLEGE QUESTIONS -----

67. How long has it been since you left/graduated from school **OR** left your last job (whichever is most recent)?

- Less than 1 month
- Less than 3 months
- Less than 6 months
- 6 months to 1 year
- More than 1 year

68. Which statement below **best** describes why you do not have a job.

- I'm not interested in working
- I am unsure of how to find a job that meets my skills and interests
- I have personal or family responsibilities that stop me from working
- I do not have transportation to get to a job
- I do not have the documents I need (such as ID or social security card)

[Display Logic: Show Q69 if Q68 is 'I do not have the documents I need']

69. Which documents do you currently have?

- Social security card
- Birth certificate
- Proof of citizenship or residency
- Driver's license

Page 14 of 24

- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q70 if Q68 is 'I do not have the documents I need']

70. Are you aware of services that can help you get the documents you need?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q71 if Q68 is 'I'm not interested in working']

71. Why are you not interested in working?

- I have personal or family responsibilities
- I feel unprepared or lack the necessary skills
- I don't want to lose public benefits
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q72 if Q68 is 'I have personal or family responsibilities that stop me from working' OR 'I do not have transportation to get a job' OR Q71 is "I feel unprepared or lack the necessary skills"]

72. What type of support would help you find a job? (Select all that apply)

- Flexible job opportunities (such as part-time, remote, or flexible hours)
- Transportation assistance (such as bus passes or carpooling)
- Childcare support during job interviews or work hours
- Access to local job placement services
- Access to job training programs that accommodate my schedule
- Counseling or support groups for job seekers with family responsibilities
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q73 if Q68 is 'I am unsure of how to find a job that meet my skills and interests']

73. What type of support would help you find a job? (Select all that apply)

- Interview preparation and coaching
- Networking opportunities and job fairs
- Access to job listings and career portals
- Professional development workshops (such as skills training)
- Mentorship
- Career counseling and guidance
- Transportation assistance (such as bus passes or carpooling)
- Childcare support
- Other (please specify)

74. What job or career are you interested in?

Page 15 of 24



Client Survey Questions (16-18)

[Display Logic: Show Q75 if Q68 is 'I am unsure of how to find a job that meet my skills and interests OR Q72 is 'Flexible job opportunities' OR 'Access to local job placement services' or 'Access to job training programs that accommodate my schedule']

75. How aware are you of the workforce training programs available in Los Angeles County?

- Very aware
- Somewhat aware
- Not aware

[Display Logic: Show Q76 if Q75 is 'Very aware' OR 'Somewhat aware']

76. Have you participated in any workforce training programs? This may include Youth@Work, HIRE LA, LA-RISE Youth Academy, and YouthSource Centers.

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q77 if Q76 is 'No']

77. Why haven't you participated in any workforce training programs? (Select all that apply)

- I wasn't aware of them
- I already know the skills taught in these programs
- The programs teach skills that aren't needed for the job I'm interested in
- The programs won't help me reach my career goals
- I don't think the programs will help me
- I trust a family, friend, or mentor to teach me these skills instead
- I have heard from peers that the programs are not helpful
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q78 if Q76 is 'Yes']

The following questions are about the workforce training program(s) you have participated in.

78. If you remember, which workforce training programs have you participated in? (Select all that apply)

- **Youth@Work:** provides youth with hands-on paid work experience and career support
- **HIRE LA:** provides youth a starter job and supports work skills development, financial literacy, career coaching, and mentoring
- **LA-RISE Youth Academy:** provides unhoused or housing-insecure youth with housing, education, and jobs
- **YouthSource Centers:** helps youth get diplomas, go to college, get mentoring, train for stable employment, and get a job
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q79 if Q76 is 'Yes']

79. What skills did you learn in the workforce training program? (Select all that apply)

- Career skills (such as resumes, cover letters, or interviews)
- Business skills (such as problem-solving, or time management)
- Soft skills (such as communication, teamwork, or collaboration)

Page 16 of 24

- Technical skills (such as computers, software, or engineering)
- Trade skills (such as plumbing or electrical)
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q80 if Q76 is 'Yes']

80. Did you finish the workforce training programs you participated in?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q81 if Q80 is 'No']

81. Which of the statements below **best** describes why you did not finish the programs?

- The program didn't teach me the skills I needed for the career I want so I stopped going
- I found the program too challenging and didn't feel supported enough to succeed
- I had trouble getting to the training/job location, which made it hard to go regularly
- I was dealing with personal problems and couldn't focus on the program
- I didn't have enough support from family and/or friends
- The program was not delivered effectively
- The program did not fulfill its promises
- I heard from others that the program was not valuable
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q82 if Q80 is 'Yes']

82. How useful were the skills you learned for the career you want?

- Very useful
- Useful
- Somewhat useful
- Not very useful
- Not useful at all

[Display Logic: Show Q83 if Q80 is 'Yes']

83. Were you able to find a job after completing the workforce training program?

- Yes, I found a job in the career I want.
- Yes, I found a job, but not in the career I want.
- No, but I am in the job application process.
- No, I have not been able to find a job.
- Other (please specify).

[Display Logic: Show Q84 if Q80 is 'Yes']

84. How confident do you feel in your ability to find a job after completing the workforce training programs?

- Extremely confident
- Very confident
- Somewhat confident

- Slightly confident
- Not at all confident

[Display Logic: Show Q85 if Q80 is 'Yes' OR 'No']

85. What type of support did you receive after exiting the program? (Select all that apply)

- Continued mentorship or guidance
- Job placement assistance
- Access to further education or training programs
- Financial support or assistance
- Counseling or mental health services
- Housing assistance
- Other (please specify)
- I did not receive support after exiting the program

[Display Logic: Show Q86 if Q80 is 'Yes']

86. Which aspects of the programs were the most helpful for you? This may include things like learning about different careers, building a network of peers, and mentorship.

[Display Logic: Show Q87 if Q80 is 'Yes']

87. How could the workforce training programs be improved?

----- **START SERVICES QUESTIONS** -----

The following questions are about the barriers or challenges you may have faced in getting services.

88. Are you currently receiving any services (such as food assistance, housing, etc.) from either LA County or a community-based organization.

- Yes, I am currently receiving services
- No, but I have previously received services
- No, I have never received services

[Display Logic: Show Q89 if Q88 is 'Yes, I am currently receiving services']

89. Which services are you currently receiving? (Select all that apply)

- Housing
- Food assistance
- Counseling, therapy, or mental health services
- Substance abuse treatment
- Transportation support



Client Survey Questions (19-21)

- Other (please specify)
- None of the above

[Display Logic: Show Q90 if Q88 is 'No, but I have previously received services']

90. Which services have you previously received? (Select all that apply)

- Housing
- Food assistance
- Counseling, therapy, or mental health services
- Substance abuse treatment
- Transportation support
- Other (please specify)
- None of the above

[Display Logic: Show Q91 if Q88 is 'Yes, I am currently receiving services' OR 'No, but I have previously received services']

91. Where do/did you receive these services? (Select all that apply)

- Through Los Angeles County (such as CalFresh, Medi-Cal)
- Through community support groups and/or organizations (such as TAY Drop-In Centers, shelters, health clinics, places of worship like churches)

[Display Logic: Show Q92 if Q91 is 'Through community support groups']

92. Where did you hear about the services offered at the community support groups? (Select all that apply)

- Social worker
- Probation officer
- Social media
- Family or friends
- Community events
- Flyers or brochures
- Online search (such as Google or Bing)
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q93 if Q88 is 'No, I have never received services']

93. Which statement below **best** describes why you are not receiving services?

- I don't need them
- I don't know what services exist
- I'm not sure if I'm eligible
- I don't know how to apply
- I don't have transportation
- Other (specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q94 if Q88 is 'Yes, I am currently receiving services' OR 'No, but I have previously received services']

94. Where do you **prefer** to receive services?

- Through Los Angeles County (such as CalFresh, Medi-Cal)

Page 19 of 24

- Through community support groups and/or organizations (such as TAY Drop-In Centers, shelters, health clinics, places of worship like churches)

[Display Logic: Show Q95 if Q91 is 'Through community support group and/or organizations']

95. What is the name of the community support group and/or organization that you currently or have received services at?

96. Please rank the following list of things that are most important to you when deciding where to receive services (1 is the most important and 5 is the least important).

- Convenient location
- Services that meet my needs
- Supportive and safe atmosphere
- Trustworthy staff
- Positive reviews from others like my friends or family

----- END SERVICES QUESTIONS -----

End of Block: Behavioral Health

Women with Young Children

[Branching Logic: Show Block if Q5 = 'Female' AND Q10 is NOT 'None' AND Q13 is 'Below' And Q14 is 'No']

Start of Block: Child Welfare and Family Well-Being

----- START SERVICES QUESTIONS -----

The following questions are about the services you may have received for you and/or your child(ren).

97. Have you previously received any of the following services? (Select all that apply)

- Housing
- Food assistance (CalFresh)
- Childcare services
- Counseling, therapy, or mental health services
- Substance abuse treatment
- Parenting education
- Transportation support
- Other (please specify)
- None of the above

Page 20 of 24

[Display Logic: Show Q98 if Q97 is NOT 'None of the above']

98. Where did you previously receive these services? (Select all that apply)

- Through Los Angeles County
- Through community support groups and/or organizations

99. Are you currently receiving any of the following services? (Select all that apply)

- Housing
- Food assistance (CalFresh)
- Childcare services
- Counseling, therapy, or mental health services
- Substance abuse treatment
- Parenting education
- Transportation support
- Other (please specify)
- None of the above

[Display Logic: Show Q100 if Q97 is 'None of the above']

100. Which statement below **best** describes why you are not receiving services?

- I don't need them
- I don't know what services exist
- I'm not sure if I'm eligible
- I don't know how to apply
- I don't have transportation
- Other (specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q101 if Q97 is NOT 'None of the above']

101. Where are you currently receiving these services? (Select all that apply)

- Through Los Angeles County
- Through community support groups and/or organizations

[Display Logic: Show Q102 if Q99 OR Q97 is NOT 'None of the above']

102. Where do you **prefer** to receive services?

- Through Los Angeles County
- Through community support groups and/or organizations

[Display Logic: Show Q103 if Q98 is 'Through community support groups and/or organizations']

103. What is the name of the community support group and/or organization that you currently or have received services at?

[Display Logic: Show Q104 if Q98 is 'Through community support groups and/or organizations']

Page 21 of 24



Client Survey Questions (22-24)

104. Are you aware of Los Angeles County services for you and your child(ren)?

• Yes

• No

[Display Logic: Show Q105 if Q98 is 'Through Los Angeles County']

105. Why do you prefer to receive services through Los Angeles County?

[Display Logic: Show Q106 if Q98 is 'Through community support groups and/or organizations AND Q104 is 'Yes']

106. Why do you prefer to receive housing through community support groups and/or organizations?

107. Are there other services (that you are **not** currently receiving) that would be helpful for you and your child(ren)?

• Yes

• No

[Display Logic: Show Q108 if Q107 is 'Yes']

108. What would be helpful for you and your child(ren)? (Select all that apply)

• Housing

• Food assistance (CalFresh)

• Childcare services

• Counseling, therapy, or mental health services

• Substance abuse treatment

• Parenting education

• Transportation support

• Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q109 if Q97 OR Q99 is NOT 'None of the above']

109. How did you learn about the services and resources available? (Select all that apply)

• Social worker

• Social media

• Family or friends

• Healthcare provider (such as OB/GYN, nurse, or doula)

• Community events

• Flyers or brochures

• Online search (such as Google or Bing)

• Other (please specify)

Page 22 of 24

END SERVICES QUESTIONS

START BARRIERS QUESTIONS

The following questions are about the barriers or challenges you may have faced in getting services for you and/or your child(ren).

[Display Logic: Show Q110 if Q97 OR Q99 is NOT 'None of the above']

110. Have you faced any barriers in accessing services? This could be things like lack of information about what's available, unreliable transportation, and language barriers.

• Yes

• No

[Display Logic: Show Q111 if Q110 is 'Yes']

111. What barriers have you faced in accessing services for you and your child(ren)? (Select all that apply)

• Lack of information about what's available

• Unreliable transportation

• Language barriers

• Long wait times for services

• Difficulty applying

• Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q112 if Q110 is 'Yes']

112. How often have you faced these barriers?

• Always

• Often

• Sometimes

• Rarely

[Display Logic: Show Q113 if Q110 is 'Yes']

113. Have you received help overcoming these barriers?

• Yes

• No

[Display Logic: Show Q114 if Q110 is 'Yes']

114. Who have you received help from? (Select all that apply)

• Family

• Friends

• Los Angeles County

• Community support groups and/or organizations

• Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q115 if Q110 is 'Yes' OR 'No']

115. What additional support would help you overcome these barriers?

Page 23 of 24

END BARRIERS QUESTIONS

End of Block: Child Welfare and Family Well-Being

Survey Closeout

Start of Block: End of Survey Message

116. Are you interested in receiving another gift card? We are offering a \$25 gift card to participate in a one-hour focus group.

• Yes

• No

[Display Logic: Show if Q116 is 'Yes']

Great! We'll email you to set up your focus group. After you finish your focus group, you'll get your second gift card.

Thanks for taking the time to complete this survey! Your answers will be used to help improve LA County services. You'll be emailed your first gift card.

[Display Logic: Show if Q116 is 'No']

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey! Your answers will be used to help improve LA County services. If you provided your name and email address, you'll be emailed your gift card.

End of Block: End of Survey Message

Page 24 of 24

62



Staff Survey Questions

Staff Survey Questions (1-3)

Los Angeles County User Journey Mapping Survey - Staff

Start of Block: Welcome Message

We want to hear from you!

The County of Los Angeles – Chief Executive Office’s Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion Initiative (CEO – ARDI) invites you to share your insights on delivering services to clients across the County. By sharing your opinions of what does and doesn’t work, you can help support an accessible and equitable prevention and promotion service delivery system that is responsive to the needs of County staff and clients.

Before you begin, please note that this survey is specifically aimed at gathering insights related to the following populations. If your work does not involve interactions with these populations in a relevant manner, please exit the survey now.

- **Disconnected Youth** (Youth aged 18-26 who are not in school or working)
- **Transition Age Youth (TAY)** (Youth aged 18-26 who have exited foster care or juvenile justice)
- **Families with Young Children (0-5)** (Women living at or below 250% (for example: this is \$75,700 for a family of four) of the Federal Poverty Level who are not currently involved with the child welfare system)

This survey is optional, anonymous, and should take about 10 minutes to complete. Your voice matters, and your answers will help us find ways for the County to better serve those in need. Together, we can make our community a better place for all.

Thank you for your time!

End of Block: Welcome Message

Start of Block: Role Questions

1. Do you work for Los Angeles County or a Community-Based Organization?
 - Los Angeles County
 - Community-Based Organization

[Display Logic: Show Q2 if Q1 is ‘Los Angeles County Department’]

2. What County organization do you currently work for?
 - CEO – Homeless Initiative (CEO-HI)
 - CEO – ARDI
 - City of LA Workforce Development Board

Page 1 of 14

- Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)
- Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO)
- Department of Health Services (DHS)
- Department of Mental Health (DMH)
- Department of Public Health (DPH)
- Department of Public Social Services (DPSS)
- Department of Youth Development (DYD)
- Emergency Services – Police Department, Fire Department, EMS
- First 5 LA
- Los Angeles County of Education (LACOE)
- Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA)
- Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority (LAHSA)
- Los Angeles County Probation Department (LACPD)
- Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD)
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q3 if Q1 is ‘Los Angeles County Department’]

3. What office/division within your organization do you work within? (e.g., DPH - Office of Violence Prevention)

[Display Logic: Show Q4 if Q1 is ‘Community-Based Organization’]

4. What Community-Based Organization do you currently work for?

5. What is your current role?

- Case Manager
- Communications Officer
- Family Support Specialist
- Fundraising Manager
- Grant Writer
- Outreach Specialist
- Policy Analyst
- Program Coordinator
- Research Analyst
- Social Worker
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Volunteer
- Youth Advocate
- Other (please specify)

6. How long have you been in your current position?
 - Less than 6 months

Page 2 of 14

- 6 months-1 year
- 1-3 years
- 4-6 years
- 7-10 years
- More than 10 years

7. For the following question, Transition Age Youth (TAY) refers to any youth between the ages of 16-26 who is involved or has been previously involved with the foster care and/or juvenile justice systems. Disconnected Youth refers to youth who are 16-26 **and** not in school or employed **and** are not seeking school or employment.

Which populations do you primarily serve? (Select all that apply)

- Foster Care TAY
- Justice-Involved TAY
- Disconnected Youth
- Women with Young Children (0-5) who are at or below 250% (for example: this is \$75,700 for a family of four) of the federal poverty line and not involved with the child welfare system
- None of the above

Note: Survey will end if answer to Q7 is ‘None of the above’

End of Block: Role Questions

[Display Logic: Show Block if Q7 is ‘Foster Care TAY’ or ‘Justice-Involved Youth’]

Start of Block: Homelessness & Housing Questions

— START TRANSITION PLAN QUESTIONS —

The following questions are about youth who had their housing plan change **after** they left foster care and/or juvenile detention.

8. Do you work with youth to help them find a new housing plan after their original transition plan fell through?
 - Yes
 - No

[Display Logic: Show Q9 if Q8 is ‘Yes’]

9. How do youth typically connect with your organization for support with a new housing plan? (Select all that apply)
 - Social worker
 - Probation officer
 - Social media
 - Family or friends
 - Community events

Page 3 of 14



Staff Survey Questions (4-6)

- Flyers or brochures
- Online search (like Google or Bing)
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q10 if Q8 is 'Yes']

10. What are the most common reasons that housing plans fall through? (Select all that apply)

- Unsafe neighborhood
- Lack of financial resources
- Unstable living conditions
- Lack of support
- Legal issues (such as eviction)
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q11 if Q8 is 'Yes']

11. Is there anything unique about serving youth whose original housing plan did not work out? Do they have specific needs or are there specific services that would be most beneficial for them in securing safe and stable housing?

[Display Logic: Show Q12 if Q8 is 'Yes']

12. Do you think that transition planning could be improved to prevent housing plans from failing?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q13 if Q12 is 'Yes']

13. How do you think transition planning could be improved?

END TRANSITION PLAN QUESTIONS

[Display Logic: Show questions if Q2 is 'Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)' OR 'Los Angeles County Probation Department (LACPD)']

START OUTREACH/HANDOFF QUESTIONS

The following questions are about your experience with referring youth to other services **before** they exit the system **and** outreach to these youth **after** they exit the system.

14. Does your organization follow-up with youth after they have left the system?

- Yes
- No

Page 4 of 14

[Display Logic: Show Q14B if Q14 is 'No']

14B. Why does your organization not follow-up with youth after they have left the system?

[Display Logic: Show Q15 if Q14 is 'Yes']

15. When does the follow-up process begin after a youth leaves the system?

- Immediately upon leaving
- Within a week after leaving
- Within a month after leaving
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q16 if Q14 is 'Yes']

16. How often is follow-up conducted?

- One-time
- Weekly
- Bi-weekly
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q17 if Q14 is 'Yes']

17. What methods are used for follow-up? (Select all that apply)

- Phone calls
- Text messages
- Emails
- In-person meetings
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q18 if Q14 is 'Yes']

18. Do you face challenges in conducting follow-ups?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q19 if Q18 is 'Yes']

19. What challenges do you face in conducting follow-up? (Select all that apply)

- Lack of resources
- Difficulty in reaching youth
- Insufficient staff training
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q20 if Q14 is 'Yes']

20. How long does the follow-up process continue after a youth leaves the system?

- Less than 3 months

Page 5 of 14

- 3 to 6 months
- 6 months to 1 year
- More than 1 year
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q21 if Q14 is 'Yes']

21. How effective do you believe the follow-up process is in supporting youth?

- Very effective
- Somewhat effective
- Not effective
- Unsure

22. Does your organization refer youth to other services before they leave the system?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q23 if Q22 is 'Yes']

23. What types of services do you typically refer youth to?

[Display Logic: Show Q24 if Q22 is 'Yes']

24. How often do you conduct warm handoffs for youth transitioning to other services?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

[Display Logic: Show Q25 if Q22 is 'Yes']

25. What does your organization define as a "warm handoff"? (Select all that apply)

- Direct introduction to the next service provider
- Accompanying the youth to the next appointment
- Providing contact information for the next service provider
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q26 if Q22 is 'Yes']

26. How effective do you believe warm handoffs are in supporting youth during their transition?

- Very effective
- Somewhat effective
- Not effective

[Display Logic: Show Q27 if Q22 is 'Yes']

27. What challenges do you face in conducting warm handoffs? (Select all that apply)

Page 6 of 14

Staff Survey Questions (7-9)

- Lack of available services
- Communication issues with service providers
- Insufficient staff training
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q28 if Q22 is 'Yes']

28. How do you track the referrals made to youth?

- Manual tracking
- Software system
- No tracking system in place
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q29 if Q22 is 'Yes']

29. What additional support do you think youth need during the referral process? (Select all that apply)

- Guidance on how to access services
- Assistance with paperwork
- Transportation support
- Other (please specify)

— END OUTREACH/HANDOFF QUESTIONS —

End of Block: Homelessness & Housing Questions

[Display Logic: Show Block if Q7 is 'Disconnected Youth']

Start of Block: Behavioral Health Questions

— START DISCONNECTION QUESTIONS —

The following questions are about your interactions with disconnected youth

30. How often do you interact with disconnected youth in your role?

- Daily
- Several times a week
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Rarely

31. In your interactions, how often do you find that youth express interest in re-engaging with education or employment?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely

Page 7 of 14

[Display Logic: Show Q32 if Q31 is 'Often' OR 'Sometimes' OR 'Rarely']

32. What methods do you use to encourage youth to consider re-engagement? (Select all that apply)

- One-on-one counseling or mentoring
- Group workshops or discussions
- Providing information about available resources
- Connecting youth with peers who have successfully re-engaged
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q33 if Q31 is 'Often' OR 'Sometimes' OR 'Rarely']

33. What challenges do you face when trying to engage youth in discussions about re-engagement? (Select all that apply)

- Lack of trust or rapport with the youth
- Youth's lack of motivation or interest
- Limited resources or options to offer
- Communication barriers (language, understanding)
- Other (please specify)

34. In your experience, what are the most effective strategies for re-engaging youth? (Select all that apply)

- Building strong, trusting relationships
- Providing tailored support based on individual needs
- Offering incentives or rewards for participation
- Creating a safe and supportive environment
- Other (please specify)

35. How do you follow up with youth after initial interactions to maintain their interest in re-engagement? (Select all that apply)

- Regular check-ins via phone or text
- Scheduling follow-up meetings
- Sending reminders about available resources or programs
- Engaging them in ongoing activities or events
- Other (please specify)

36. In your opinion, what are the main reasons for youth disconnection from education and employment? (Select all that apply)

- Personal or family responsibilities
- Health issues (physical or mental)
- Lack of interest or motivation
- Financial constraints
- Issues with the school environment (bullying, lack of support)
- Lack of access to resources or information
- Other (please specify)

Page 8 of 14

37. Based on your experiences, where are disconnected youth currently accessing services? (Select all that apply)

- Los Angeles County services (e.g., CalFresh, Medi-Cal)
- Community-based organizations (e.g., TAY Drop-In Centers, shelters)
- Informal support networks (e.g., family, friends)
- Online resources or platforms
- Other (please specify)

38. How effective do you think current services are in reconnecting youth to education and employment?

- Very effective
- Somewhat effective
- Not effective

— END DISCONNECTION QUESTIONS —

End of Block: Behavioral Health Questions

[Display Logic: Show Block if Q7 is 'Women with Young Children (0-5) who are at or below 250% of the federal poverty line and not involved with the child welfare system']

Start of Block: Women with Young Children Questions

— START WOMEN WITH YOUNG CHILDREN QUESTIONS —

The following questions are about your experiences providing services to women with young children (0-5).

39. In your experience, how often do women with young children (0-5 years) access services?

- Very frequently (weekly)
- Frequently (monthly)
- Occasionally (quarterly)
- Rarely (annually)

40. What types of services do you observe women with young children typically seeking? (Select all that apply)

- Housing assistance
- Food assistance (CalFresh)
- Childcare services
- Counseling, therapy, or mental health services
- Substance abuse treatment
- Parenting education
- Transportation support

Page 9 of 14

Staff Survey Questions (10-12)

- Other (please specify)

41. What barriers do you believe prevent women with young children from accessing services? (Select all that apply)

- Lack of awareness of available services
- Transportation issues
- Eligibility concerns (income limits)
- Complexity of the application process
- Stigma or fear of seeking help
- Personal or family responsibilities
- Difficulty navigating the system and understanding requirements
- Navigational skills needed to access services
- Perception that the benefits are not worth the time and energy required
- Other (please specify)

42. How do you typically engage with women to inform them about available services? (Select all that apply)

- One-on-one counseling or support
- Group workshops or informational sessions
- Providing printed materials (flyers, brochures)
- Referrals from other service providers
- Other (please specify)

43. In your opinion, how effective are the current services in meeting the needs of women with young children?

- Very effective
- Somewhat effective
- Not effective

44. What feedback have you received from women regarding their experiences with accessing services? (Select all that apply)

- Positive experiences and satisfaction
- Difficulty navigating the system
- Need for more tailored services
- Desire for more flexible service options
- Other (please specify)
- I have not received feedback

45. What strategies do you believe could improve access to services for women with young children? (Select all that apply)

- Increased outreach and awareness campaigns
- Simplified application processes
- Enhanced collaboration between service providers
- More transportation assistance options
- Other (please specify)

Page 10 of 14

End of Block: Women with Young Children Questions

Start of Block: Barriers for Clients Questions

The following questions are about barriers or challenges your clients may have when accessing services.

46. Do clients express frustration about accessing services?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q47 if Q46 is 'Yes']

47. How frequently do clients express frustration about accessing services?

- Very frequently
- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never

48. How do you think clients perceive quality of services provided by your organization?

- Very positively
- Positively
- Neutral
- Negatively
- Very negatively

49. Does this differ from their overall perception of Los Angeles County services at-large?

- Yes
- No

50. Why or why not?

51. Have the needs of the populations you serve changed over the past few years?

- Yes
- No

52. Why or why not?

Page 11 of 14

End of Block: Barriers for Clients Questions

Start of Block: Barriers for Staff Questions

The following questions are about barriers or challenges you may face when providing services.

53. Do you face challenges in delivering services to clients?

- Yes
- No

[Display Logic: Show Q54 if Q53 is 'Yes']

54. What challenges do you face? (Select all that apply)

- Cultural competency issues: challenges in understanding and addressing the diverse cultural needs of clients
- Bureaucratic barriers: complicated policies or procedures that hinder service delivery
- Burnout and stress: emotional exhaustion from high demands and challenging work environments
- Client engagement: difficulty in engaging clients or getting them to participate in services
- Inadequate communication: poor communication between staff, clients, and other service providers
- Fragmented services: lack of integration between different services leading to gaps in care
- Time constraints: limited time to provide adequate support or follow-up with clients
- Safety Concerns: issues related to the safety of staff or clients in certain environment
- Other (please specify)

55. What resources would help your organization deliver better services? (Select all that apply)

- Additional staff
- Training and professional development
- Funding for programs
- Access to technology or tools
- Support services (e.g., mental health support for staff)
- Improved collaboration and data sharing
- Enhanced data management systems
- Partnerships with other organizations
- Other (please specify)

56. Does your organization collaborate closely with other County or Community-Based Organization teams?

- Yes
- No

Page 12 of 14



Staff Survey Questions (13-15)

[Display Logic: Show Q57 if Q56 is 'Yes']

57. How often do you collaborate with other organizations or departments to meet client needs?

- Very frequently
- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Rarely

[Display Logic: Show Q58 if Q56 is 'Yes']

58. What types of activities do you collaborate on? (Select all that apply)

- Joint service delivery
- Referrals
- Information sharing
- Training or workshops
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q59 if Q56 is 'Yes']

59. What challenges do you face when trying to coordinate services with other providers? (Select all that apply)

- Lack of shared information or data
- Differing organizational policies
- Scheduling conflicts
- Limited understanding of each other's services
- Other (please specify)

[Display Logic: Show Q60 if Q56 is 'Yes']

60. What suggestions do you have for improving collaboration between your organization and other providers?

[Display Logic: Show Q61 if Q56 is 'Yes']

61. How successful is that collaboration in driving better outcomes for your clients?

- Very successful
- Successful
- Somewhat successful
- Not successful
- Not successful at all

End of Block: Barriers for Staff Questions

Start of Block: Additional Comments

Page 13 of 14

62. Any additional comments you would like to share?

End of Block: Additional Comments

Start of Block: End of Survey Message

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

End of Block: End of Survey Message

Page 14 of 14

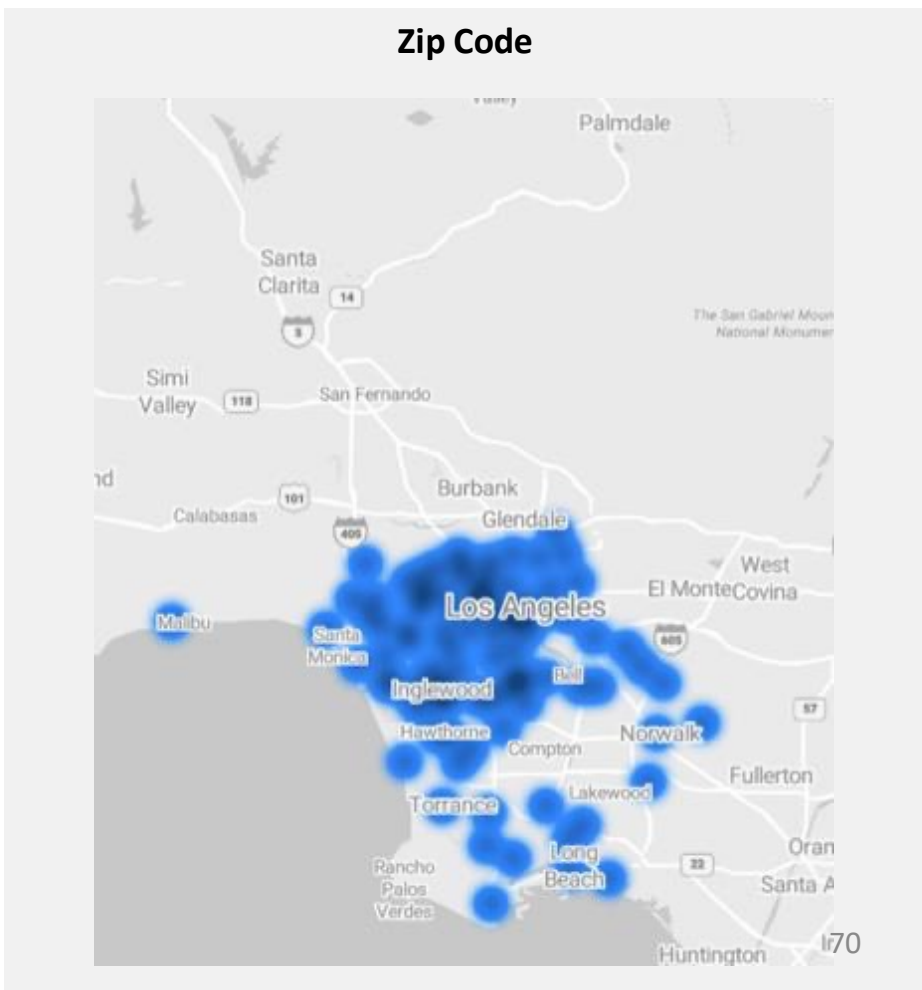
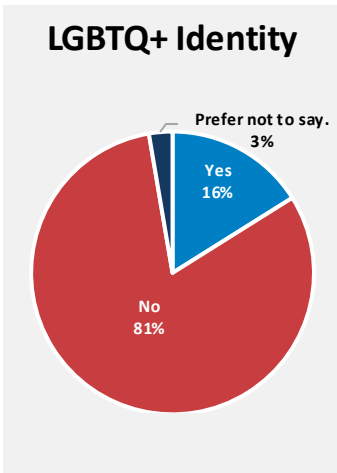
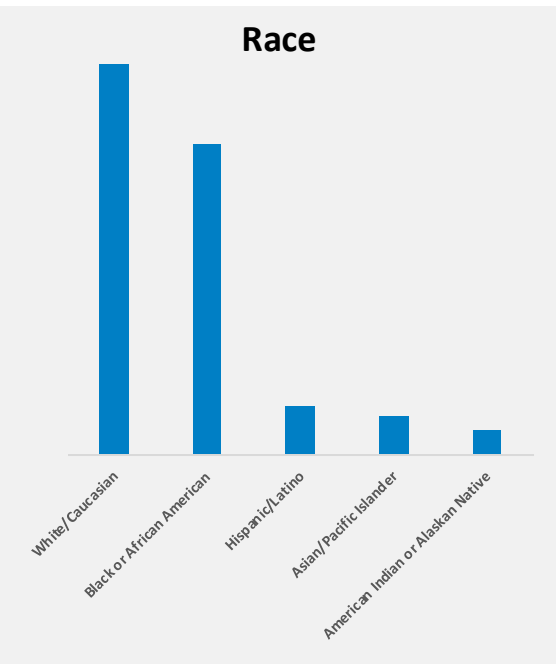
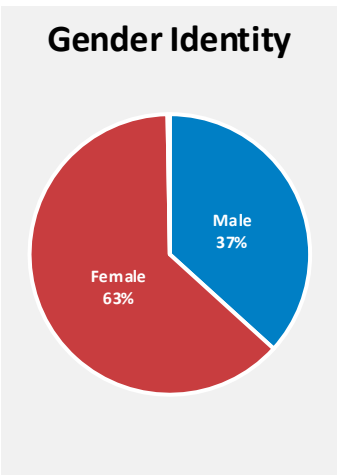
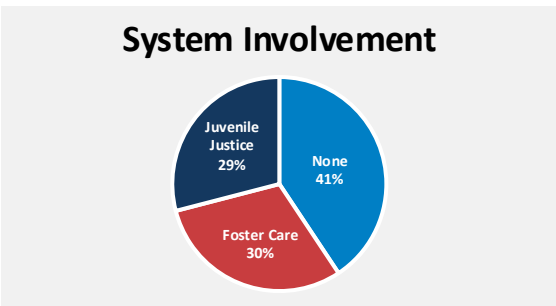
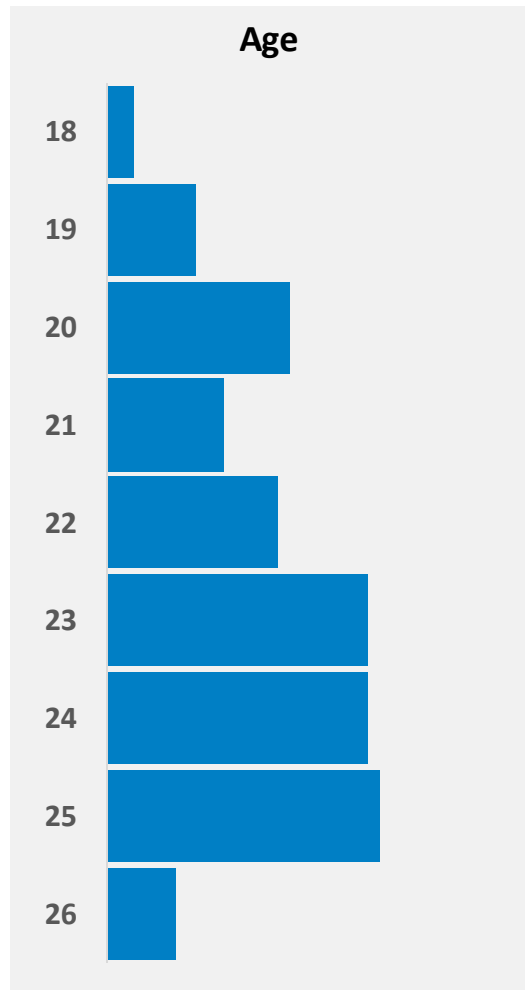


Domain-Specific Findings



Survey Overview: Opportunity Youth

373 respondents that identified as opportunity youth participated in the virtual survey. This broad sample allowed us to surface patterns across geographies, service interactions, and lived realities.



Findings Overview: Opportunity Youth

Disconnection is rarely a single moment – it’s a slow unraveling.

Youth often become disconnected during major life transitions, such as aging out of foster care or juvenile justice, losing housing, or leaving school without a plan. Reconnection is possible – but only when systems meet youth where they are.

Catalysts for Disconnection

Barriers to Reconnection

1

Sudden Loss of Housing
or Family Support

- Disconnection often follows a family crisis like death, incarceration, eviction, or rejection.
- LGBTQ+ youth are at heightened risk of being pushed out of their homes after coming out.
- Youth are told to leave, lose placements, or age out of eligibility without a backup plan.
- Temporary arrangements like couch surfing are unstable and deprioritized in housing systems.
- *“My friend let me stay temporarily, but their partner said I had to leave.”*

2

Challenges with School
and Career Pathways

- Many youth feel unprepared, unsupported, or discouraged by financial and emotional barriers.
- School staff often misinterpret disengagement or absences as apathy, not trauma or other psychological/physical barriers.
- School is seen as a delay, not a pathway, especially when immediate income is needed to survive.
- Career programs often prioritize quick placement over personal goals, leading to disengagement.
- Internships are often unpaid or underpaid, and don’t materialize into full-time jobs.
- *“School felt like a delay when I needed to make money.”*

3

Lack of Navigation and
Trust in Systems

- There’s no centralized access point for programs, and youth often don’t know what they’re eligible for.
- Services rely on outdated flyers and complex applications that place the burden of navigation on youth.
- Past experiences with DCFS, Probation, or school systems erode trust and create fear of surveillance or rejection.
- Therapy is stigmatized, especially in gang-involved communities, and many youth feel like “just a number.”
- *“It’s like trying to climb a mountain with weights tied to your ankles.”*
- *“Long wait times for services and unreliable transportation made it hard to get help.”*



“I’m lost on what I really want in my life... I'm really confused, I'm really lost as to what I want for myself.”

- Opportunity Youth



A Deeper Dive: Opportunity Youth & Education

Education is a crossroads – but many are stuck at the edge

Opportunity youth often avoid school not because they don’t care, but because school doesn’t feel like a viable or safe option. **Many are navigating trauma, financial pressure, and survival needs** that make traditional education feel inaccessible or irrelevant. Reconnection requires more than enrollment – it requires trust and flexibility.

Survey data showed that only 32% of opportunity youth have a high school diploma, and less than 11% have any postsecondary credential. Among those who didn’t finish **high school** or **college**, the top reasons were:

- 1. **Lack of motivation / Financial constraints**
- 2. **Financial constraints / Personal or family responsibilities**
- 3. **Caregiving responsibilities / Lack of interest in continuing**

Nearly three-quarters of these youth indicated that they were not interested in returning to school – many don’t see the value, feel unprepared, or prefer to work. During research sessions, **youth described school as a delay, especially when survival needs were urgent and they felt pressure to contribute to their households**. The opportunity cost of education is too high when youth must choose between attending class and earning money to support themselves or their families.

“Trying to get a kid to sit in a school and go to a classroom vs. a kid going and hustling – money is key.”

Youth shared that **school is not just inaccessible, it’s unsafe**. Some described walking through gang territories just to get to class, facing threats, robberies, and long commutes that drained their energy before the day even began. When they arrived late or missed school, staff often assumed laziness or defiance, not survival. Disconnected youth also described the **punitive consequences of zero-tolerance school policies** – one slip up could result in expulsion. In these cases, without restorative practices or follow-up support, youth are pushed further into isolation, reinforcing the belief that systems abandon rather than invest in them.

Despite these challenges, many youth demonstrate remarkable resilience, creativity, and leadership in their communities. When given **access to flexible learning environments, mentorship, and wraparound support**, they thrive. Programs that **center youth voices and integrate mental health** have shown promising results in re-engaging disconnected youth. Youth have expressed interest in alternative models like hybrid learning, vocational training, and entrepreneurship – approaches that respect their lived realities and build on their strengths.

Survey Data (n = 373)

Educational Attainment	
Type	%
Some High School	30.29%
High School Diploma	32.17%
GED	12.87%
Some College	13.40%
Associate’s Degree	2.95%
Bachelor’s Degree	6.43%
Technical or Trade Degree	0.80%
Advanced Degree	1.07%

Top 3 Supports Needed to Reconnect with School

- 1. Financial assistance
- 2. Flexible class schedules
- 3. Mental health & counseling support

A Deeper Dive: Opportunity Youth & Work

Work is a pathway – but many youth can't find the on-ramp

Opportunity youth often want to work but face a maze of barriers that make employment feel out of reach. Many are **navigating trauma, caregiving responsibilities, and survival needs** that make traditional job pathways inaccessible or irrelevant. Reconnection requires more than job listings, it requires trust, flexibility, and support.

Youth expressed strong interest in careers that reflect their passions and lived experiences, not just job placements that check a box. Many shared that they were interested in:

- **Service-oriented roles** like healthcare, education, and youth advocacy
- **Creative fields** like graphic design, music, and digital media
- **Skilled trades** like IT, construction, and automotive
- **Entrepreneurship**, with some youth wanting to start businesses like barbershops or catering services

Despite these aspirations, youth felt that workforce lacked flexibility and offered low pay or limited hours. Youth shared that completing trainings doesn't materialize into careers that they're interested in or offer livable wages. The survey revealed that **16.5% of youth who completed a program found a job in the career they wanted**, with the rest indicating that they were still searching, working outside their field, or unable to find employment.

"Lots of opportunities are offered to other people and there's a different quality of life for the people given opportunities for jobs and careers."

Mental health was a recurring theme. Youth navigating trauma, instability, and survival often struggled to focus or commit to job training. **Mental health services were described as intimidating, inaccessible, or stigmatized – especially for young men of color and LGBTQ+ youth.** Programs rarely accounted for emotional readiness, and silence or disengagement was often misread as resistance.

Yet even in the face of these challenges, youth consistently expressed a desire to contribute meaningfully to their communities and build futures that reflect their values. When workforce programs are **co-designed with youth, offer paid pathways, and integrate mentorship and mental health supports**, they can unlock powerful outcomes. Some programs have begun to shift toward trauma-informed, culturally responsive (**including non-English speaking**) models that recognize healing as foundational to employment readiness. These approaches are showing early promise in increasing engagement, retention, and long-term success.

Survey Data (n = 373)

Top 3 Reasons for Unemployment

1. Unsure how to find a job that matches skills and interests
2. Personal or family responsibilities that prevent them from working
3. Not interested in working – often due to feeling unprepared or lacking confidence

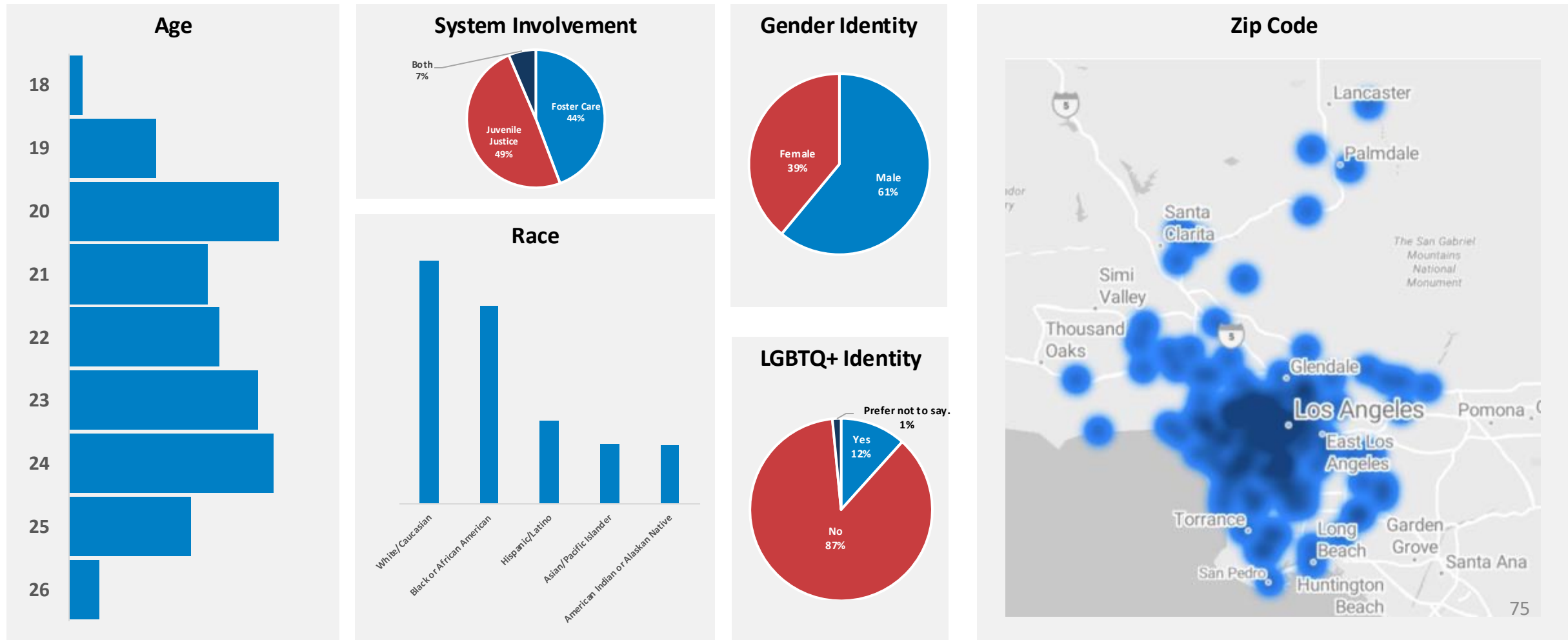
Supports Needed to Reconnect with Work

- Flexible job opportunities (part-time, remote, or adaptable hours)
- Access to job training programs that accommodate their schedule
- Childcare support during job interviews or work hours
- Career counseling, mentorship, and networking opportunities
- Resume writing, interview preparation, and practical workplace skills



Survey Overview: Transition Age Youth

908 respondents that identified as Transition Age Youth (TAY) participated in the virtual survey. This broad sample allowed us to surface patterns across geographies, service interactions, and lived realities.



Findings Overview: Transition Age Youth

Support sometimes ends before stability begins.

TAY exiting systems often face adulthood without the supports needed to thrive. Youth described experiences shaped by instability, unclear pathways, and systems that felt disconnected from their realities.

Experiences Exiting Care

Barriers to Successful Housing Plans

1

Planning That Happens to Youth, Not With Them

- Planning often begins before youth feel emotionally ready and rarely reflects their actual needs or goals.
- Youth are expected to make long-term decisions with little support or trust in the adults guiding them.
- Caseworker turnover disrupts continuity and leaves youth navigating systems alone.
- Youth disengage when services feel judgmental, transactional, or disconnected from their lived experience.
- Systems rarely support grief, loss, or trauma during transitions – especially after adoption or reunification.
- *“I just wanted it to be over with... after so long being in the system.”*

2

Leaving Systems Without a Safety Net

- Many were unaware of extended care options like AB 12 or didn’t trust the system enough to stay engaged.
- Youth aren’t aware of or connected to culturally-relevant resources (including non-English speaking) within their community.
- There is no centralized access point or “one-stop shop” for services, making it difficult to know where to start.
- Youth who want to return to biological families often do so without emotional or logistical support.
- *“After the adoption was done, the social workers just left me alone.”*

3

Labels and Placement Instability Undermine Trust

- Youth experience dozens of placements and social workers, eroding trust and stability.
- Labels like “guarded” or “at-risk” shape how youth are treated, limiting opportunities.
- Substance use is often punished rather than supported with treatment, despite being a coping mechanism.
- Youth reentering care must recount personal histories to verify eligibility, which can feel retraumatizing.
- *“They get your report, your face sheet, and behind it is all these notes describing how you are.”*

4

Reentry That Lacks Individualization and Continuity

- Reentry is often treated as a standardized process, ignoring individual aftercare needs and emotional readiness.
- Probation systems emphasize rule enforcement over relationship-building, reinforcing mistrust.
- Lack of coordinated handoffs between custody and CBO supports leaves youth unsure if anyone will still be there once they’re out.
- *“Lots of opportunities are offered to other people and there's a different quality of life for the people given opportunities for jobs and careers.”*



“There were so many different people I had to go through for different things. It took a lot of energy, I would get stressed out easily, I felt like at this point I just didn't want services anymore.”

- AB 12 Youth



A Deeper Dive: Foster Care Youth

Leaving care isn’t the exit – it’s the beginning of the maze.

For many youth aging out of foster care, the transition into adulthood is marked by uncertainty, disconnection, and a lack of coordinated support. While some youth find stability through programs like AB 12 or THP+, others fall through the cracks – navigating housing instability, emotional exhaustion, and systems that feel impersonal.

Many youth noted that their transition planning started too late – and the **success of their plan was heavily influenced by their social worker’s knowledge of supports and programs**. Youth shared that SILPs lacked behavioral health supports, and THP+ programs – while promising – were competitive and oversubscribed, with waitlists stretching up to a year. Staff emphasized that youth whose housing plans failed often had more complex needs like trauma histories, disrupted family ties, and limited life skills. Youth also expressed a desire for more emotionally safe spaces, culturally grounded (including non-English speaking) mentorship, and flexible services that meet them where they are. Youth were expected to self-navigate complex eligibility rules and application processes, often with limited guidance, and many lost placements simply because they couldn’t keep up with paperwork or deadlines. One youth noted: *“[I] couldn’t keep up with paperwork requirements and missed deadlines, so I lost the spot.”* **Peer networks became lifelines** as youth learned about reentry options like AB 12 from friends and family who had already navigated the system. These informal channels were more effective than official outreach, underscoring a broader challenge.

Reconnecting with biological families was a deeply held hope for many, but rarely supported in practice and lacked relational healing or therapeutic support. **Reunification was treated as a housing solution, not a relational one, leaving youth to navigate unresolved trauma and strained dynamics alone**. Post-adoption support revealed another systemic blind spot, with youth experiencing a sudden and disorienting drop-off in services once their case was closed. The assumption that permanency ends with legal finalization ignored the reality that stability is a process, not a milestone. When unexpected life changes occurred – such as the death of a caregiver – youth were left adrift, with no safety net or clear pathway back to support. Following adoption, one youth shared that *“The bridge or veil to knowing where resources are has been put up again, and I don’t know where to start.”*

Social workers who went above and beyond were described as steady presences who built trust over time, celebrated small wins, and showed up in moments of crisis and growth. One youth shared that after a traumatic car accident, **the first person they called was their social worker** – a turning point that led to school enrollment and housing stability. Social workers also helped youth reconnect with siblings and access trauma-informed therapy. Programs like **Guardian Scholars, peer mentorship networks, and drop-in centers** staffed by trauma-informed professionals have also created safe spaces where youth feel seen, heard, and supported. These environments offer not just services, but dignity – a reminder that youth are more than their case files.

Survey Data (n = 460)

Question & Responses	%
Did your original housing plan change?	
Yes	49.57%
THP	54.39%
SILP	23.68%
Supportive Housing	16.23%
APPLA	3.07%
Other	2.63%
No	50.43%
THP	38.79%
SILP	27.16%
Supportive Housing	25.86%
APPLA	6.03%
Other	2.16%
When did your plan change?	
Within first week	19.30%
Within first month	31.58%
Within first 3 months	31.58%
+3 months later	17.54%
Did you find new housing?	
Yes	66.23%
No	33.77%
Did you seek help finding new housing?	
Yes	71.49%
No	28.51%



“Justice-involved youth often have unique needs when their original housing plan does not work out. Many have experienced trauma, disrupted family ties, and limited financial resources.”

- Staff



A Deeper Dive: Juvenile Justice Youth

Stability requires more than a bed – it requires belonging.

For youth exiting the juvenile justice system, the journey toward stability is shaped by trauma, institutional distrust, and a patchwork of services that often feel more like surveillance than support. Youth noted that programs emphasized compliance over connection, and disengagement was frequently misread as defiance.

Survey data revealed that youth often enter the juvenile justice system during mid-adolescence, with a sharp peak at age 17, just before legal adulthood. This late entry point suggests that **many interventions come too late to prevent deeper system involvement**. Once inside, youth encounter rigid structures that prioritize rule enforcement over relationship-building. Probation is frequently described as punitive and impersonal, reinforcing the very disconnection it aims to prevent.

Youth exiting custody often face abrupt transitions with little continuity. Staff acknowledge release planning lacks coordination, and follow-up is rare due to policy restrictions, high caseloads, and the absence of dedicated units. Youth must self-navigate complex systems where youth describe feeling like “just a number,” saying **“the system is built to deplete you of your spirit and hope.” Step-down THPs (with clear regulations and structured support) have high success rates** and are often described as stabilizing environments. These programs offer consistency, mentorship, and pathways to independence. However, the proliferation of unregulated THPs presents serious challenges as they lack formal oversight.

Therapy is stigmatized, especially in gang-involved communities, and many youth fear judgment or exposure. **Help-seeking feels risky** in systems that criminalize coping and discourage honesty. Youth who are ready to engage often face **long waitlists, provider shortages, and bureaucratic delays** that leave healing up to luck rather than design.

Gang involvement remains a powerful force in the lives of justice-involved youth. For many, **gangs offer a sense of belonging, protection, and identity** that systems fail to provide. The **absence of community-rooted, culturally relevant (including non-English speaking) prevention programs leaves youth vulnerable to recruitment**. Institutional programs inside juvenile facilities are often compliance-driven, not trauma-responsive. Resistance is labeled as defiance rather than a survival response to harm.

Critical messengers (often mentors/staff with lived experience) play a transformative role in bridging the gap between custody and community. But their true impact is realized when that relationship continues after release. Programs **that eliminate the gap between confinement and community** – through coordinated handoffs, relational probation, and trauma-informed mentorship – show promise in increasing engagement and reducing recidivism.

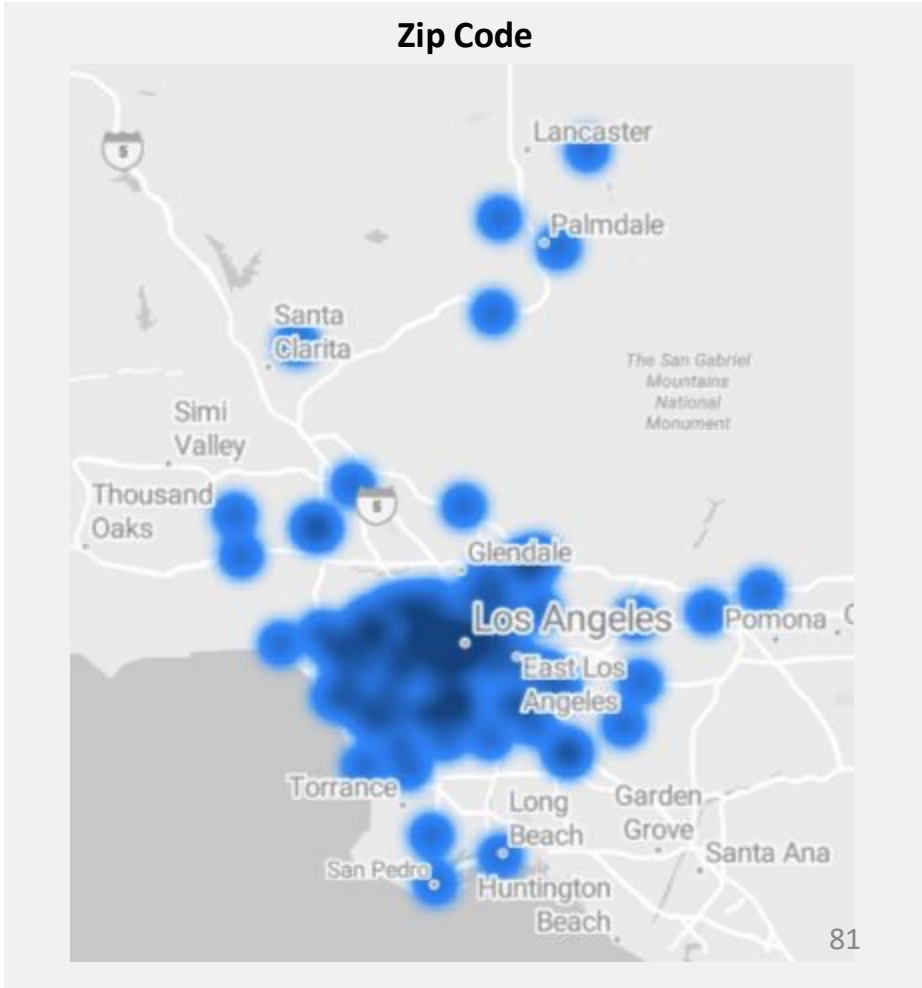
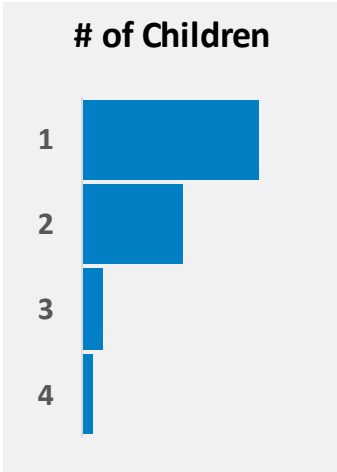
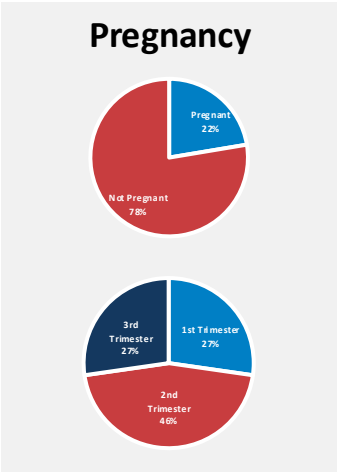
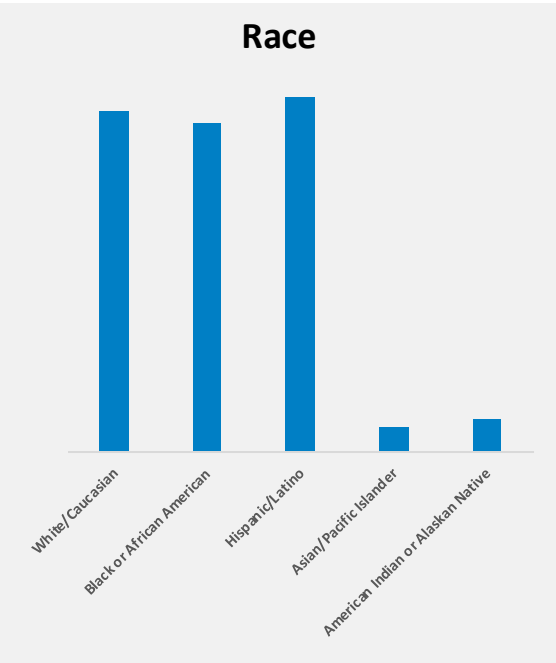
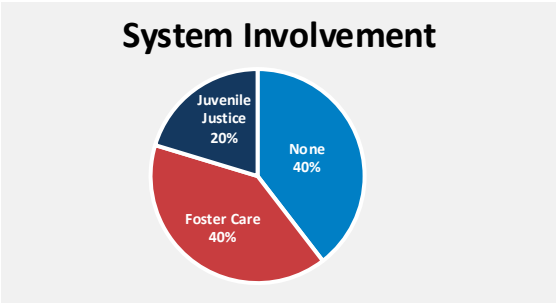
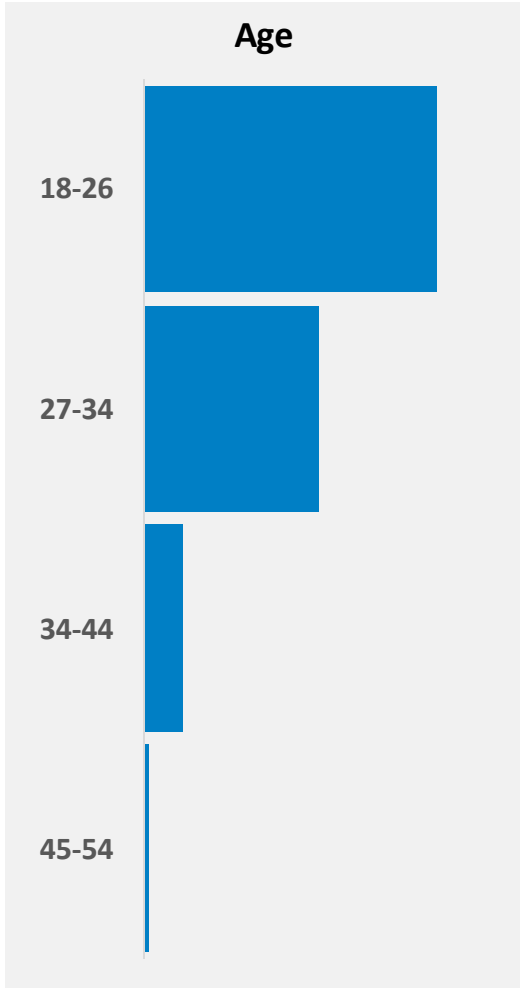
Survey Data (n = 506)

Question & Responses	%
Did your original housing plan change?	
Yes	71.34%
THP	43.13.%
SILP	28.30%
Supportive Housing	26.96%
APPLA	1.35%
Other	0.27%
No	28.66%
THP	32.41%
SILP	25.52%
Supportive Housing	33.10%
APPLA	4.83%
Other	4.14%
When did your plan change?	
Within first week	24.93%
Within first month	35.73%
Within first 3 months	25.18%
+3 months later	4.16%
Did you find new housing?	
Yes	89.47%
No	10.53%
Did you seek help finding new housing?	
Yes	92.24%
No	7.76%



Survey Overview: Women with Young Children

295 respondents that identified as Women with Young Children participated in the virtual survey. This broad sample allowed us to surface patterns across geographies, service interactions, and lived realities.





Findings Overview: Women with Young Children

Confusion is the first step in seeking help.

For many women with young children, accessing basic services like healthcare, food, or housing support means navigating a maze of disconnected systems. Each agency has its own rules, timelines, and processes, often leaving families confused, overwhelmed, and without clear answers.

Ability to Access Care

Barriers to Accessing Services

1

Fragmented Access and System Navigation Challenges

- Women often face a maze of disconnected services with unclear eligibility rules, long wait times, and inconsistent follow-up.
- Even when programs like Medi-Cal, WIC, or CalFresh are technically available, navigating them requires time, digital literacy, and persistence that many don't have.
- Lack of coordination across hospitals, departments, and programs leads to missed opportunities for support, especially during postpartum recovery.
- *"I felt lost. Every office had a different answer, and the websites were confusing."*

2

Emotional Risk and Mistrust in Systems

- Many mothers, especially Black women, fear that seeking help, particularly for mental health, could trigger surveillance or child welfare involvement. This fear leads to silence, avoidance of therapy, and emotional isolation during critical periods.
- Mothers indicated that they were unable to identify the symptoms of postpartum depression and wouldn't know who to ask for help.
- The burden of "performing stability" during home visits or intake appointments adds stress.
- *"Black women are supposed to be strong... asking for help isn't always safe."*

3

Economic Insecurity Compounded by "Making too Much" for Services

- Rigid income thresholds disqualify families from essential benefits, even when they are struggling to afford rent, childcare, and healthcare.
- Program regulations often fails to account for caregiving labor, co-pays, or regional cost of living, leaving working families without a safety net.
- *"[My benefits denial letter] didn't mention the \$2,800 rent, the \$400 grocery bill, or the \$300 I spent on co-pays."*

4

The Role – and Limits – of Community-Based Support

- CBOs and home visiting programs like Welcome Baby provide relational care that builds trust and emotional safety.
- When embedded in hospitals and delivered by culturally responsive (including non-English speaking) staff, these programs can interrupt cycles of isolation and mistrust.
- Access to key services is uneven and often dependent on geography, hospital affiliation, or chance encounters – leaving many families unsupported.
- *"[My home visitor was] an angel sent from God because I was very depressed."*



“Black women are supposed to be strong, resilient. We get beaten down by life and asking for help is not always chalked up to what it seems based on how we were raised to be strong.”

- Woman with Children

A Deeper Dive: Prenatal Care

Too much to carry, too little support.

Pregnancy can be a time of hope, uncertainty, and overwhelming responsibility, especially for women navigating it with limited resources. But instead of feeling supported, many expectant mothers described a system that offered help in ways that didn't meet them where they were.

For many pregnant women in LA County, the journey to accessing prenatal services begins with a flyer – handed out in a clinic waiting room or tucked into discharge paperwork. But when you're juggling work, school, childcare, and the emotional weight of pregnancy, that **flyer often ends up buried under bills and baby supplies**. Women described rushed clinic visits, where providers had limited time to explain benefits or make warm handoffs. Instead of coordinated care, they were given lists of programs with **little guidance on how to apply or eligibility**. Digital systems like BenefitsCal and WIC portals were **filled with jargon and unclear steps**, leaving women to guess their way through eligibility.

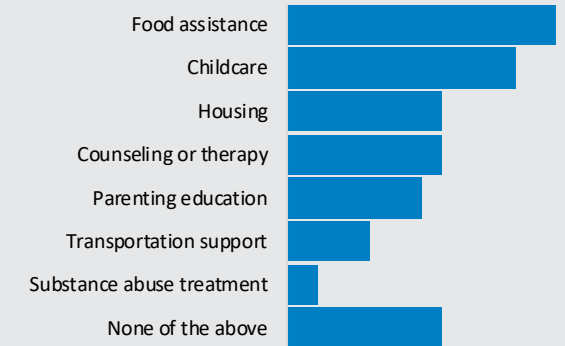
Transportation and childcare barriers made it hard to attend appointments, and the emotional toll of navigating these systems alone was heavy. Some women relied on family or friends to help interpret flyers or coach them through what to say at the DPSS office. Others gave up after being told they were in the wrong place or didn't qualify. One mom shared, *"I wish the programs understood how much we're already juggling. I'm working, studying, and trying to be a good mom – just give me a little grace."*

For young women who had previously been in foster care, **pregnancy often brought a new layer of fear around re-engaging with systems**. While programs like AB 12 could offer housing and financial support, the emotional cost felt too high. For some, the fear wasn't just about their own experience, it was about what might happen to their child. One mom shared, *"This is a scary situation. I would not put myself in that situation... To reopen a DCFS case for what... just to get housing? No, no, no. There's other alternatives."* Even when trusted adults like former social workers suggested AB 12 as a pathway to stability, the reaction was often visceral – tense, guarded, and filled with worry that any misstep could lead to child welfare involvement.

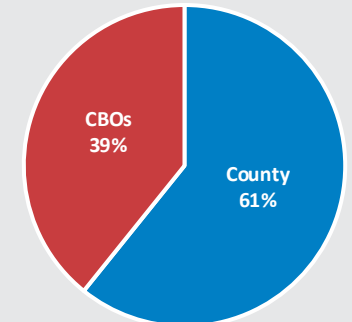
Mothers who preferred to access services through the County noted that these programs felt more trustworthy, familiar, and safe. They described **County services as easier to access, more reliable, and better known** – especially when juggling multiple responsibilities. The official status of County programs gave them **confidence that the support would be consistent and legitimate**. Many appreciated the ability to access multiple services in one place, reducing the need to navigate disconnected systems.

Survey Data (n = 66)

Services Currently Received



Preferred Place to Receive Services



Top 3 Reasons for Not Receiving Services

1. Unsure if eligible
 2. Not sure how to apply
 3. Don't know what services exist
- 84

A Deeper Dive: Postnatal Care

Postpartum care that feels conditional, confusing, or out of reach.

Postpartum recovery is a vulnerable time – physically, emotionally, and financially. Moms reported that the systems meant to support them felt distant, confusing, or even threatening. From inaccessible mental health care to unclear benefit rules, the journey after birth was often marked by exhaustion, isolation, and confusion.

After giving birth, many mothers were met with confusion, fear, and silence. Mental health support was described as either **inaccessible due to cost or emotionally unsafe due to fear of surveillance**. **Black mothers feared that disclosing emotional struggles could trigger child welfare** involvement. Many moms expressed a **desire for someone to talk to who wasn't family** who was neutral, trained, and emotionally safe. Even when surrounded by relatives, the emotional weight of postpartum recovery was often carried alone. Moms shared that they weren't able to identify signs of postpartum depression, with one sharing, *"I was depressed for a whole year. I didn't know what postpartum was until after."*

Mothers of children with disabilities described feeling disconnected from other parents and unsure where to turn for support. They wanted to be part of communities that understood their experiences. *"There wasn't that much help. It would have been nice to be introduced to a support network, regardless of how small it is."*

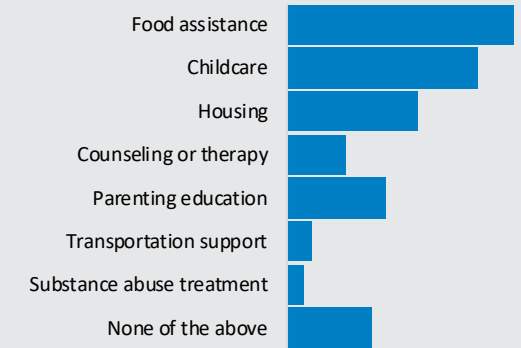
Home visiting programs embedded in hospitals and delivered by culturally responsive staff, were described as lifelines. Parent coaches built long-term relationships with mothers, helping them access therapy, early intervention, and public benefits. But access was confusing as some mothers received home visits for one child but not another. Eligibility seemed to depend on hospital location or timing which left families confused and frustrated. *"They were there for my first and third, but not my second. I still don't know why,"* one mom shared.

Even when mothers had legitimate needs, **income-based thresholds often disqualified them**. They were told they "made too much" for benefits, despite having no disposable income. Rent, groceries, diapers, and co-pays added up quickly, and the **system rarely accounted for caregiving labor or cost of living**. Navigating insurance was described as exhausting and demoralizing. Moms spent hours on hold, chasing paperwork, and re-submitting documents just to keep coverage active. *"It took months to get reactivated despite them having all the info. I had to chase after them while working and parenting."*

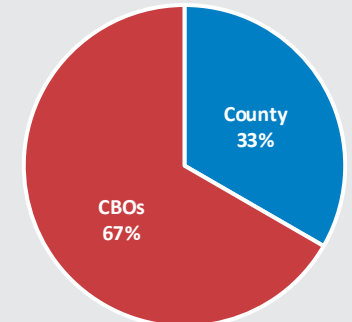
County enforcement actions – like initiating child support – sometimes occurred without client consent. These actions **fractured co-parenting relationships and added stress to already fragile family dynamics**.

Survey Data (n = 229)

Services Currently Received



Preferred Place to Receive Services



Top 3 Reasons for Not Receiving Services

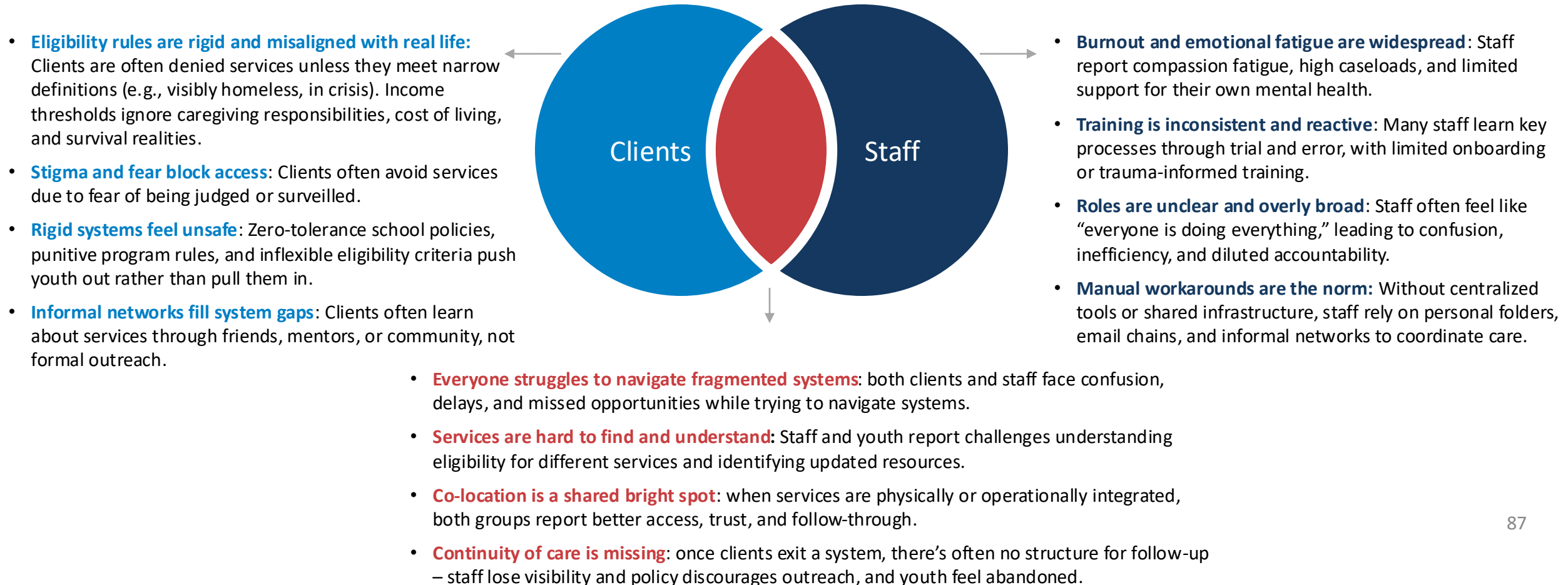
1. Unsure if eligible
 2. Not sure how to apply
 3. Don't know what services exist
- 85



Thematic Analysis of Findings

An Introduction: Commonly Heard Challenges

Both clients and staff describe a system that is **difficult to navigate, overly rigid, and often out of sync with real-world needs**. From confusing eligibility rules to fragmented services and a lack of follow-up, the design of current policies and practices creates barriers that undermine trust, limit access, and strain those trying to give or receive support. Although the list below does not capture every finding, it **highlights commonly heard challenges across clients and staff**.



Thematic Analysis: Client Findings

Through research activities with individuals with lived experience, several key categories emerged that highlight **what makes systems feel supportive – and what still gets in the way.**



1. Access & Equity

The fairness and clarity of pathways to services, including how eligibility is determined and how easily individuals can navigate systems to get support.



2. Relationship-Centered Support

The quality and consistency of personal connections between individuals and staff, emphasizing trust, empathy, and continuity over time.



3. Healing & Identity Affirmation

The extent to which systems create emotionally safe, culturally aligned (including non-English speaking) spaces that support personal healing and affirm lived experience and identity.



4. Youth-Led Pathways to Growth

The degree to which systems support youth in setting and pursuing their own goals – educational, creative, or career-related – on their own terms.



5. Community & Peer Connection

The role of peer relationships and informal networks in fostering belonging, trust, and reengagement outside of formal systems.



Access & Equity: Findings

Access and equity emerged as a critical theme across conversations, especially with youth from marginalized communities like those at the LGBT Center. Their stories revealed how **eligibility rules, documentation barriers, and system design often feel confusing, unsafe, or out of reach**, which reinforces fear and mistrust instead of offering support.

1. Eligibility Rules Are Rigid and Misaligned

- Clients are often denied services unless they meet narrow definitions (e.g., visibly homeless, in crisis).
- Income-based thresholds ignore caregiving responsibilities, cost of living, and real-life expenses, which leads to denied support for families who have no disposal income – forcing them to choose between survival and stability.
- Youth from mixed-status families fear applying for services due to immigration risks.
- **Bright Spot:** When staff proactively explain eligibility and advocate for clients, access improves – especially when they help clients reframe their situation in language systems recognize.

2. Documentation and ID Barriers

- Lack of ID, birth certificates, or SSNs blocks access to housing, jobs, and benefits.
- Youth noted challenges and/or significant delays with getting their case files.
- Youth shared stories of identity theft by biological parents, making it impossible to open bank accounts or apply for housing.
- **Bright Spot:** Some CBOs offer help recovering documents or navigating identity theft, but these services are not widely known or funded.

3. Digital Access and Literacy Gaps

- Many clients lack access to a computer, phone, or reliable internet.
- Digital systems require persistence, literacy, and time – resources many don't have.

- Even when tools exist, they're often filled with jargon and not user-friendly.
- **Bright Spot:** Some clients appreciated being able to complete applications online when supported by staff or peer navigators who walked them through the process.

4. System Navigation Is Overwhelming

- Clients are unsure where to go, how to sign up, or what they're eligible for.
- Flyers and websites are often outdated, overwhelming, or inaccessible.
- Intake systems are rigid and don't capture nuance; clients often say "I'm fine" to avoid deeper questions.
- **Bright Spot:** Peer-led navigation and trauma-informed intake practices help bridge trust gaps and reduce confusion.

5. Fear, Stigma, and Mistrust Undermine Access

- Youth and families fear surveillance, judgment, or being labeled when seeking help.
- Past negative experiences with systems (e.g., DCFS involvement) lead some to avoid services altogether.
- Seeking help is often seen as risky, not safe.
- **Bright Spot:** When staff lead with empathy and/or lived experience, clients feel safer and more willing to engage.



"We aren't designing using a human-centered approach. This is solvable if government focuses on user-centered design."

- Staff



Relationship-Centered Support: Findings

Across interviews and journey mapping sessions, clients consistently emphasized that **relationships with staff were just as important as the services themselves**. When trust, empathy, and consistency were present, clients felt safe enough to engage. But when relationships were disrupted or impersonal, many disengaged – even when help was available.

1. Staff Turnover and Disrupted Continuity

- Youth described frequent caseworker changes as abrupt and uncommunicated.
- Each transition forced them to retell painful stories, which was emotionally exhausting.
- Positive relationships with staff were often broken by promotions, emergencies, or transfers.
- **Bright Spot:** When transitions were handled with transparency and warm handoffs, youth felt respected and more willing to stay engaged.

2. Feeling Like “Just a Number”

- Youth said they felt like “just a number” in public systems.
- Services felt transactional, rushed, and focused on paperwork rather than connection.
- Youth disengaged when they sensed staff didn’t care or were just “checking boxes.”
- **Bright Spot:** Youth felt affirmed when staff remembered their name, followed up, or showed genuine interest in their goals and wellbeing.

3. No Follow-Up After Exit

- Youth reported that once they exited a program or aged out of care, support ended abruptly.
- There was no structure for ongoing contact, and they often didn’t know where to turn next, which left them feeling disconnected and unsupported during critical transitions.

- **Bright Spot:** Programs that offered alumni check-ins, peer mentorship, or informal follow-up helped youth feel like they still mattered

4. Rigid Intake Undermines Connection

- Intake processes were described as cold, rushed, and overly focused on documentation.
- Systems prioritized compliance over care, making it hard to build trust.
- **Bright Spot:** Trauma-informed intake (most commonly used at CBOs and drop-in centers) – where staff led with warmth, listened first, and met immediate needs – helped youth feel safe enough to engage.

5. Trust is Built Through Consistency

- Youth emphasized that trust wasn’t built through one-time gestures – it came from staff who showed up consistently, followed through, and didn’t give up on them.
- Even small acts like remembering a birthday or checking in after a missed appointment made a difference.
- **Bright Spot:** Staff who lead with empathy, presence, and cultural humility foster healing and long-term engagement.



“I wish my social workers weren't spread thin.. they would've gotten to know who I really am.”

-Foster Youth



Healing & Identity Affirmation: Findings

Clients consistently emphasized that healing is not just about accessing services, it's **about feeling emotionally safe, culturally understood, and affirmed in their identity**. When systems failed to recognize trauma or imposed labels, many disengaged. But when care was trauma-informed and culturally aligned, clients described those spaces as transformative.

1. Therapy Feels Risky, Not Safe

- Youth and mothers feared that seeking therapy could lead to surveillance or child welfare involvement.
- Black mothers described therapy as emotionally unsafe due to racial bias and fear of being reported.
- Youth in gang-involved communities said therapy was stigmatized or felt like punishment.
- Youth expressed interest in alternative therapies, like video games, field trips, nature walks, etc.
- **Bright Spot:** When therapy was delivered by culturally aligned providers with lived experience, it became a space for healing rather than surveillance.

2. Retelling Trauma Undermines Healing

- Youth described therapy fatigue from having to restart their healing process with every new provider or placement.
- Constantly retelling their story made it feel like it no longer belonged to them.
- Intake systems often reduced complex experiences to labels like “guarded” or “at-risk.”
- **Bright Spot:** Trauma-informed intake that prioritized listening and emotional readiness helped youth feel safe enough to engage.

3. Labels and Case Files Shape Identity

- Youth said their “face sheet” followed them across placements, shaping how staff treated them.
- Being labeled limited opportunities and reinforced shame.

- **Bright Spot:** Staff who saw youth beyond their file – who asked about goals and affirmed strengths – helped rebuild identity and trust.

4. Cultural Alignment Builds Trust

- Youth were more likely to engage when staff understood their cultural background and didn't require them to defend or explain their trauma.
- LGBTQ+ youth and youth of color described feeling unseen or judged in mainstream programs.
- **Bright Spot:** Programs that offered gender-affirming care, spiritual support, or culturally grounded mentorship created spaces of belonging.

5. Healing Requires Time and Presence

- Youth said healing couldn't be rushed or forced. They needed time to build trust and feel emotionally ready.
- Systems often expected immediate engagement, missing quiet moments of vulnerability.
- **Bright Spot:** Staff who showed up consistently, offered low-pressure support, and followed through created rare spaces for emotional safety.

6. Employment and Mentorship Reinforce Identity

- Youth found healing in jobs that offered mentorship, gradual responsibility, and belief in their potential.
- **Bright Spot:** When work settings prioritized belonging and growth, youth felt affirmed and motivated. Youth noted that mentorship and peer relationships are key for their success.



Youth-Led Pathways to Growth: Findings

Youth consistently shared that they want more than services – they want agency. Whether pursuing education, creative passions, or career goals, they emphasized **the importance of being heard, having choices, and setting their own direction**. When systems made decisions for them or prioritized quick fixes over long-term growth, youth felt unseen.

1. Education Feels Like a Delay, Not a Pathway

- Youth described school as a barrier when survival needs made income more urgent.
- Traditional education felt inaccessible, irrelevant, or unsafe, especially for youth navigating trauma or gang territories.
- Zero-tolerance policies and lack of restorative practices pushed youth out of school.
- **Bright Spot:** College trips, hands-on support (e.g., Guardian Scholars), and social workers who go above and beyond helped youth see education as achievable and worth pursuing.

2. Career Programs Prioritize Placement Over Passion

- Workforce programs often focus on quick job placement, not long-term goals.
- Youth felt boxed into low-wage jobs or roles that didn't reflect their interests.
- Creative and entrepreneurial aspirations were rarely supported.
- **Bright Spot:** Mentors who aligned short-term stability with long-term dreams helped youth feel hopeful and motivated.

3. Internships and Training Don't Lead to Livable Wages

- Many internships were unpaid or underpaid, and didn't lead to full-time jobs (despite program promises that completion would materialize into a job)
- Youth wanted paid opportunities that respected their time and offered real career pathways.
- **Bright Spot:** Programs that offered stipends for participation, flexible hours, and skill-building were more engaging and effective.

4. Youth Voice Is Overridden by Adult Decision-Making

- Youth described planning processes as performative, where decisions were made by adults without their input.
- Services often assumed readiness or interest without asking youth what they actually wanted or needed.
- Staff made long-term decisions on behalf of youth, sometimes before youth felt emotionally ready.
- **Bright Spot:** Youth shared that when they had advocates on their behalf, they receive more consistent care and were better listened to.

5. Consistent Youth Voice Is Missing in Program Design

- Youth felt disconnected from decisions that shaped their services.
- Programs were often designed without authentic youth input, leading to low engagement.
- **Bright Spot:** Youth-led initiatives, advisory boards, and co-design spaces helped youth feel heard and invested.

6. No Clear Pathways for Creative or Entrepreneurial Goals

- Youth interested in arts, media, or starting a business struggled to find support.
- Systems lacked formal pathways for non-traditional careers.
- **Bright Spot:** When youth were connected to mentors or programs that embraced their vision (e.g., barbershops, nonprofits), they thrived.



Community & Peer Connections: Findings



Across all populations, clients emphasized that healing and reengagement often begin outside of formal systems. **Peer relationships and informal networks through friends, mentors, older siblings, and community members played a critical role in helping individuals feel safe, informed, and motivated to access resources.**

1. Peer Networks Fill System Gaps

- Individuals often learn about programs like AB 12, housing, job training, and resources through friends and family, not formal outreach.
- Informal networks are more trusted and accessible than official channels.
- **Bright spot:** Youth reported that their friend's engagement encouraged them to reenter care, showing how lived experience can bridge systemic distrust. Clients also reported the community centers provided outlets to build community and connect with others.

2. Peer Mentorship Transforms Fear into Empowerment

- Youth described peer mentors as critical to navigating intimidating systems like benefits, housing, and education.
- Shared lived experience made mentors feel safe and relatable.
- Youth shared confusion around how to find mentors.

3. Informal Networks Provide Survival Support

- In the absence of accessible food, safety, and mentorship, youth turn to informal networks (sometimes gangs) for protection and belonging.
- These networks meet basic needs when systems fail.

4. Culturally Grounded Community Spaces Are Rare but Powerful

- Youth described a lack of affirming, identity-safe spaces in their neighborhoods.
- When culturally relevant programs existed (**including non-English speaking**), they fostered connection and healing.
- **Bright Spot:** DYD's community-based model – Heart of Youth Justice Reimagined – was praised by youth for integrating cultural practices and youth voices into programming.

5. Male Mentorship is Critically Missing

- Many boys raised in female-led households lacked access to emotionally available male role models, leaving youth to search for identity and guidance in risky environments.

Thematic Analysis: Staff Findings

Through research activities with County and CBO staff, several key categories emerged that reflect shared experiences in providing services. These themes highlight **what supports staff in showing up fully – and what makes it harder to do so.**



1. Workforce Sustainability & Emotional Resilience

The capacity of staff to maintain their well-being and effectiveness over time, shaped by caseloads, emotional demands, and recovery supports.



2. System Navigation & Coordination

The ability of staff to move across departments and programs, connect services, and support continuity of care despite fragmented infrastructure.



3. Training, Tools & Knowledge Infrastructure

The systems and resources that equip staff with the information, guidance, and skills needed to serve clients confidently and consistently.



4. Service Design & Role Clarity

The structure and expectations of staff roles, including how well they support personalized, flexible, and client-centered engagement.



5. Policy-Practice Alignment

The degree to which rules, funding, and protocols reflect the realities staff face – and support rather than constrain responsive care.



Workforce Sustainability & Emotional Resilience: Findings

Staff across departments described the emotional toll of their work – balancing high caseloads, limited resources, and the weight of client trauma. Many shared that burnout and compassion fatigue were common, especially when support systems for staff were inconsistent or unavailable.

1. Burnout and Compassion Fatigue Are Widespread

- Staff described emotional exhaustion from working with deeply traumatized clients, often without time to process. They wished that there were more mental health resources onsite for their wellbeing.
- High caseloads and limited relational continuity made it difficult to build trust or follow through.
- Some staff reported feeling numb or disconnected after years in the field.
- **Bright Spot:** Regular check-ins and a “family-like” team culture helped staff feel emotionally grounded.

2. Caseloads & Capacity Are Unsustainable

- Staff described juggling 60+ youth or families, with no time to build meaningful relationships or follow through.
- Probation staff noted that major staff shortages have pulled Probation Officers (POs) from the field to staff juvenile halls, creating large caseloads for the few remaining POs.
- Social worker and PO turnover only compounds caseloads, leaving staff feeling overwhelmed.

“

Not enough front-line staff working with clients, especially when so much data entry and last-minute requests are made.

”

- Staff



System Navigation & Coordination: Findings

Staff described the challenge of **navigating fragmented systems** while trying to support clients. Without shared infrastructure, clear handoff protocols, or cross-agency visibility, coordination often relied on individual effort and informal workarounds.

1. Fragmented Systems Create Gaps in Care

- Staff described having to manually bridge gaps between disconnected systems like DCFS, DPSS, DMH, and LAHSA – which was difficult and required significant manual efforts to identify the right point of contact at different departments.
- Lack of shared data systems and referral tracking leads to missed opportunities and duplicated efforts.
- Inability to see the full view of a client and their comprehensive services made comprehensive care more challenging.

2. Warm Handoffs Are Inconsistent or Nonexistent

- Transitions between departments often lacked structure and enforceable policy, leaving youth and families confused and unsupported in transitions.
- Staff noted that without intentional coordination, momentum toward permanency or stabilization was frequently lost.

3. Staff Must Navigate Without Shared Infrastructure

- Many staff reported relying on email chains, word of mouth, paper forms, and phone calls to track housing openings, benefits status, and service referrals.
- **Bright Spot:** High-performing teams developed shared repositories for tracking available resources, but noted that it's a significant manual effort.

“
We face challenges with communication gaps between agencies, different eligibility requirements, fragmented systems causing gaps in care.
”
- Staff



Training, Tools & Knowledge Infrastructure: Findings

Staff consistently shared that their **ability to serve clients confidently and consistently depends on the tools and training they receive**. But across departments, training was often reactive, fragmented, or missing altogether, especially around trauma-informed care.

1. Training Is Inconsistent and Often Reactive

- Staff reported learning key processes (e.g., AB 12 eligibility, housing referrals) through trial and error or informal peer guidance.
- Staff expressed frustration with policy documents that were too long or frequently changed, making it hard to stay current.
- New staff lacked standardized onboarding, leading to varied practices and confusion.

2. Trauma-Informed Training Is Critically Missing

- Staff repeatedly noted a lack of trauma-informed training, especially for those working with youth who have experienced deep emotional and systemic harm.
- Staff felt unprepared to respond to youth in crisis or build trust with those carrying trauma

3. Staff Rely on Informal Tools to Fill Gaps

- Many staff used Google, ChatGPT, or personal folders to find updated eligibility rules, referral contacts, and program details.
- Lack of centralized, searchable directories made it hard to share accurate information with clients.
- **Bright Spot:** Some teams created shared resource repositories or cheat sheets to reduce duplication and improve consistency.

4. Cross-Departmental Knowledge Is Limited

- Staff often lacked awareness of programs outside their department or team, which led to missed referrals, misinformation, and client frustration.
- **Bright Spot:** Offices with embedded liaisons (that were well-trained and consistently staffed) or cross-training sessions saw stronger coordination and better client outcomes.

5. Digital Systems Are Fragmented and Time-Consuming

- Staff described spending hours navigating multiple platforms to track referrals, eligibility, and service history.
- Staff also shared that a significant amount of their time is spent on completing manual administrative activities.
- Staff spent significant time troubleshooting tech issues or printing/scanning documents for clients.
- Manual tracking led to errors, delays, and missed deadlines.



Service Design & Role Clarity: Findings



Despite their commitment to supporting clients, staff describe being constrained by rigid structures, unclear expectations, and fragmented systems. Instead of enabling personalized, relational care, service design often pushes staff into transactional roles focused on compliance, paperwork, and navigating disconnected platforms.

1. Staff Roles Are Often Transactional and Rigid

- Staff feel limited to transactional tasks, unable to offer holistic support or build meaningful relationships with clients due to caseload.
- Intake processes are described as cold and compliance-driven, undermining trust and connection.
- Staff are expected to move quickly despite the complexity of youth needs, which compromises care quality.

2. Role Expectations Are Unclear and Inconsistent

- Staff report that roles and responsibilities are not well defined, leading to confusion and finger-pointing.
- There's inconsistency in role expectations, creating inconsistency in care for clients.
- Everyone is “trying to do everything,” which dilutes accountability and creates inefficiencies.
- There's no formal structure for ongoing contact after clients exit systems, leaving staff disconnected from long-term outcomes.

3. Oversegmentation and Siloed Systems

- Staff describe the system as oversegmented, with departments operating in silos, leading to duplication, inefficiency, and missed opportunities for coordinated care.
- Staff feel disconnected from backend systems that affect service delivery, and often must manually bridge gaps across fragmented infrastructure.

4. Lack of Feedback Loops

- Staff feel excluded from strategic decision-making, especially when policies are made without frontline input.
- There are no formal feedback loops with clients, making it difficult to improve services based on lived experience.

5. Systemic Inaccessibility of Services

- Services are segmented by design, forcing staff to navigate disconnected systems with no shared infrastructure or continuity of care.
- Resources are stretched too thin to meet demand – waitlists, eligibility restrictions, and staffing gaps are built into the system.
- Navigation is burdensome by default, requiring significant time and persistence to navigate.



Policy-Practice Alignment: Findings

Staff consistently described a **disconnect between policy and practice**, where rules, funding, and protocols are designed without input from those implementing them. Policies are often long, frequently changing, and hard to understand, leaving staff confused and clients underserved.

1. Policies Are Misaligned with Frontline Realities

- Staff struggle to keep up with lengthy, frequently changing policies leading to confusion and missed opportunities for clients.
- Rules often conflict across departments, forcing staff to interpret and improvise rather than follow clear, unified guidance.
- Staff report that policies are designed without input from those implementing them, creating disconnects between design and delivery.

2. Complex Policies Create Confusion and Burden

- Staff described policies as too long, frequently changing, and hard to interpret, making it difficult to stay current or apply them consistently.
- Conflicting rules across departments force staff to improvise, leading to inconsistent service delivery and missed opportunities for clients.
- Policy documents lack plain-language summaries or visual guides, making onboarding and day-to-day reference challenging.

3. Funding Structures Limit Responsive Care

- Rigid funding models force programs to choose between sustaining core services and meeting urgent needs like sober housing or emergency placements.
- Staff describe watching youth fall through gaps they're trying to close due to inflexible funding and eligibility rules.

“

[We need to] simplify the process and ensure every one is following the same policy. Policy changes too much and it is unrealistic for us to be able to keep up with policies 45 pages long for example... It would be better if it was uniform for all departments.

”



Participant Proposed Ideas



Ideas Overview

How the ideas were created:

1. Ideas were sourced from interview and focus group sessions with:
 - People with Lived Experience
 - County Staff
 - Community-Based Organization (CBO) Staff
2. Ideas are organized into three key themes:
 - Service Delivery Improvements
 - Service Infrastructure and Supports
 - Staff Support
3. Within these themes, there are 14 broad sections:
 - Each section includes more specific key considerations
 - Some considerations have their own spotlight with more context and details
 - For each section, the relevant theme from our findings is listed at the bottom of the slide.

Note: The goal of this section is to record and document ideas proposed by research participants. These ideas are in draft form and for consideration, not immediate adoption or implementation.

Ideas

Service Delivery Improvements

Focus: How services can be improved to better meet client needs.

1. Move to Client-Centric Service Model
2. Tailor Services to Population Needs
3. Build New Relationships & Strengthen Existing Relationships
4. Support Path to Independence
5. Reduce Stigma
6. Offer Flexible Programming Options

Service Infrastructure and Supports

Focus: How clients access the right resources and improving the efficacy of service.

7. Streamline Access to Services
8. Reform Eligibility Criteria
9. Strengthen Coordination
10. Create Feedback Loops
11. Know Your Client

Staff Support

Focus: How to better support staff in doing their jobs effectively and sustainably.

12. Curate Staff Knowledge Management and Collaboration
13. Go Deeper with Training
14. Invest in Staff Care

Key Themes from Findings to Address

Client



1. Access & Equity

The fairness and clarity of pathways to services, including how eligibility is determined and how easily individuals can navigate systems to get support.



2. Relationship-Centered Support

The quality and consistency of personal connections between individuals and staff, emphasizing trust, empathy, and continuity over time.



3. Healing & Identity Affirmation

The extent to which systems create emotionally safe, culturally aligned spaces that support personal healing and affirm lived experience and identity.



4. Youth-Led Pathways to Growth

The degree to which systems support youth in setting and pursuing their own goals – educational, creative, or career-related – on their own terms.



5. Community & Peer Connection

The role of peer relationships and informal networks in fostering belonging, trust, and reengagement outside of formal systems.

Staff



1. Workforce Sustainability & Emotional Resilience

The capacity of staff to maintain their well-being and effectiveness over time, shaped by caseloads, emotional demands, and recovery supports.



2. System Navigation & Coordination

The ability of staff to move across departments and programs, connect services, and support continuity of care despite fragmented infrastructure.



3. Training, Tools & Knowledge Infrastructure

The systems and resources that equip staff with the information, guidance, and skills needed to serve clients confidently and consistently.



4. Service Design & Role Clarity

The structure and expectations of staff roles, including how well they support personalized, flexible, and client-centered engagement.



5. Policy-Practice Alignment

The degree to which rules, funding, and protocols reflect the realities staff face – and support rather than constrain responsive care.



PARTICIPANT PROPOSED IDEAS

Service Delivery Improvements



Service Delivery Improvements

Summarized Ideas in this Theme

1. Move to Client-Centric Service Model

Adopt flexible, client-centered models that prioritize healing, empowerment, trauma-informed approaches, and cultural responsiveness.

2. Tailor Services to Population Needs

Design services that reflect individual needs, schedules, and goals. Use youth input to personalize offerings and increase relevance and effectiveness. Move away from one-size-fits-all approaches.

3. Build New Relationships & Strengthen Existing Relationships

Connect clients to community through warm handoffs to community-based organizations, mentorship pairings, and peer support. Prioritize relational engagement to improve participation and outcomes.

4. Support Path to Independence

Support youth in building life skills, accessing education and employment, and navigating systems. Provide scaffolding that leads to self-sufficiency.

How services can be improved to better meet client needs.

5. Reduce Stigma

Address fear and shame that prevent families from seeking help. Promote inclusive practices and shift narratives from blame to support.

6. Offer Flexible Programming Options

Offer services at varied times and formats (virtual/in-person) to meet diverse needs. Adapt programs to accommodate youth and family schedules and commitments.

Move to Client-Centric Service Model

To better serve youth and families navigating complex systems of care, a strategic shift in the service model from a supervision-based approach to a rehabilitation-centered framework was recommended. This model should be grounded in evidence-based practices, trauma-informed care, and culturally responsive service delivery, with a strong emphasis on individualized risk assessment and motivational engagement.

Key Considerations

Shift from Supervision to Rehabilitation

- Move away from compliance-driven oversight toward rehabilitation-centered engagement, especially for justice involved individuals.
- Partner with community-based organizations to offer alternatives to punitive methods.

Trauma-Informed Care

- Programs must incorporate evidence-based, trauma-informed care principles into all aspects of service delivery, emphasizing physical, and emotional safety for participants and staff.
- Staff must be trained in trauma-informed care practices and understand how trauma affects development and behavior.
- Ensure services reflect and respect the diverse backgrounds of client, even down to simple things like what kind of food is served at program events.
- Facilitate cross-training between County departments and CBOs to align service philosophies

Clear Communication to Make Processes Transparent

- Motivational interviewing can be used to encourage participation and buy in.

- Use plain language, consistent messaging, and multiple language options across all touchpoints.
- Explain processes, timelines, and eligibility clearly to reduce confusion.
- Staff can acknowledge that systems can be frustrating and that rejection may occur.
- Staff can frame setbacks as part of the journey and reinforce persistence and resilience.

Community Partnerships

- Position CBO staff as transition navigators during key system exits (e.g., foster care, probation) to provide continuity and culturally grounded support.
- Partner with CBOs to create safe, identity-affirming environments where clients can access trauma-informed care, peer support, and more flexible programming.
- Recognize and resource informal support networks (e.g., peer mentors, community elders) as legitimate components of the care model.
- For families, expand partnerships with hospitals to increase the reach of Home visiting programs. Support CBOs in building direct relationships with hospitals and engaging OB providers to share information about home visiting programs.

Tailor Services to Population Needs

To prevent retraumatization and improve outcomes for clients, Los Angeles County should invest in tailored housing and service models that reflect the distinct needs of subpopulations within client communities. A one-size-fits-all approach has led to mismatches in placement, safety concerns, and service disengagement. Specialized housing environments and service designs must be trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and developmentally appropriate.

Key Considerations

Specialized Housing by Population and Need

- Keep distinct housing options that prioritize safety and privacy for queer clients, minorities, and survivors of trauma.
- Develop harm reduction-oriented housing that separates youth seeking sobriety from other settings that may trigger relapse.
- Expand sober living environments and recuperative care housing for youth with substance use or mental health needs, ensuring access to outpatient treatment and stabilization services. Expand rehabilitation centers and sober living housing..
- Recognize that some housing options such as permanent supportive housing (PSH) are not the end goal for all clients; offer intermediate and flexible housing models that align with client aspirations and readiness.
- Develop housing programs for parenting youth, including units that accommodate children and offer parenting support services
- Provide timely referrals to families seeking housing so that they do not have to risk separating either due to system involvement or shelter eligibility restrictions.
- Avoid placing youth with vastly different age groups (e.g., 60-year-olds with 19-year-olds) in shared housing environments to prevent discomfort and retraumatization.

Age-Specific and Developmentally Appropriate Services

- Establish programs for youth under 16 who are unhoused and not connected to guardians, including safe shelter and service access without requiring adult accompaniment.
- Expand drop-in centers and day centers as harm reduction spaces that alleviate the daily burdens of homelessness and provide low-barrier access to basic needs and emotional support.
- Increase housing navigation support to help youth locate appropriate housing options, complete applications, and understand eligibility.
- Consider needs holistically of parents and families with children of different ages who have different needs.

Safety and Stability as Core Design Principles

- Prioritize safety in transitional housing, including secure sleeping arrangements, and gender-affirming placements.
- Have clear grievance procedures to resolve interpersonal conflicts within programs.
- Design housing environments that allow for privacy, autonomy, and dignity, including private or semi-private rooms and secure storage for personal belongings.
- Communicate clearly what housing facilities have 24-hour access.

Build New Relationships & Strengthen Existing Relationships (Part 1)

Building and strengthening relationships means creating safe, supportive spaces for youth to form new connections and repair old ones – through peer support, family reconnection, and community engagement – while honoring emotional readiness, cultural identity, and the need for consistent, trauma-informed relationships across systems.

Key Considerations

Facilitate Youth-to-Youth Connection Through Shared Activities

- Partner with programs like shared sports leagues and creative arts initiatives to create safe spaces for foster youth to connect.
- Provide transportation support to reduce barriers to participation in these activities, especially for youth facing housing instability or financial hardship.
- During foster parent meetings, offer parallel programming for foster youth to meet and engage with peers in similar circumstances.
- Link youth to youth drop-in centers and community hubs that serve similar age groups and cultural backgrounds to foster belonging and build their community.
- Promote culturally grounded practices and healing-centered engagement to support identity development and emotional resilience.

Creation of Client-Led Third Spaces

- Integrate local cultural practices (e.g., art, music, language, food) into programming and space design.
- Situate centers in geographically relevant areas to reduce transportation barriers and consider gang boundaries where applicable.
- Design spaces that support casual socialization and recreational activities to encourage drop-in engagement and relationship-building

before service enrollment.

- Facilitate peer support groups, mentorship circles, and family therapy sessions that center lived experience voices.

Employ and Support Peer Support Specialists

- Hire and train youth peer support specialists with lived experience in foster care to provide mentorship and resource navigation.
- Integrate peer-led workshops and support groups into existing programming to foster trust and relatability.
- Designate quiet spaces within service sites where peer support specialists can decompress and regulate emotionally.
- Offer access to therapy and counseling services for peer staff to process their own trauma and maintain emotional wellness.
- Maintain flexible scheduling and allow for mental health days without stigma or penalty.
- Ensure adequate staffing ratios and backup coverage so peer support specialists can take time off without disrupting services.
- Link peer specialist roles to build to higher degrees and certifications to build towards career progression.

Build New Relationships & Strengthen Existing Relationships (Part 2)

Building and strengthening relationships means creating safe, supportive spaces for youth to form new connections and repair old ones – through peer support, family reconnection, and community engagement – while honoring emotional readiness, cultural identity, and the need for consistent, trauma-informed relationships across systems.

Key Considerations

Peer-Inclusive Youth Engagement Across Systems

- Allow youth to bring trusted friends or chosen family members to meetings, orientations, and service appointments (e.g., CFTs, workforce programs, juvenile justice check-ins) to reduce anxiety and foster emotional safety.
- Establish peer support networks and mentorship programs where youth with lived experience guide others through system processes. These networks should include alumni of foster care and justice systems who can share insights and offer hope.
- Encourage service providers to recognize the value of peer presence in therapeutic sessions, case planning, and workforce development meetings. This can include community therapy models or wraparound services that integrate peer support.
- Provide incentives (e.g., transportation stipends, food, shared learning opportunities) for youth who attend programs with peers or family members. This can increase retention and reduce barriers to participation.
- Recognize that not all youth may want to involve peers in their personal processes. Offer peer-inclusive options as voluntary, and tailor approaches based on youth comfort and consent.

Rebuild Family and Community Networks

- Work with family finding teams to reconnect youth with extended family, mentors, or community members who may have been lost due to system involvement.
- Include therapeutic community sessions and family retreats as part of the stabilization strategy.
- Provide family and group therapy as preventative measures to help mediate conflicts within the family and prevent instability.
- Recognize that transitional periods vary for system-impacted youth, and tailor reconnection efforts to individual timelines and readiness.
- Train social workers to support partial reconnection pathways, such as safe messaging, virtual check-ins, or occasional supervised visits, when full reunification is not appropriate.
- Establish communication protocols that guide staff and foster youth to reconnect with family in a supported and flexible manner. Include options which do not have to be a binary decision of reconnection or no reconnection, but rather include a spectrum of options such as text messaging, social media interactions, and virtual calls (e.g., FaceTime). Provide guidance on how to navigate youth safety for how to reconnect with family.

Support Path to Independence

Support youth in building life skills, accessing education and employment, and navigating systems. Provide structured scaffolding that leads to self-sufficiency through intensive case management, financial literacy, career preparation, and confidence-building opportunities.

Key Considerations

Exit Planning

- Provide intensive case management for foster youth in their final year of care, similar to high school senior counseling, to guide exit planning.
- Provide guidance on topics to cover in exit conversations such as student employment, college options, credit management, banking, cooking, cleaning, dressing for interviews, interview skills, counseling, career guidance, and life coaching.
- Provide youth with a roadmap or handbook on tangible next steps they can take as they exit foster care such as extended foster care and the DCFS hotline number.

Financial Literacy and Credit Building

- Provide webinars with incentives to cover personal finance topics such as emergency funds.
- Establish personal finance topics to be mandatory to discuss at case worker meetings.
- Administer SILP, EBT, or other cash assistance through secured credit-building cards, allowing youth to begin establishing credit responsibly.

Employment and Career Development

- Provide volunteer opportunities and internships for systems-involved youth to build confidence, skills, and resumes from an early age.
- Design internships and work experiences to be trauma-informed and confidence-building, with employers trained on youth risk factors and support needs.

Digital Literacy Development

- Provide youth with access to phones, laptops, and internet connectivity to support education, employment, and service navigation.
- Offer typing classes, digital literacy workshops, and training on using email, online applications, business applications, and virtual platforms for job and college readiness.

Life Skills Development

- Include more diversity of life skills classes.
- Include interpersonal conflict classes such as how to be a good roommate, maintain good hygiene, and navigate difficult conversations.

Reduce Stigma

Reduce stigma so that clients are more comfortable asking for help by normalizing lived experience, expanding trauma-informed education, and elevating youth voices. Promote empathy, inclusion, and awareness through peer mentorship, school-based education, and culturally responsive engagement across systems.

Key Considerations

Education and Awareness

- Integrate education about homelessness, foster care, and justice involvement into school curricula to reduce stigma and promote understanding.
 - Support and expand LACOE's efforts to educate students about youth system involvement and housing instability.
 - Host school-based forums and community events that highlight youth resilience and normalize diverse life experiences.
 - For families with young children, reduce stigma around developmental delays by hosting parent education and awareness events that normalize conversations with pediatricians and family members.
- Address concerns about judgment tied to income, race, or other factors to create a safe, inclusive environment for seeking help.

Peer Mentorship and Role Models

- Employ peer support specialists and mentors with lived experience to foster trust and relatability.
- Invite role models to share their stories in schools and youth programs to inspire and reduce shame.
- Create youth-led advisory boards and councils to shape programs and policies from lived experience.

Staff Training and Language

- Train staff across systems in trauma-informed care and healing-centered engagement to reduce judgment and increase emotional safety.

Inclusive Communication and Outreach

- Use youth-friendly language and multiple communication channels (e.g., social media, peer referrals) to reach opportunity youth.
- Include feedback loops and satisfaction surveys to improve messaging and reduce stigma in service delivery.
- Provide safe, non-judgmental spaces for youth to share their stories through journaling, art, and peer-led forums.

Offer Flexible Programming Options

Flexible programming empowers clients by meeting them where they are – physically, emotionally, and culturally – through adaptable services, discretionary funding, and community-based engagement that honors lived experience and promotes holistic support.

Key Considerations

Expand Discretionary and Flexible Funding Pools

- Establish dedicated discretionary funds to cover transportation needs for clients to be able to access more types of diversion and therapy.
- Create mental health-specific funding pools to support non-traditional therapeutic modalities like art groups, therapy walks, and movement workshops.
- When policy or funding constraints limit direct service provision, collaborate with CBOs that have trusted relationships and cultural competency to deliver services effectively.

Diversify Engagement Modalities

- Offer alternative ways for social workers and case managers to connect with clients, such as casual meetups over lunch, community outings, or shared activities like hikes or grocery shopping.
- Normalize informal and communal formats for Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings to reduce formality and increase frequency.
- Encourage peer mentorship and community-based therapeutic models that reflect the realities of youth experiences.
- Design wraparound service hubs with flexible meeting locations where youth can bring friends or chosen family, fostering comfort and reducing stigma.

- For families with young children, Expand home visiting programs to actively engage fathers, including participation in mental health screenings. If work conflicts prevent attendance, use creative solutions like shared group texts to keep fathers involved.

Expand Access to Alternative Therapies

- Simplify funding pathways for non-clinical therapeutic options such as art therapy, animal-assisted therapy, and culturally grounded healing practices.
- Reduce administrative barriers that delay access to these services.

Inclusive Communication and Outreach

- Use youth-friendly language and multiple communication channels (e.g., social media, peer referrals) to reach opportunity youth.
- Include feedback loops and satisfaction surveys to improve messaging and reduce stigma in service delivery.
- Provide safe, non-judgmental spaces for youth to share their stories through journaling, art, and peer-led forums.



PARTICIPANT PROPOSED IDEAS

Service Infrastructure and Supports



Service Infrastructure and Supports

Summarized Ideas in this Theme

7. Streamline Access to Services

Simplify access to services by improving the way that services are found, their fit is determined, and how they are applied to.

8. Reform Eligibility Criteria

Revise rigid eligibility rules to allow more families and youth to qualify for services. Address gaps that exclude those in need due to narrow definitions or systemic barriers.

9. Strengthen Coordination

Strengthen collaboration across departments and community partners.

How clients access the right resources and ensure those resources are coordinated and effective.

10. Create Feedback Loops

Create systems for collecting and acting on input from youth and families. Use feedback to adjust programs, update resource lists, and improve responsiveness to evolving needs.

11. Know Your Client

Train staff to understand youth and family histories, strengths, and needs. Build relationships that support tailored services and foster trust in systems.

Streamline Access to Services

Simplify and accelerate access to services by consolidating resource information and integrating external, community-based supports. Once resources are identified, streamline the application process to reduce barriers and improve client experience.

Recommendations to help streamline access to services will support:

Finding Services

Improve how clients discover available services by creating centralized, accessible, and user-friendly platforms that include both County and community-based resources.

Determining Service Fit

Help clients understand which services they are eligible for and which best meet their needs through standardized tools and clear guidance.

Applying for Services

Reduce the complexity and burden of applying for services by creating streamlined, secure, and user-friendly application processes.

Streamline Access to Services – Finding Services

Improve how clients discover services by building a centralized, client-friendly system that consolidates public and community-based resources. This includes proactive outreach, safety nets for communication breakdowns, and organizing information by client needs rather than agency silos to reduce confusion and missed opportunities.

Key Considerations

Consolidate and Centralize Resources

- Develop a centralized, well-maintained platform that consolidates both County and community-based resources, enabling clients to independently discover services that meet their needs. This platform must be robust enough to act as a communication safety net when social workers or case managers fail to provide adequate guidance.
- Integrate County services (e.g., DPSS, DCFS, DMH, DHS) with community-based organizations (CBOs), faith-based groups, and local institutions such as schools, hospitals, and drop-in centers.
- Include supplemental programs to fill gaps when clients lose access to benefits due to income fluctuations.

Communicate Proactively

- Develop persistent and proactive communication systems to ensure clients receive information even when caseworkers are unavailable or overwhelmed. This includes:
 - Printed flyers with up-to-date resource information posted in high-traffic areas such as hotels (where vouchers are used), bus stops, drop-in centers, and clinics.
 - Digital channels (e.g., mobile apps, SMS, email, social media) that

deliver clear, plain-language messages about available services and how to access them.

- Partner with hospitals and other key institutions to proactively share resources—such as doulas, home visiting programs, and Parents as Teachers—at times of low stress. Avoid delivering this information during appointments involving vaccinations, blood draws, or other stressful procedures, as these can distract from important messages.

Information Architecture and Design

- Organize services by client needs (e.g., food, housing, mental health) rather than by agency or department. This shift from organization-based to persona-based navigation allows users to identify as “young parent,” “college student,” or “recently adopted youth” and receive tailored resource lists.
- Implement a stepper-style UI layer that visually guides users through each phase, even if the backend links to different agency websites. This maintains continuity and reduces confusion.
- Use plain language, visuals, and interactive tools (e.g., videos, chatbots) to make information accessible to all literacy levels and language backgrounds.

Streamline Access to Services – Determining Fit for Services

Support the Engagement and Access Subcommittee, co-chaired by the Youth Commission and the Department of Youth Development (DYD), in its effort to develop a Universal Screening and Assessment Tool.

Key Considerations

While the Engagement and Access Subcommittee may already be exploring many of these elements, the following considerations emerged consistently across focus groups and interviews and are lifted here to reinforce their importance:

Guidance on How to Advocate for Services

- Clients can be guided on how to advocate for themselves once eligibility is determined. This includes coaching on how to initiate contact with service providers, ask the right questions, say the right words to demonstrate eligibility, and follow up effectively.
- Outreach specialists or peer navigators could play a critical role in mentoring youth through the engagement process, especially when social worker support is inconsistent.

Streamlining Application Processes

- The screening tool should be designed to feed directly into pre-filled forms and support auto-application for eligible services. This reduces administrative burden and minimizes the risk of missed opportunities due to complex or duplicative paperwork.
- A universal application system would allow youth to apply for multiple services (e.g., housing, food, mental health) through a single intake, improving efficiency and access.

Storytelling Boundaries and Trauma-Informed Design

- Clients can be guided on which parts of their personal story are necessary to share for accessing services and which details they can choose to protect. This empowers youth to maintain agency over their narratives and reduces retraumatization during intake processes.
- The tool should incorporate trauma-informed practices, allowing youth to control how their information is shared across departments and minimizing the need to repeatedly recount sensitive experiences.

Staff-Facing Summary Output

- The tool output can be integrated with existing processes and the eligibility results need to be easily understood by staff (e.g., social workers, case managers, outreach specialists). This helps staff quickly understand what services a youth qualifies for and how to support them effectively.
- This summary can also serve as a training and decision-support resource, improving staff capacity to guide youth through next steps and reducing reliance on individual staff knowledge

Streamline Access to Services – Applying for Services

Support and build upon the work already being led by the **Opportunity Youth Collaborative (OYC)** and its partners, including efforts under the **Horizons 32K Strategic Plan**, to streamline and simplify the application process for services. While OYC may already be exploring many of these elements, the following considerations emerged consistently across focus groups and interviews and are lifted here to reinforce their importance.

Key Considerations

OYC may already be exploring many of these elements, and the following considerations emerged consistently across focus groups and interviews and are lifted here to reinforce their importance.

Auto-Fill Functionality and Application Automation

- Develop auto-fill tools that allow youth to reuse previously entered information across multiple applications, reducing time and effort.
- Create a universal application system that can route a single intake form to multiple agencies and programs (e.g., bridge housing, CalFresh, mental health services).

Document Passport System

- Establish a secure digital document passport where youth can store vital records (e.g., birth certificate, ID, Social Security card) for use across applications.
- Provide physical storage solutions, such as fireproof folios, for youth who lack digital access or prefer tangible records.
- Discuss document needs and storage strategies during case planning meetings with social workers and supportive adults to ensure youth are prepared and informed.

Unified Application Wrapper

- Design a step-by-step application wrapper that visually guides youth through the stages of finding, determining eligibility, and applying for services.
- Use a UI layer that allows youth to navigate between agency websites while maintaining a consistent interface and tracking progress across steps

Integration with Social Worker Practice

- Encourage social workers to initiate conversations about application readiness, including document collection, timelines, and service options.
- Develop training and tools for social workers to support youth in navigating applications and understanding eligibility criteria.

Reform Eligibility Criteria

Reforming eligibility criteria is essential to reduce systemic barriers for vulnerable populations. This section proposes short- and long-term solutions to address address-based job application restrictions, seasonal income fluctuations, and service overlap exclusions. It aims to improve access to housing, financial aid, and food assistance by aligning county policies with lived realities.

Key Considerations

Housing Criteria

- Remove age-based entry restrictions for youth approaching their 25th birthday to prevent premature exclusion from housing programs.
- Extend housing support services beyond age 24, with consideration for expanding eligibility up to age 30.
- Streamline transitions between youth and adult Coordinated Entry Systems (CES) to reduce service gaps when youth turn 25.
- Accept self-certification of homelessness status during intake to reduce documentation barriers. Expand the definition of homelessness to include couch surfing.
- Address barriers such as curfews, location, and possession restrictions that discourage youth from accepting housing offers

Service Overlap Criteria

- Clarify and publish guidance on allowable overlaps.
- Update policy to allow for overlap of some services such as food from housing programs and food assistance programs.
- Address cannibalization of services where clinics or programs close due to overlapping eligibility restrictions.

Financial Criteria

- Use prior-prior year income data to get a more accurate picture of income in case of income changes due to job seasonality.
- Recognize seasonal employment patterns in eligibility assessments.
- Raise income thresholds for benefits to accommodate low-wage earners and prevent sudden loss of aid.
- Encourage financial planning and savings by removing penalties for temporary income increases.
- Expand access to tax credits and financial literacy support for foster youth and parenting students.

Other Barriers

- Jobs requiring permanent addresses
 - Promote employer policy reform to eliminate permanent address requirements on job applications
- Incentivize employers to hire vulnerable populations.

Strengthen Coordination

To reduce fragmentation, improve service delivery, and ensure youth receive timely, comprehensive support, County departments and community partners should implement structured coordination practices that enable real-time collaboration, shared accountability, and warm handoffs.

Key Considerations

Build Integrated Client Teams

- Establish a **core team for each youth**, including a Children's Social Worker (CSW), housing specialist, medical case worker, substance abuse counselor, employment specialist, attorney, and a community-based organization (CBO) representative if applicable.
- For youth in foster care, increase the frequency of Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings, ensuring all key players are present and that meetings are used to align services and update care plans.

Co-Location and Rotational Presence

- Implement weekly co-location schedules where staff from departments such as DMH, DPSS, DCFS, and DYD are physically present at shared service sites.
- Staff should be cross-trained to provide information on multiple programs and services and should document interactions even if a client does not attend, maintaining accountability.
- Maintain a directory of departmental contacts to reduce delays and eliminate the need for multiple calls and emails to locate the right person.

Leverage Technology for Real-Time Collaboration

- Use Microsoft Teams, SharePoint, and shared drives to enable real-time communication and resource sharing across departments.
- Develop a centralized intranet or resource hub with up-to-date program information, including expiration dates and eligibility criteria, accessible to all staff.
- Develop clear expectations for response times, especially for urgent client needs that require same-day support or decision-making.
- Maintain an up-to-date, centralized directory of departmental contacts to reduce delays and eliminate the need for multiple calls or emails.

Facilitate Warm Handoffs

- Create protocols for warm handoffs between, reducing missed opportunities and confusion.
- Intake workers should be empowered to communicate directly with other departmental staff to explain the reason for a youth's visit and ensure continuity of care.

Create Feedback Loops

Establishing robust feedback loops is essential for evaluating the efficacy of programs and resources, improving service delivery, and ensuring that youth voices inform system design and accountability. These mechanisms will also support data collection on youth trajectories, including AB12 participation, post-care outcomes, and transitions into adult systems such as HMIS.

Key Considerations

Youth Feedback on Program Efficacy

- Create structured opportunities for youth to share feedback on the usefulness, accessibility, and accuracy of services and resources they receive.
- Develop tools for youth to report outdated or ineffective resources directly to social workers and case managers, enabling real-time updates to referral practices.
- Incorporate feedback into workforce and service provider training to improve future recommendations and engagement strategies.

Dual-Channel Relationship Monitoring

- Establish a **relationship check-in mechanism** where youth can confidentially share feedback about their interactions with their assigned social worker.
- Consider assigning a secondary CSW or neutral staff member to periodically check in with youth, without being directly involved in the case, to assess relationship quality and service alignment.
- This model provides a **non-punitive safety net** for youth to express concerns and receive support when primary relationships falter.

Post-Care Tracking and Data Visibility

- Expand data systems to track youth outcomes after exiting programs such as THP, AB12, or other transitional services.
- Encourage THP providers to **own and report post-exit data**, potentially making data collection a contractual requirement.
- Support the **TAY Data Subcommittee** and the **One Roof Data Table** in their efforts to integrate and standardize data across departments, including tracking youth transitions into adult HMIS systems and homelessness risk.

Periodic Surveys and Digital Engagement

- Implement **monthly or quarterly surveys** via text or email to maintain contact with youth and caregivers post-program.
- Use incentives such as **gift cards** to encourage participation, especially for youth over 18 who can consent to data sharing.
- Surveys should assess well-being, housing stability, employment status, and service needs.

Know Your Client

To improve service coordination and reduce retraumatization, departments should implement tools that offer a real-time, comprehensive view of each client's circumstances and service history; this section aligns with and reinforces similar proposals from the Opportunity Youth Collaborative, the Engagement and Access Subcommittee, and the TAY Table Data Subcommittee.

Key Considerations

360-Degree Client Profile

- Create a centralized client summary that includes:
 - Services currently being received across County departments (e.g., DCFS, DPSS, DMH, Child Support Services)
 - Community-based program participation
 - Key updates such as eligibility changes, family reunification opportunities, or housing transitions.
- Integrate data from multiple systems to reduce duplication and improve visibility for caseworkers and supervisors.
- When data-sharing is restricted, establish a **clear protocol for supervisors to request access** on behalf of their staff.

Client Summary

- Enhance digital case management systems to automatically extract and summarize key details from journal entries, including:
 - Youth's stated goals and interests
 - Identified triggers or sensitive topics
- Allow caseworkers to **tag and elevate critical information** for visibility during transitions or handoffs.

Youth Journal System

- Introduce a Youth Journal – a tool for youth to document:
 - Personal goals, hobbies, and interests
 - Services they are currently using
 - Reflections on what's working and what's not
- The journal should be available in both physical and digital formats, with youth controlling what entries are shared with caseworkers.
- Enable selective sharing so youth can choose which parts of their story to disclose, reducing retraumatization and empowering youth as authors of their own narrative.

Improve Intake and Visit Documentation

- Expand options for documenting reasons for visits to County offices (e.g., housing support, domestic violence, benefits assistance) beyond generic labels like "office visit."
- This allows for more accurate tracking of client needs and reduces the need for youth to repeatedly explain sensitive or traumatic experiences

Idea Spotlight: 360 Client View

The 360 Client View can be a centralized digital interface designed to provide caseworkers, supervisors, and department staff with a comprehensive, real-time summary of services and supports received by clients across Los Angeles County departments and community-based organizations. This tool aims to dismantle data silos and streamline service coordination for transition-age youth (TAY), families, and other vulnerable populations.

Core Features

Unified Service Dashboard

- Displays all services currently accessed by a client across County departments such as:
- DCFS (child welfare and family services)
- DPSS (public assistance programs)
- DMH (mental health services)
- Child Support Services
- Community-based programs (e.g., housing, mentorship, early intervention)

Dynamic Status Updates

Real-time alerts for key client developments:

- Eligibility changes
- Family reunification opportunities
- Housing transitions
- Enrollment in new programs

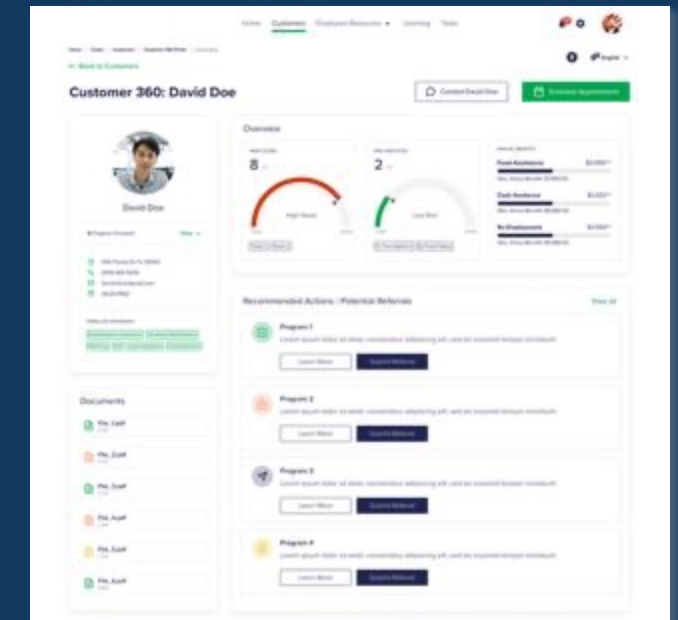
Case Study

Solution

A US state workforce department was able to create a Customer 360 view of their client, allowing caseworkers and department staff to see the full suite of services the client is receiving, functionally breaking down department silos and allowing for more transparency and communication

Benefits

- Provides an overview of aggregated customer data, allowing staff to see across department lines and provide a holistic view of the customer.
- Gives department staff the ability access central documents for eligibility determination
- Analytics driven suggestion of additional services, which departments can use to proactively refer customers to



Idea Spotlight: Youth Journal

A secure, interactive journaling platform – available digitally and in print – that empowers youth to share their voice through fun prompts, hobbies, and career goals, access helpful resources, and control what information they share to stay safe and engaged in the process.

Core Features

Interactive Prompts & Activities

A dynamic set of prompts that rotate weekly, covering both lighthearted topics (favorite hobbies, dream skills, weekend activities) and reflective questions (career aspirations, community impact).

Physical and Digital Means of Engaging

Printed journals with guided sections, QR codes linking to digital resources, and creative spaces for personalization. Includes stickers and tear-out pages for anonymous submissions, blending tactile engagement with digital connectivity.

Privacy & Security Controls

Customizable sharing settings that allow youth to choose between private entries, sharing with staff, or sharing with peer groups. Includes consent workflows, encryption for digital entries, and options to delete or export journal content..

Education on Rights and Programs

An integrated section within the journal offering curated resources such as the foster youth bill of rights and eligibility rules sprinkled throughout so that youth can learn in small pieces about the programs and services available to them.

**“We need to create a way
for youth to journal and
share their voice in the
process – things like
hobbies, career goals – so
they feel more
participatory.”
-Youth Commissioner**



PARTICIPANT PROPOSED IDEAS

Staff Support



Staff Support

How to better support staff in doing their jobs effectively and sustainably.

Summarized Ideas in this Theme

12. Curate Staff Knowledge Management and Collaboration

Create systems for sharing best practices, data, and resources among staff. Promote cross-training and interagency learning to improve service quality.

13. Go Deeper with Training

Provide ongoing, trauma-informed, culturally responsive training. Equip staff with tools to engage youth effectively and navigate complex systems.

14. Invest in Staff Care

Invest in staff well-being through coaching, supervision, and peer networks. Address burnout and build capacity for sustained, high-quality engagement.

**“Sometimes we just need additional supports. We need... perhaps somebody to come out with us. Our supervisor, to perhaps support us in the field... or maybe just sometimes checking in on us as individual people.”
-County Staff**

Curate Staff Knowledge Management and Collaboration

Improve staff efficiency and service quality by centralizing resource information, automating routine tasks, aligning roles with staff strengths, and investing in wellness supports. These strategies reduce burnout, improve referrals, and foster a more coordinated, trauma-informed workforce.

Key Considerations

Centralized Knowledge Management

- Develop a cross-departmental intranet (e.g., SharePoint) for staff from DPSS, DCFS, Probation, DMH, and CBOs to access and share up-to-date resources, forms, and directories.
- Include features such as:
 - Searchable resource library with filtering by region, eligibility, and service type.
- Ensure accessibility for staff and CBO partners, with printable versions meant for external distribution to clients.

Role Alignment and Specialized Staffing

- Factor in staff interests and strengths when assigning specialized roles, especially in youth-serving positions. Hire staff for administrative and technical roles to manage paperwork-heavy processes like exit planning, referral tracking, and feedback collection.
- Provide training on navigating multiple systems (e.g., child support, IHSS, workforce portals) and create centralized guides for common tasks.

Cross-Departmental Staff Collaboration

- Allow staff at various levels (frontline practitioners, supervisors, program leads) to edit or annotate knowledge entries based on their expertise and experience, with version tracking to maintain accountability
- Encourage staff to co-develop materials with youth or community partners, especially those with lived experience, to ensure relevance and authenticity in shared resources.
- Facilitate regular interdepartmental meetings or workgroups to review and update shared knowledge, reducing silos and improving service alignment.
- Add structured commenting tools to resource platforms, allowing staff to provide feedback, suggest improvements, and flag outdated or unclear content.
- Incorporate user journey mapping and persona stories into staff training to hear different perspectives and more holistically.

Idea Spotlight: Cross-Departmental Staff Intranet

*A cross-departmental staff intranet that **centralizes and updates resource information**, making it **easily searchable and shareable** for staff across agencies. This is needed because clients miss out on services and staff waste time with scattered, outdated lists – an intranet would streamline referrals, improve coordination, and ensure everyone has access to the most current resources.*

Centralized Resource Hub:

A single, secure SharePoint site where staff from DPSS, DCFS, Probation, DMH, and CBO partners can access and share up-to-date information, forms, and resource directories.

Real-Time Collaboration:

Built-in Teams chat integration, document co-authoring, and discussion boards for quick questions, warm handoffs, and sharing best practices.

Resource Library:

Searchable, filterable library of pamphlets, eligibility guides, referral forms, and community resource lists – kept current by designated owners.

Feedback & Alerts:

Staff can flag outdated resources, submit feedback, and receive alerts when critical information is updated.

Training & Onboarding:

Step-by-step guides, process maps, and training videos for new staff or when policies change.

Department of Public Health Intranet

Problem

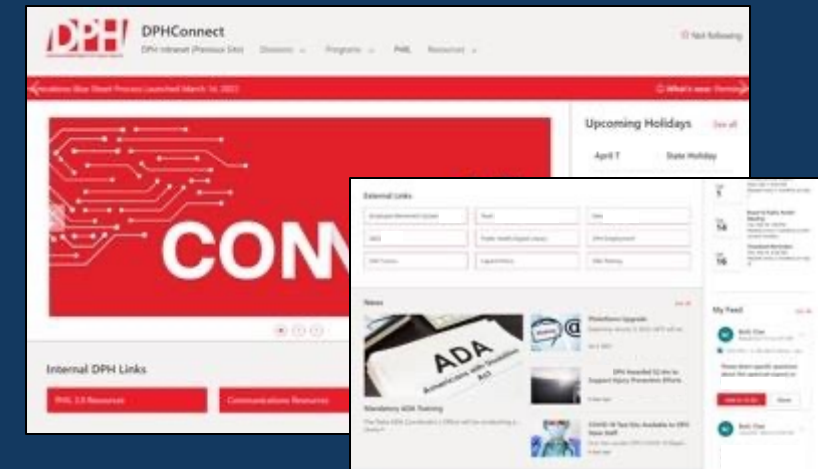
An outdated DPH intranet of a US state lacked content management processes and didn't meet needs of employees or hybrid work environments.

Solution

- **Modern Landing Page:** Includes top notifications, leadership messages, quick links, news feed, social media feed, holidays/events, and personalized feeds.
- **Templates:** Standard templates for subsites to streamline page creation.
- **Enterprise Search:** Unified search across SharePoint site collections.

Benefits

- Built on SharePoint using out-of-the-box web parts, minimal customizations.
- No deployment required.



Idea Spotlight: AI Staff Support Agent

Staff and clients alike struggle to navigate fragmented systems, leading to confusion, delays, and missed opportunities. Training is often inconsistent and reactive, leaving staff to learn critical processes through trial and error. The AB12 Support Agent provides faster access to verified information from internal documents and trusted websites—reducing confusion, improving onboarding, and supporting better outcomes.

Searches Across Internal Documents

The agent can instantly locate and extract relevant information from uploaded handbooks, policies, and procedural guides. This eliminates the need for staff to manually sift through lengthy PDFs or outdated folders, saving time and reducing frustration.

Web Search Integration

When internal resources don't have the answer, the agent can search trusted public websites to fill in gaps—especially helpful for locating current benefits, housing programs, or legal updates. This ensures staff always have access to the most up-to-date information.

Enterprise Context Awareness

Responses are tailored to the user's role, location, and collaborators. For example, a social worker in the San Fernando Valley will receive information relevant to their office and team, ensuring that answers are locally applicable and operationally useful.

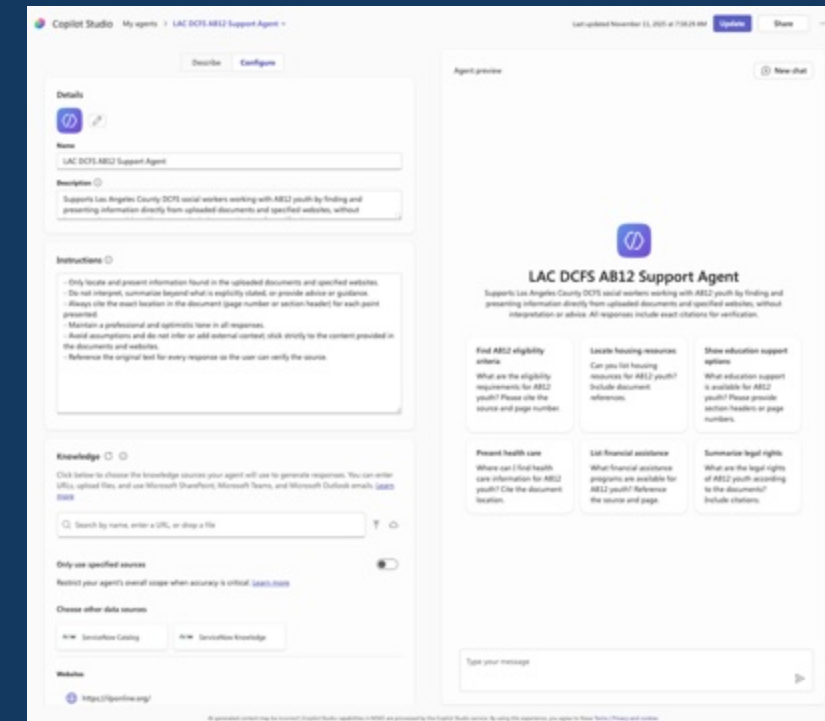
No Interpretation or Advice

To maintain neutrality and accuracy, the agent only presents information as written in official documents or verified sources. It does not offer personal opinions or interpretations, ensuring that staff receive objective, policy-based guidance.

Copilot Agent Proof of Concept

A Copilot agent proof of concept was created to explore a use case of Los Angeles County DCFS staff working with AB12 youth. This agent was built using Microsoft Copilot, a platform that Los Angeles County already has access to, enabling seamless integration into existing systems.

The AB12 Support Agent demonstrates how Copilot technology can be used to reduce confusion and improve access to verified information. By searching across internal documents and trusted websites, the agent helps staff quickly find accurate answers, complete with citations, without relying on trial-and-error learning or fragmented systems.



Go Deeper with Training

Improve staff training by creating shared learning spaces, cross-departmental onboarding, and practical guidance tools. Emphasize trauma-informed care, peer support, and hands-on learning to reduce confusion, improve consistency, and build confidence across systems.

Key Considerations

Cross-Departmental Training and Shared Learning

- Develop a countywide training framework that brings together staff from DCFS, DPSS, DMH, and other departments for joint sessions on youth engagement, trauma-informed care, and system navigation.
- Create interdepartmental learning hubs where staff can learn together, share resources, and build relationships across agencies. Include peer-led training modules to incorporate lived experience and frontline insights into formal training structures.
- Build a peer support training program that prepares staff to mentor new hires and share best practices in youth engagement and service delivery.
- Provide onboarding and ongoing training on digital platforms and service portals, including child support, IHSS, workforce systems, and income verification tools.
- Assign training liaisons or navigators within each department to answer questions, troubleshoot issues, and guide staff through unfamiliar processes.
- Create onboarding cohorts for new staff to learn together and build peer networks for ongoing support.

Practical Tools and Process Guidance

- Develop a comprehensive handbook that outlines key forms, steps, and contacts for common processes (e.g., referrals, benefits, exit planning).
- Provide step-by-step guides for navigating multiple systems (e.g., child support, IHSS, income verification, workforce enrollment) with clear instructions and access points.
- Offer training on how to write consistent journal entries, track deadlines, and manage documentation across cases.

Updated Training Modules

- Training modules and materials that are more video based and go into more detail on how to step by step go through a process.

Invest in Staff Care

Support staff by reducing administrative burdens, aligning roles with personal strengths, and investing in mental health and wellness. These strategies improve service quality, reduce burnout, and foster a more sustainable and youth-centered workforce.

Key Considerations

Unburden Staff Through Automation and Smart Systems

- Implement automated appointment reminders that include transit directions and estimated departure times based on client location. Develop systems that automatically notify clients of upcoming deadlines and send reminders before due dates, not just after they are missed. Introduce centralized dashboards for staff to track case milestones and deadlines across programs, reducing manual data entry and missed follow-ups.
- Connect siloed databases to reduce duplicative data entry and improve referral tracking.

Invest in Staff Mental Health and Wellness

- Co-locate therapists or wellness counselors in offices to provide confidential support for staff experiencing secondary trauma or burnout.
- Offer wellness amenities such as massage chairs, quiet rooms, and decompression spaces in high-stress environments.
- Pilot flexible scheduling models (e.g., every other Friday off) to support work-life balance and retention.

- Advocate for higher pay and reduced caseloads to reflect the emotional and logistical demands of youth-serving roles.

Align Staff Roles with Passion and Expertise

- Prioritize staff interests and lived experience when assigning specialized roles, especially in youth-serving positions.
- Create dedicated administrative support roles to manage paperwork-heavy processes such as exit planning, feedback collection, and documentation.
- Establish specialized positions for high-impact tasks (e.g., foster care exit coordination, youth feedback facilitation) to improve efficiency and service quality.



Personas & Journey Maps



DOMAIN: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Opportunity Youth



Alexa Garcia, 20, she/her

Population

Opportunity Youth

Demographic

Gen Z

Location

Boyle Heights

Education

High School Diploma

Work

Unreported Employment

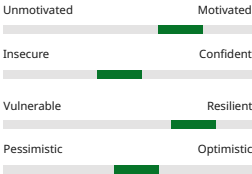
BIO

Alexa is the oldest daughter in a close-knit, undocumented family. As the only documented member, she feels pressure to provide for everyone. Her father was injured in a construction job, leaving her mother to care for him and her younger siblings at home.

After high school, Alexa wanted to attend some secondary education, but thought that her family would not be able to afford it. She's been disconnected from school and formal work, though she occasionally does under-the-table nannying for families in her building. The work is unstable, and the stress of managing her household has impacted her mental health and confidence.

Alexa wants to return to school to build skills for stable employment, but she's overwhelmed by the process and fears that sharing her information with government systems could put her family at risk of ICE involvement. Alexa's story highlights the unique burdens faced by mixed-status families, where young adults often become de facto providers and protectors. She needs culturally responsive support, trauma-informed mental health care, and safe pathways to education and employment that don't jeopardize her family's security.

PERSONALITY



STRESS



"I'm in that process of where I've lost what I really want in my life... I was so used to doing what I was doing that now I'm questioning myself, like... what am I gonna do now? What do I wanna do?"

SERVICES & PROGRAMS

- CalFresh
- Medi-Cal
- Regularly visits youth drop-in centers to connect with their education support staff and other peers with similar challenges.

PRIMARY TASKS

- Exploring options to reenroll in college or vocational training.
- Taking care of her younger siblings while her parents are at work.
- Accessing community-based services through CBOs like drop-in centers.

GOALS

- Reconnect with education, either through college or vocational training.
- Find a stable job after graduation to provide for her family.
- Rebuild confidence.

NEEDS

- Affordable and accessible educational programs or vocational training.
- Financial support or scholarships for tuition, books, and supplies.
- Mentorship, career counseling, and guidance navigating education and post-graduation employment pathways.
- Emotional and mental health support to overcome past setbacks.
- Affordable childcare for her siblings.

CHALLENGES

- Overcoming disengagement from education.
- School staff lacking knowledge of financial aid or other benefits and not prioritizing her needs.
- Limited financial resources and unstable support systems.
- Navigating complex education and employment systems.
- Fear of reduced or cut County benefits for her family if she gets a job.

PERSONAL HISTORY

• 1998
• 2000
• 2002
• 2004
• 2006
• 2008
• 2010
• 2012
• 2014
• 2016
• 2018
• 2020
• 2022

PERSONAL HISTORY

• 1998
• 2000
• 2002
• 2004
• 2006
• 2008
• 2010
• 2012
• 2014
• 2016
• 2018
• 2020
• 2022

PERSONAL HISTORY

• 1998
• 2000
• 2002
• 2004
• 2006
• 2008
• 2010
• 2012
• 2014
• 2016
• 2018
• 2020
• 2022

PERSONAL HISTORY

• 1998
• 2000
• 2002
• 2004
• 2006
• 2008
• 2010
• 2012
• 2014
• 2016
• 2018
• 2020
• 2022

PERSONAL HISTORY

• 1998
• 2000
• 2002
• 2004
• 2006
• 2008
• 2010
• 2012
• 2014
• 2016
• 2018
• 2020
• 2022

PERSONAL HISTORY

• 1998
• 2000
• 2002
• 2004
• 2006
• 2008
• 2010
• 2012
• 2014
• 2016
• 2018
• 2020
• 2022

PERSONAL HISTORY

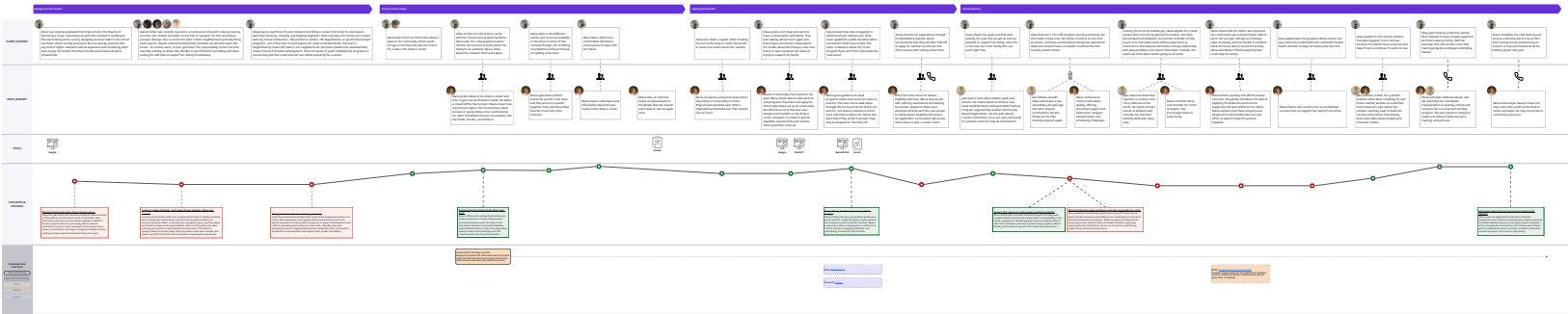
• 1998
• 2000
• 2002
• 2004
• 2006
• 2008
• 2010
• 2012
• 2014
• 2016
• 2018
• 2020
• 2022

PERSONAL HISTORY

• 1998
• 2000
• 2002
• 2004
• 2006
• 2008
• 2010
• 2012
• 2014
• 2016
• 2018
• 2020
• 2022

PERSONAL HISTORY

• 1998
• 2000
• 2002
• 2004
• 2006
• 2008
• 2010
• 2012
• 2014
• 2016
• 2018
• 2020
• 2022





Javier Morales, 23, he/him

Population

Opportunity Youth

Demographic

Gen Z

Location

San Fernando Valley

Education

High School Diploma

Work

Unemployed

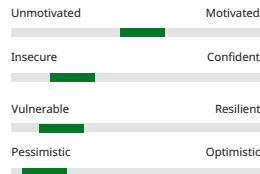
BIO

Javier faced significant challenges throughout high school, ultimately managing to graduate despite struggling academically. At home, he experienced financial and emotional instability, which intensified after he came out as gay to his unsupportive family. Looking for a fresh start, Javier moved to the San Fernando Valley.

Unemployed and living in a friend's car, Javier picks up random neighborhood jobs but the inconsistent income leaves him struggling to make ends meet. Surrounded by people who aren't great influences, he feels the weight of his circumstances. He is trying to figure out what careers align with his interests and skills to help him achieve a brighter future.

Javier dreams of finding a job that allows him to express his creativity and contribute meaningfully to his community. He's looking for programs that can help him build skills, secure housing, and connect with mentors who understand his lived experience. With the right support, Javier believes he can move beyond survival mode and begin building a life rooted in purpose, safety, and self-acceptance.

PERSONALITY



STRESS



"I'm in that process of where, like, I'm lost... I really don't know what I want for myself."

SERVICES & PROGRAMS

- Regularly visits youth drop-in centers to connect with their workforce support staff, meet with therapists, have meals, and connect with peers with similar challenges.
- Mentoring and support through the LGBTQ center, when time allows for the trip to Hollywood.

PRIMARY TASKS

- Working random jobs in his neighborhood like walking dogs, fixing fences, mowing lawns, etc.
- Researching different career paths and industries.
- Attending therapy at the drop-in center.
- Connecting with the drop-in center workforce staff to discuss different career paths.
- Working with mentors for guidance and support.

GOALS

- Identify a career path that aligns with his interest and skills.
- Find a stable job within his ideal field that puts him on the path to a meaningful career.
- Find safe and stable housing close to his job.
- Build a support network with positive influences.
- Rebuild confidence.

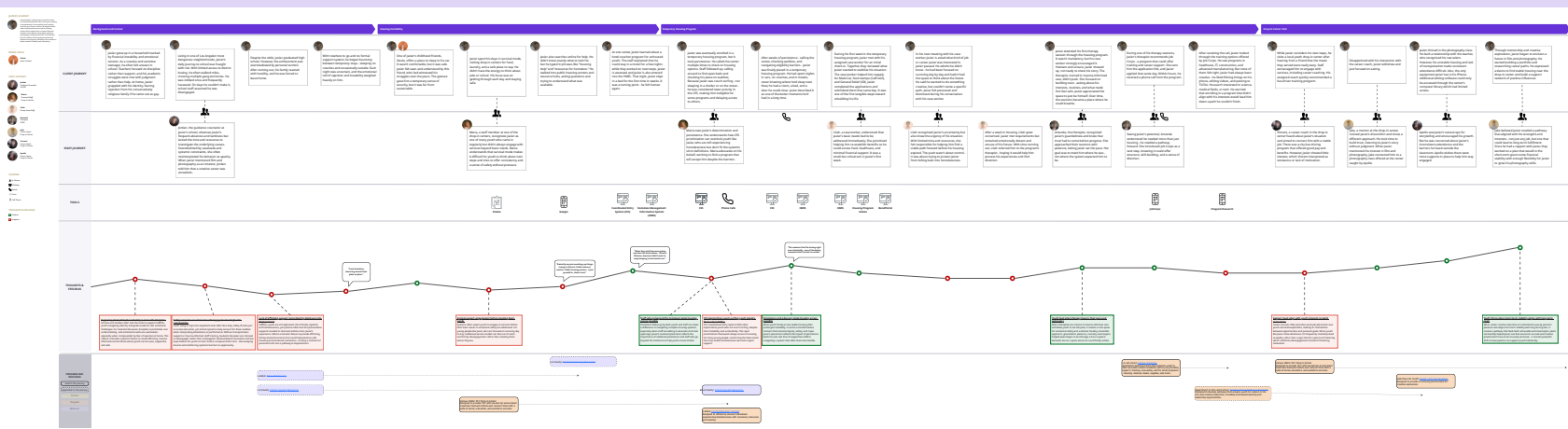
NEEDS

- Coaching and mentorship to help identify career paths and opportunities that match his interests.
- Financial support/resources to help with living expenses, food, clothes, and other basic needs.
- Assistance in finding stable and supportive housing.
- Access to mental health resources to help cope with past trauma and disconnection from family.
- Workforce programs with tangible results (like stable job offers) post-graduation.

CHALLENGES

- Difficulty in maintaining stable income due to the nature of random jobs.
- Lack of support in his immediate environment, hindering his motivation and self-esteem.
- Struggling with the emotional impact of family rejection.
- Feeling lost and unsure about what career options are available or suitable for him.
- Unstable living environment, making it challenging to focus on personal growth.

Behavioral Health: Opportunity Youth Disconnected from Work





Jamal Williams, 19, he/him

Population

Opportunity Youth

Demographic

Gen Z

Location

Watts

Education

Some High School

Work

Unemployed

"How many more straws gotta go on the camel's back until I or the County finally breaks down?"

BIO

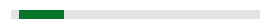
Jamal is a 19-year-old opportunity youth from Watts, navigating life without stable housing, employment, or formal education. He grew up in a neighborhood marked by generational poverty, systemic neglect, and limited access to resources. As a teenager, Jamal faced intense financial strain at home, often stepping into adult responsibilities to support his grandmother, who raised him with love but couldn't provide the male guidance he craved.

School was never a safe or supportive space. Jamal struggled academically and emotionally, and after being expelled from all LAUSD campuses following a fight triggered by stress, he disconnected from education entirely. The system never asked why - only how fast it could remove him.

With no clear path forward, Jamal found belonging in his neighborhood, where gang culture offered food, protection, and a sense of identity. Now at 19, Jamal has little interest in pursuing his GED or seeking employment. He feels disconnected from formal systems, including social services and job programs, and spends most of his time with his neighborhood friends who share similar feelings of disconnection. The influence of the gang culture around him acts as a powerful social network, providing a sense of belonging but also limiting his access to positive opportunities and contributing to a cycle of instability in his life.

PERSONALITY

Unmotivated Motivated



Insecure Confident



Vulnerable Resilient



Pessimistic Optimistic



STRESS

Low High



SERVICES & PROGRAMS

- None, Jamal does not engage with County or CBOs for services or supports.

PRIMARY TASKS

- Maintaining personal safety in his direct environment, which can be unpredictable.
- Earning income through informal jobs, oftentimes made in illegal ways.
- Accessing basic needs without relying on formal systems like social services.
- Identifying opportunities for additional revenue streams.

GOALS

- Safety and stability for himself and his close friends.
- Increase financial independence by finding consistent ways to earn income that don't involve illegal activities.
- Find a pathway out of his high-risk environment to reduce gang exposure but keep social acceptance.

NEEDS

- Access to safe environments where he won't feel judged or pressured to engage with formal systems.
- Peer mentors with lived experience who can offer guidance and coaching based on a shared understanding of what Jamal is going through.
- Flexible, informal education or vocational training that are not tied to traditional schooling.
- Access to basic resources like food, clothing, hygiene, and safe housing.

CHALLENGES

- Distrust in formal systems resulting in not accessing services he's eligible for that could help overall stability and connection.
- Fear of being judged or stigmatized by peers or community members if he seeks help.
- Lack of education and no work experience translating to limited skills.
- Lack of support in his immediate environment, hindering his motivation, self-esteem, and ability to make decisions for himself.

Behavioral Health: Opportunity Youth Disconnected from Work

CHARACTER

Jamal (he/him), a 20-year-old youth, resides in a neighborhood where gang culture is prevalent. He is intelligent and has a strong desire to succeed, but he feels disconnected from the community and lacks a sense of belonging.

CHARACTER

Ms. Jerald (she/her), a 45-year-old school counselor, is a dedicated professional who is empathetic and understanding. She has a strong belief in the power of education and community support to help young people succeed.

CHARACTER

Carlos (he/him), a 35-year-old community organizer, is a passionate and energetic individual. He is a strong advocate for the needs of the community and is committed to helping young people find their path forward.

CHARACTER

David (he/him), a 25-year-old youth, is a young man who is struggling with the same issues as Jamal. He is intelligent and has a strong desire to succeed, but he feels disconnected from the community and lacks a sense of belonging.

CHARACTER

Ms. Jerald (she/her), a 45-year-old school counselor, is a dedicated professional who is empathetic and understanding. She has a strong belief in the power of education and community support to help young people succeed.

CHARACTER

Carlos (he/him), a 35-year-old community organizer, is a passionate and energetic individual. He is a strong advocate for the needs of the community and is committed to helping young people find their path forward.

CHARACTER

David (he/him), a 25-year-old youth, is a young man who is struggling with the same issues as Jamal. He is intelligent and has a strong desire to succeed, but he feels disconnected from the community and lacks a sense of belonging.

CHARACTER

Ms. Jerald (she/her), a 45-year-old school counselor, is a dedicated professional who is empathetic and understanding. She has a strong belief in the power of education and community support to help young people succeed.

CHARACTER

Carlos (he/him), a 35-year-old community organizer, is a passionate and energetic individual. He is a strong advocate for the needs of the community and is committed to helping young people find their path forward.

CHARACTER

David (he/him), a 25-year-old youth, is a young man who is struggling with the same issues as Jamal. He is intelligent and has a strong desire to succeed, but he feels disconnected from the community and lacks a sense of belonging.

Background and Context

School Experience

GED Program

County Benefits





DOMAIN: Housing & Homelessness

Transition Age Youth



Em Rodriguez, 19, they/them

Population

Transition Age Youth
Former Foster Care

Demographic

Gen Z

Location

Florence

Education

High School Diploma,
attending college

Work

Unemployed

"There were so many different people I had to go through for different things. It took a lot of energy, I would get stressed out easily, **I felt like at this point I just didn't want services anymore.**"

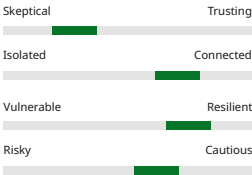
BIO

Em entered foster care at 13 and experienced numerous placements, working with over 30 social workers throughout their journey. At 17, feeling done with the system and yearning for independence, they were adopted by their grandmother. However, after their grandmother passed away and other family members moved in, Em chose to move out and began couch surfing with friends.

A turning point came when a friend who was in a THP invited Em over to see her apartment. Experiencing the living space firsthand helped Em realize that the program wasn't as daunting as they had thought. This positive experience encouraged them to call the hotline and opt back into the system under AB 12.

Despite their challenging past, Em is resilient and determined to create a stable life. They learned to navigate the complexities of the foster care system largely on their own, relying on networking and their resourcefulness to access services. Em has a strong desire to help others in similar situations, believing that lived experience is crucial in serving these populations. As a former foster youth, Em attending college for free and is connected with the Guardian Scholars program to pursue a degree in nursing to help their community. They remain focused on building a stable, independent life while advocating for expanded support for youth transitioning out of the foster care system.

PERSONALITY



STRESS



SERVICES & PROGRAMS

- THP
- AB 12
- Medi-Cal
- CalFresh
- Guardian Scholars Program
- Mental Health Services

PRIMARY TASKS

- Attending classes to pursue their degree in nursing with the support of Guardian Scholars.
- Completing assignments and engaging in coursework to enhance their knowledge.
- Maintaining a budget to manage their allowance and save up for their own place.
- Engaging in workshops to improve independent living skills.

GOALS

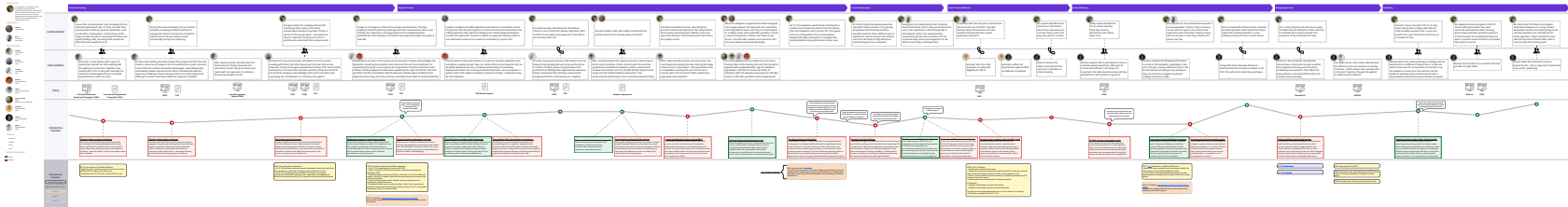
- Successfully earn their degree in nursing to help their community.
- Transition from the THP to independent living with a stable housing situation.
- Establish connections with professionals in nursing and related fields to enhance career opportunities.
- Attain financial stability through savings and employment.

NEEDS

- Access to safe and affordable housing options post-THP.
- Continued financial support through scholarships, grants, or increased funding from AB 12.
- Guidance from experienced professionals in nursing to navigate their career path.
- Information on services available for youth transitioning out of foster care, including mental health support and job training.
- Opportunities to connect with peers and mentors who understand their experiences.
- Access to transportation for commuting to college classes and internships.

CHALLENGES

- Difficulty understanding and accessing available resources and services.
- Coping with the loss of their grandmother and the instability of their past living situations.
- Juggling college, personal life, and ILP classes while maintaining focus on their goals.
- Managing living expenses while saving for the future.
- Overcoming past experiences with numerous social workers and developing trust in new support systems.





Jordan Smith, 21, he/him

Population

Transition Age Youth
Former Foster Care

Demographic

Gen Z

Location

Los Angeles

Education

Some High School

Work

Unemployed, but searching

"If I had gotten the support I needed when I asked, I would have been better off... **I wouldn't have sought out drugs to take care of me... A lot of that was because they're going to look at my face sheet or say that that stuff isn't really going on."**

BIO

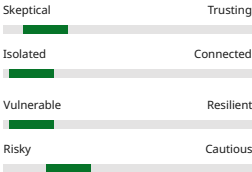
Jordan entered foster care at age 14 after his mother was denied access to a shelter due to rules that prohibit mothers from bringing teenage sons into certain facilities. With no safe housing options and no stable male figures in his life, Jordan was placed into care, beginning a cycle of instability that deeply shaped his life.

His relationship with his mother had been strained from a young age, and the instability of multiple placements only compounded his sense of disconnection and mistrust. Each move meant a new therapist, new staff, and the painful task of retelling his story again and again. Over time, Jordan began to feel like his story wasn't even his own anymore - which chipped away at his sense of identity and made it harder to trust that healing was possible.

Without consistent support, Jordan began using drugs to cope with the emotional toll of his environment. When he turned 18, he moved back home with his mom, believing it would be different and bring stability. But their relationship remained unchanged, and the disappointment led to couch surfing.

Jordan regularly visits a local drop-in center for support and is actively seeking sober housing and employment. His transient lifestyle and emotional challenges, especially anxiety, hopelessness, and exhaustion from having to constantly start over, make progress difficult.

PERSONALITY



STRESS



SERVICES & PROGRAMS

- Drop-in centers
- Peer mentorship
- Sober living programs
- Mental health services

PRIMARY TASKS

- Searching for sober, affordable housing that will accept him in early recovery.
- Attending drop-in centers for basic needs and emotional support.
- Applying for jobs that accommodate his current life circumstances and recovery goals.
- Maintaining sobriety while managing emotional triggers and instability.
- Navigating complex systems (housing, education, benefits) with limited guidance.
- Building trust with providers and advocate for his own needs, even when it's exhausting.

GOALS

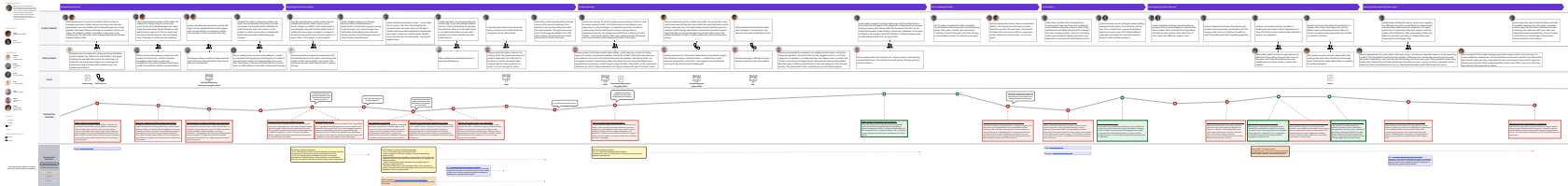
- Secure stable, sober housing that supports his early recovery and provides a foundation for rebuilding his life.
- Find meaningful, stable employment that aligns with his goals and supports his independence.
- Establish consistent mental health support, ideally with a provider he can build trust with over time.
- Reclaim ownership of his story and begin healing without having to constantly relive trauma.
- Build a sense of connection and belonging, whether through community, peers, or chosen family.

NEEDS

- Access to sober living environments that don't require long-term sobriety to qualify - he's in the early stages of recovery and needs housing that offers structure, support, and understanding -not punishment for where he is in his journey.
- Consistent mental health support that doesn't reset every time he moves.
- An emotionally-safe space where he doesn't have to constantly relive his past to access help.
- Support that helps him reclaim his story and feel seen beyond his "file" or "face sheet"
- Providers who understand the emotional toll of system-induced instability and can build trust over time.

CHALLENGES

- Housing instability disrupts every aspect of his life, from employment to mental health to sobriety.
- Therapy fatigue from having to restart his healing process with every new placement or provider.
- Retelling his story so many times has made it feel like it no longer belongs to him.
- Strict program requirements (e.g., sobriety length, full-time school/work) often exclude him from the very support he needs.
- Emotional exhaustion from navigating systems that feel impersonal, judgmental, or slow to respond.
- Being labeled "troubled" or "at-risk" has shaped how others treat him, especially in group homes or job settings.





Darius Johnson, 20, he/him

Population

Transition Age Youth
Former Foster Care & Juvenile Detention

Demographic

Gen Z

Location

Lancaster

Education

High School Diploma

Work

Part-Time Job

"The system is **built to deplete you of your spirit and hope**. You have to have hope, which is hard because you're a kid. **It's hard to have that hope.**"

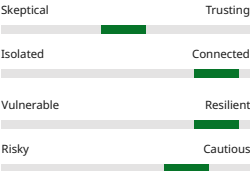
BIO

Darius is a resilient and entrepreneurial young adult who entered foster care early, spending much of his adolescence in group homes. His path shifted when he became justice-involved. Despite pressure to take a plea deal, Darius stood firm in his innocence, guided by faith. While incarcerated, he joined youth mentorship programs and connected with CBOs that offered him belonging and support. He discovered a passion for entrepreneurship, learning to cut and style hair from peers in detention.

After release, Darius entered a strict THP. Though the structure felt overwhelming and restrictive at first, he leaned into the consistency and mentorship it provided. The program gave him stability and a safe place to grow which is something he hadn't had in years. Living in the Antelope Valley added challenges: services were hard to access, transportation was limited, and resources were stretched thin. But the THP helped bridge those gaps, connecting him to employment support, mental health services, and a strong network.

Now working part-time at a local barber shop, Darius uses the skills he learned in detention to earn income and build relationships. He remains grounded in faith, driven by purpose, and surrounded by a community that believes in him. His journey is far from easy, but he's committed to rewriting the narrative - one that too often defines young men like him by their charges instead of their choices.

PERSONALITY



STRESS



SERVICES & PROGRAMS

- THP
- ILP
- Medi-Cal
- CalFresh
- Mental health services

PRIMARY TASKS

- Maintaining housing stability within the THP while navigating its rules and structure.
- Participating in ILP workshops and coaching to build life skills and prepare for independent living.
- Building professional skills and experience through part-time work at a barber shop.
- Continuing to develop entrepreneurial skills and business ideas for his future barbershop.
- Staying connected with mentors and CBOs for emotional and practical support.
- Managing transportation challenges to access services and work in the Antelope Valley.
- Engaging in mental health support to promote healing from his experiences.

GOALS

- Open his own barbershop and create opportunities for other youth to learn business and trade skills.
- Transition from THP to independent living with confidence and stability.
- Build financial independence through entrepreneurship and employment.
- Stay connected to mentors and continue growing his support network.
- Heal from past trauma and maintain emotional and spiritual well-being.
- Be a role model for other justice-involved and foster youth.

NEEDS

- Continued access to structured environments that offer guidance without excessive surveillance.
- Accessible services, especially in the Antelope Valley, where transportation and program availability are limited.
- Business coaching, startup resources, and mentorship to launch his barbershop.
- Consistent, trauma-informed therapy and emotional support tailored to justice-involved youth.
- Spaces where he feels seen, heard, and valued.
- Opportunities to connect with spiritual mentors and practices that reinforce his resilience.

CHALLENGES

- Limited access to services and transportation in the Antelope Valley.
- Landlords may be hesitant to rent to him in the future due to his background.
- Navigating THP rules while trying to build independence.
- Managing the emotional toll of being justice-involved and formerly in foster care.
- Unsure of pathways for youth with records to pursue entrepreneurship.
- Processing trauma while maintaining motivation and focus.

Background information
The following information was gathered from the research and interviews conducted for this project. It provides context for the findings and the experiences of the participants.

Key findings
The research identified several key findings related to the experiences of homeless youth in the juvenile justice system. These findings are discussed in detail in the following sections.

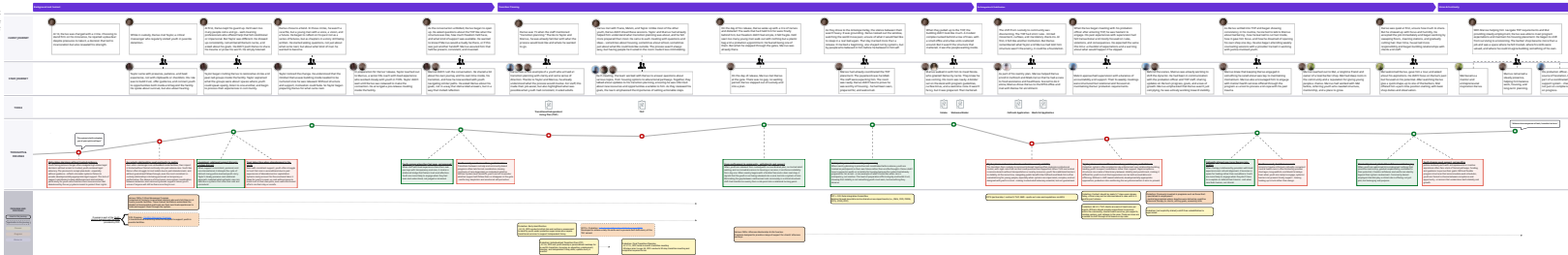
Recommendations
Based on the findings, several recommendations were made to improve the experiences of homeless youth in the juvenile justice system. These recommendations are discussed in detail in the following sections.

Conclusion
The research highlights the need for a more holistic and supportive approach to addressing the needs of homeless youth in the juvenile justice system. This approach should focus on providing comprehensive services and support to help these youth achieve stability and success.

References
The following references were used in the research for this project. They provide additional information and resources related to the topics discussed in the report.

Appendix
The following appendix contains additional information and resources related to the topics discussed in the report. This information is provided for reference and further exploration.

Disclaimer
The information presented in this report is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to be used as a substitute for professional advice or as a basis for legal action.





Aaron Rivera, 19, he/him

Population

Transition Age Youth
Former Juvenile Detention

Demographic

Gen Z

Location

Boyle Heights

Education

Some High School

Work

Unemployed

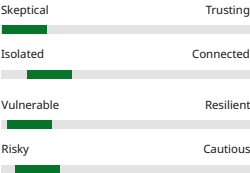
BIO

Aaron grew up in a cramped apartment in Boyle Heights, raised by his aunt after his parents disappeared from his life. At age 11, he was sexually abused by a family friend - a trauma he never spoke about and never received help for. The pain and confusion hardened into anger, and Aaron began acting out, pulling his younger cousin into trouble and finding belonging in local gang activity.

By his early teens, Aaron was running errands for older gang members, watching corners, delivering messages, and sometimes acting as a lookout. The gang offered him a sense of family and protection he couldn't find at home but also demanded loyalty and risk. Aaron's all-or-nothing personality made him quick to prove himself, and he was often the first to volunteer for dangerous tasks. He started carrying weapons and participating in petty crimes that escalated over time.

At 13, Aaron was arrested for armed robbery during a botched break-in with older boys. He spent years in juvenile detention, refusing therapy and disengaging from staff and programs. After a brief, unsuccessful attempt at a THP, Aaron left, overwhelmed by the rules and structure. With nowhere safe to go and no family able to take him in, he quickly fell back into old habits by rejoining his crew, couch surfing, and relying on the streets for survival. For Aaron, the gang remained his main source of belonging, even as it kept him trapped in cycles of risk and instability.

PERSONALITY



STRESS



"[The lifestyle] chooses us. **You get addicted to it... it's like drugs.**"

SERVICES & PROGRAMS

- Probation

PRIMARY TASKS

- Attending probation check-ins and complying with conditions to avoid further legal trouble.
- Maintaining loyalty and status within his gang, which provides a sense of belonging and protection.
- Avoiding therapy, programs, and most forms of adult support, keeping emotional distance from staff and mentors.
- Navigating daily survival like finding places to stay, food, and safety often through risky or illegal activities.
- Managing intense emotions and trauma alone, without professional help or healthy coping strategies.

GOALS

- Gain respect and security within his peer group and gang.
- Avoid further incarceration or legal consequences, even while engaging in risky behaviors.
- Maintain independence and control over his life, resisting authority and outside intervention.
- Protect his cousin and maintain family loyalty, even as relationships remain strained.
- Find a sense of stability or safety, though he struggles to imagine what that could look like outside the streets.

NEEDS

- Trauma-informed support that feels safe and nonjudgmental, offered at his pace.
- Opportunities for genuine connection with adults who understand his experience and won't push too hard.
- Alternatives to gang involvement that offer real belonging and purpose.
- Safe, stable housing that doesn't come with rigid rules or exposure to unsafe environments.
- Emotional safety and patience from service providers, recognizing his all-or-nothing approach to trust.

CHALLENGES

- Deep distrust of systems, staff, and authority figures due to repeated disappointments and unresolved trauma.
- All-or-nothing thinking makes it hard to accept imperfect relationships or boundaries.
- Refusal to engage in therapy or programs, limiting access to healing and support.
- High exposure to violence, substance use, and negative influences through gang activity and unstable housing.
- Family unable to welcome him back, increasing isolation and sense of betrayal.
- Anxiety, depression, and trauma interfere with decision-making, motivation, and ability to envision a different future.

Background Information
The following information was gathered from interviews with the participants and is intended to provide context for the findings of the study. It is not intended to be a comprehensive review of the literature or a detailed description of the program.

Study Goals
The primary goal of the study was to understand the experiences of youth who are experiencing homelessness and to identify the barriers to housing and support services. The secondary goal was to identify the strengths and resources of the youth and to explore ways to address the barriers.

Study Questions
The study was guided by the following research questions:
1. What are the experiences of youth who are experiencing homelessness?
2. What are the barriers to housing and support services?
3. What are the strengths and resources of the youth?
4. How can the barriers be addressed?

Study Methods
The study used a qualitative research design. Data was collected through interviews with youth, staff, and community members. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis.

Study Findings
The study found that youth who are experiencing homelessness face a variety of barriers to housing and support services. These barriers include lack of income, lack of social support, and lack of information. The study also found that youth have strengths and resources that can be used to address the barriers.

Study Limitations
The study has several limitations. First, the sample was small and may not be representative of all youth who are experiencing homelessness. Second, the study was conducted in a single location and may not be generalizable to other locations. Third, the study was conducted over a short period of time and may not capture long-term changes.

Study Implications
The study has several implications for practice and policy. First, the study highlights the need for a holistic approach to addressing homelessness that addresses the needs of the whole person. Second, the study highlights the importance of building relationships and social support for youth. Third, the study highlights the need for more information and resources for youth.

Study Conclusions
The study concludes that youth who are experiencing homelessness face a variety of barriers to housing and support services. These barriers include lack of income, lack of social support, and lack of information. The study also found that youth have strengths and resources that can be used to address the barriers.

Study Acknowledgments
The study was made possible by the support of the following organizations and individuals: [List of organizations and individuals]

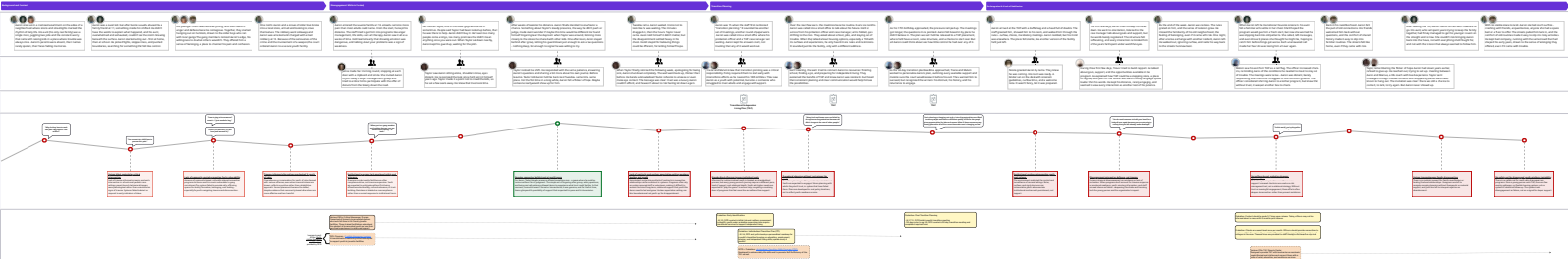
Study References
The study references the following sources: [List of references]

Study Appendix
The study includes the following appendix: [List of appendix items]

Study Glossary
The study includes the following glossary: [List of glossary items]

Study Bibliography
The study includes the following bibliography: [List of bibliography items]

Study Index
The study includes the following index: [List of index items]





DOMAIN: Child Welfare and Family Well-Being

Women with Young Children



Lucia Torres, 19, she/her

Population	Demographic	Location	Education	Work	Household Income	Household Size
Women with Young Children	Gen Z	Lancaster	Part-Time College	Part-Time Job	\$18,500	1

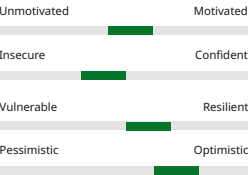
“I wish the programs understood how much we’re already juggling. I’m working, studying, and trying to be a good mom - just give me a little grace.”

BIO

Lucia is a pregnant woman navigating the challenges of single motherhood while pursuing her dreams. Despite her financial challenges, Lucia is determined to have a healthy pregnancy and create a loving environment for her child

As Lucia prepares for motherhood, she recognizes that she needs to prioritize healing from her past traumas as young child in foster care, including a strong distrust of the system. Faced with no other options for support, she puts her own feelings aside to engage with County services for the health of her baby.

PERSONALITY



STRESS



SERVICES & PROGRAMS

- Medi-Cal
- CalFresh
- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- Prenatal care from local clinic
- Education scholarships for former foster youth
- Faith-based support and resources

PRIMARY TASKS

- Managing basic needs like food, clothing, and baby supplies like diapers and formula.
- Attending prenatal appointments at her OBGYN's office.
- Attending classes and studying for her degree in social work.
- Working her part-time job.
- Attending her church's support group to connect with other expecting mothers.

GOALS

- Have a healthy pregnancy, birth, and child.
- Earn degree in social work to get a more secure and stable job for her and her child.
- Find stable, affordable housing in a safe neighborhood with parks and a good school system.
- Provide a high quality of life for her baby after birth.

NEEDS

- Access healthcare and nutrition services like Medi-Cal, CalFresh, WIC, and low-barrier care.
- Access to financial support for when she is out of work following birth.
- Safe, stable housing for her and her baby.
- Counseling to overcome her past traumas with the foster care system.
- Childcare resources for when she needs to return to work and school.
- Sense of community to help her feel supported.

CHALLENGES

- Low income makes it difficult to cover living costs that are not covered by County benefits.
- Balancing time between school, work, doctor's appointments, and support groups.
- Uncertainty of the future and not being able to provide for her child once they are born.
- Fear that her child will end up in foster care like she did.

Child Welfare & Family Well-Being: Pregnant Woman

CLIENT JOURNEY

Lucia's Childhood
Lucia's Childhood was marked by instability and frequent moves. Her behavior became increasingly erratic, leading a judge to order her placement in a group home. The group home provided the structure and stability she desperately needed. However, once she left, she fell into old habits and became pregnant.

STAFF JOURNEY

Georgia recognized Lucia's need for stability and worked to build trust, offering a safe space for Lucia to share her worries and seek guidance.

TOOLS

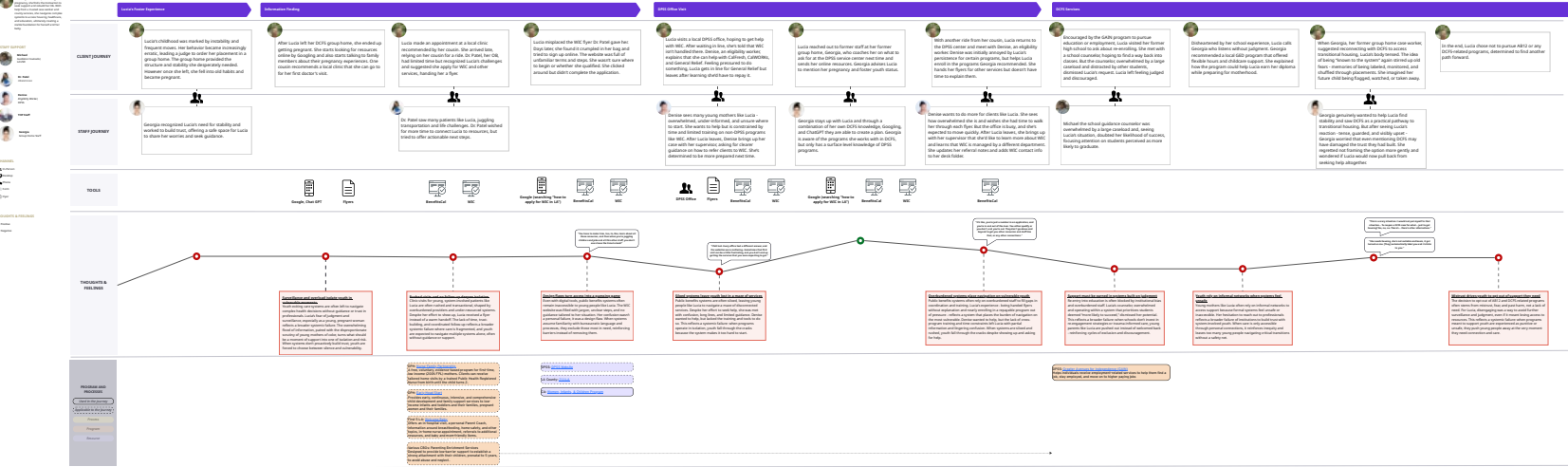
Google, Chat GPT
Flyers
BenefitsCal
WSC
DPS Office Visit
Flyers
BenefitsCal
WSC
Google (Searching "How to apply for WSC in LA")
BenefitsCal
WSC

THOUGHTS & FEELINGS

Positive
Negative

PROGRAM AND PROCESS

Used in the Journey
Available in the Journey
Positive
Program
Outcome





Jasmine Carter, 31, she/her

Population

Women with Young Children Millennial

Demographic

Location

Inglewood

Education

High School Diploma

Work

Part-Time Job

Household Income

\$30,000

Household Size

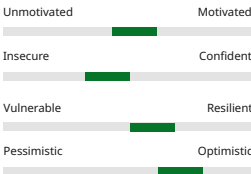
3

BIO

Jasmine is a hardworking mother navigating the challenges of single parenthood with her one-year-old, Desiree. After becoming pregnant again, she moved back in with her mom to save money and have extra support during/after her pregnancy. While Jasmine appreciates her mom, she doesn't want to be a burden since her elderly mom doesn't work anymore and watches Desiree full-time.

Jasmine skillfully juggles work, parenting, and childcare while adhering to a strict budget. She is motivated to contribute more to the family's financial stability but is afraid to get a new job that pays more and lose their County benefits. Jasmine's primary focus is on creating a safe and stable environment for Desiree while improving the long-term quality of life for the family.

PERSONALITY



STRESS



"I want [my children] to be in an environment that **supports them and applauds them.**"

SERVICES & PROGRAMS

- Medi-Cal
- CalFresh
- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- Food bank

PRIMARY TASKS

- Caring for Desiree to make sure her developmental needs are met.
- Attending pediatric appointments for Desiree.
- Working part-time job.
- Budgeting and planning for household expenses and sticking to a strict budget.
- Maintaining eligibility for County benefits (including renewal appointments) and using them for food and basic living expenses.

GOALS

- Find a new job that pays higher and includes benefits so the family doesn't need to rely on County benefits anymore.
- Maintain a safe, loving environment for Desiree to support her growth and development.
- Contribute more to the household so she feels like less of a burden on her mom.
- Send Desiree to the best schools possible and start planning for college so she is set up for longer-term success.

NEEDS

- Access healthcare and nutrition services like Medi-Cal, CalFresh, WIC, and low-barrier care.
- Access to local food banks to support her family on weeks when the budget is extra tight.
- Opportunities for job training or education to enhance her skills and employability.
- Emotional support or counseling to help manage the stress of single parenthood.

CHALLENGES

- Anxiety about finding a higher-paying job that could jeopardize her family's eligibility for County benefits.
- Balancing time between parenting, work, doctor's appointments, and renewals for County benefits.
- Fear of being a burden to her elderly mother, who is already providing full-time childcare.
- Lack of personal time to recharge and rest results in her feeling run-down and overwhelmed.

Child Welfare & Family Well-Being: Woman with Young Children

PERSONA: JESSICA
A 32-year-old woman with a high school diploma and a GED. She is currently unemployed and lives with her two children, a 6-year-old boy and a 4-year-old girl. She has a history of substance use and is currently in recovery. She is seeking support for her children's development and her own well-being.

PERSONA: ROSA
A 35-year-old woman with a high school diploma and a GED. She is currently unemployed and lives with her two children, a 6-year-old boy and a 4-year-old girl. She has a history of substance use and is currently in recovery. She is seeking support for her children's development and her own well-being.

PERSONA: DR. PATEL
A 45-year-old male physician with a medical degree and board certification in pediatrics. He is currently employed at a children's hospital and is seeking support for his own well-being.

PERSONA: ROSA
A 35-year-old woman with a high school diploma and a GED. She is currently unemployed and lives with her two children, a 6-year-old boy and a 4-year-old girl. She has a history of substance use and is currently in recovery. She is seeking support for her children's development and her own well-being.

PERSONA: ROSA
A 35-year-old woman with a high school diploma and a GED. She is currently unemployed and lives with her two children, a 6-year-old boy and a 4-year-old girl. She has a history of substance use and is currently in recovery. She is seeking support for her children's development and her own well-being.

PERSONA: ROSA
A 35-year-old woman with a high school diploma and a GED. She is currently unemployed and lives with her two children, a 6-year-old boy and a 4-year-old girl. She has a history of substance use and is currently in recovery. She is seeking support for her children's development and her own well-being.

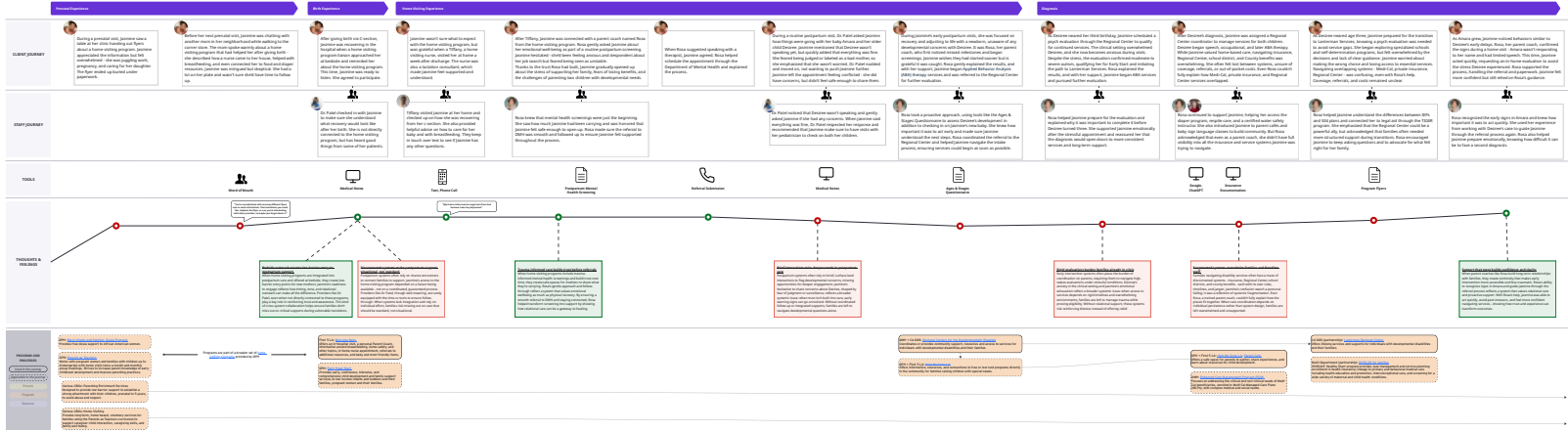
PERSONA: ROSA
A 35-year-old woman with a high school diploma and a GED. She is currently unemployed and lives with her two children, a 6-year-old boy and a 4-year-old girl. She has a history of substance use and is currently in recovery. She is seeking support for her children's development and her own well-being.

PERSONA: ROSA
A 35-year-old woman with a high school diploma and a GED. She is currently unemployed and lives with her two children, a 6-year-old boy and a 4-year-old girl. She has a history of substance use and is currently in recovery. She is seeking support for her children's development and her own well-being.

PERSONA: ROSA
A 35-year-old woman with a high school diploma and a GED. She is currently unemployed and lives with her two children, a 6-year-old boy and a 4-year-old girl. She has a history of substance use and is currently in recovery. She is seeking support for her children's development and her own well-being.

PERSONA: ROSA
A 35-year-old woman with a high school diploma and a GED. She is currently unemployed and lives with her two children, a 6-year-old boy and a 4-year-old girl. She has a history of substance use and is currently in recovery. She is seeking support for her children's development and her own well-being.

PERSONA: ROSA
A 35-year-old woman with a high school diploma and a GED. She is currently unemployed and lives with her two children, a 6-year-old boy and a 4-year-old girl. She has a history of substance use and is currently in recovery. She is seeking support for her children's development and her own well-being.





Monique Harris, 36, she/her

Population

Women with Young Children

Demographic

Millennial

Location

Carson

Education

Associate's Degree

Work

Part-Time Job

Household Income

\$75,000

Household Size

4

"Black women are supposed to be strong, resilient. We get beaten down by life and **asking for help is not always chalked up to what it seems based on how we were raised** to be strong."

BIO

Monique is a determined mother of two young boys who works part-time as a community health worker - a role she chose to balance her career with her responsibilities as a mother and partner. Her husband, Al, works full-time, and together they bring in a combined household income of \$75,000. On paper, they are not considered low-income, but in reality, they are one emergency away from financial collapse. Their income disqualifies them from essential programs despite the fact that they often struggle to afford food, childcare, and healthcare.

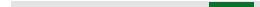
Monique's first pregnancy was supported by a home visiting program, which helped her feel prepared. Her second pregnancy was traumatic, and she didn't receive home visiting services but still doesn't understand why. Monique has considered going to therapy, but she's worried that anything she shares could be misinterpreted or used against her. She's aware of how black families are disproportionately reported which makes her cautious about seeking help, even though she needs it. A misclassified benefits application triggered a child support case that fractured her co-parenting relationship with Corey, adding emotional strain during an already vulnerable time.

Despite these challenges, Monique continues to show up for her family, her job, and her community. She's resourceful, resilient, and deeply committed to raising her children with love, boundaries, and care. But the reality is stark: even with a degree, a job, and a stable household, Monique lives on the edge.

PERSONALITY

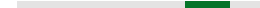
Insecure  Confident

Isolated  Connected

Reactive  Proactive

Skeptical  Trusting

STRESS

Low  High

SERVICES & PROGRAMS

- Local food bank
- CBOs providing family support services, parenting classes, and referrals to other services

PRIMARY TASKS

- Providing peer-based support to families navigating healthcare, parenting, and social services.
- Managing daily household activities, routines, meals, and childcare.
- Budgeting household income to cover rent, food, and healthcare.
- Supporting her children's emotional and developmental needs.
- Navigating healthcare and insurance for the whole family.
- Monitoring her own mental health while avoiding systems she doesn't trust.
- Working with CBO staff for additional support for her family where available.

GOALS

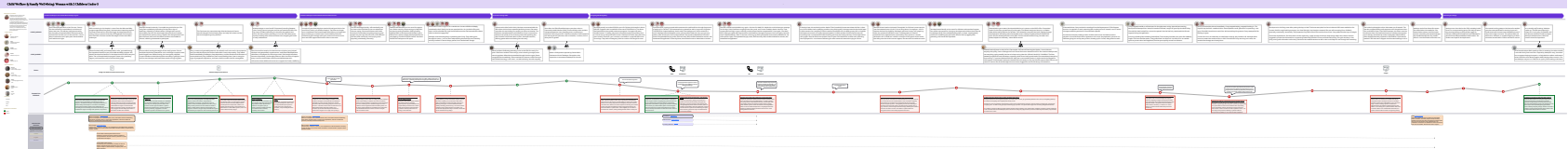
- Raise emotionally healthy, well-supported children.
- Achieve financial stability and build savings, maybe even start a college fund for the boys.
- Heal from her traumatic birth experience.
- Access support without fear of surveillance or judgment.
- Balance the responsibilities of being a mom, co-worker, and wife while also allowing time for personal growth and development.
- Rebuild trust with Corey after the child support case fractured their co-parenting relationship.

NEEDS

- Affordable, high-quality childcare.
- High-quality education for her children.
- Accessible healthcare for the entire family, including mental health support without risk of reporting.
- Reliable transportation and financial support for basic needs
- Clear, empathetic guidance through County systems.

CHALLENGES

- "Cliff effect" from earning just above public benefit thresholds.
- Lack of postpartum care and mental health access.
- Fear of child welfare involvement due to racial bias.
- Inflexible work and care systems that don't support part-time caregivers.
- Although her work is meaningful, it's stagnant - there's no clear path for growth, no raises, and no recognition for the emotional labor she carries.
- Stigma around needing help despite being "middle income."
- Strained co-parenting with Corey due to the child support case and Corey's fractured relationship with Connor as a result.





Staff Personas



STAFF PERSONAS

CBO Staff



Jake Thompson, 29, he/him

TITLE

Career Pathways Coach

Department

Department of Economic
Opportunity (DEO)

Location

San Fernando Valley

Demographic

Millennial

Experience

6 years in workforce development

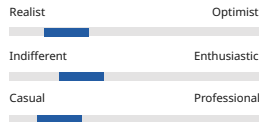
"Even finding out what you're **not interested in is a success.**"

BIO

Jake is a career pathways coach at a drop-in center in where he supports disconnected youth ages 16–24 - many of whom are navigating homelessness, trauma, or system involvement. With six years in workforce development and lived experience as a formerly disconnected youth himself, Jake brings empathy and grit to his work.

But the job is demanding: his caseload is heavy, the systems he relies on are constantly changing, and referrals often stall due to long waitlists or unclear eligibility rules. He spends much of his day troubleshooting applications, chasing down updates, and trying to keep youth engaged despite setbacks. Burnout is real, but Jake stays committed, knowing that for some youth, he may be the only adult who hasn't given up on them.

PERSONALITY



TECHNICAL COMFORT



STRESS LEVEL



TEAM COMPOSITION

- Workforce Navigator
- Mental Health Clinician
- Employer Liaison
- Peer Support Specialist

COMMONLY USED TOOLS

- **Student Information System (SIS)** – for tracking attendance and academic performance
- **LAUSD MISIS** – for student records and case management
- **Referral Forms** – used to refer youth to external services

PRIMARY TASKS

- Conducting career assessments.
- Connecting youth to earn-and-learn programs.
- Facilitating job readiness workshops.
- Tracking progress and retention.

GOALS

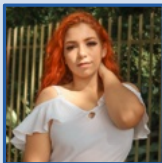
- Increase youth enrollment in training programs.
- Identify mentors and coaches to support youth throughout their career journey.
- Improve job placement rates out of the training programs.
- Build youth confidence and self-sufficiency.
- Connect youth with careers in their area of interest and/or that will result in a job with a livable wage.

NEEDS

- Stronger employer partnerships to support youth entering the workforce.
- Good network knowledge of who has job opportunities and training programs.
- Transportation stipends for youth to access training and/or go to their jobs.
- Mental health supports for youth.
- Supportive team environment.
- Budget for participation incentives for youth to participate in and engage with job programming.

CHALLENGES

- Youth trauma and instability affecting focus and commitment to job training programs.
- Youth distrust of systems.
- Limited access to high-growth jobs and jobs that immediately pay a livable wage.
- Documentation barriers for enrollment, hindering participation in training programs.
- Job training programs not always resulting in positions that offer a livable wage.
- Inconsistent attendance and engagement.



Maria Sanchez, 26, she/her

TITLE

Youth Advocate, Program Coordinator

Department

CBO

Location

Hollywood

Demographic

Gen Z

Experience

3 years in youth homelessness services

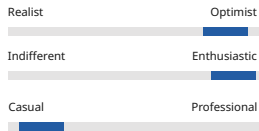
BIO

Maria is a compassionate and highly skilled support worker at a drop-in center serving TAY. As the first point of contact, she plays a critical role in welcoming youth into a safe, non-judgmental space where their immediate needs like food, hygiene, rest, and emotional support are met with dignity and care.

Her deep empathy and trauma-informed approach allow her to build trust quickly, even with youth who have experienced significant instability, homelessness, or system involvement. Maria understands that healing and engagement take time, and she meets each young person where they are, offering support without pressure.

Maria's work includes conducting intake assessments, connecting youth to housing and mental health services, facilitating workshops, and coordinating with outreach teams and community-based organizations. She's known for her resourcefulness, her ability to de-escalate tense situations, and her unwavering commitment to helping youth navigate complex systems with confidence.

PERSONALITY



TECHNICAL COMFORT



STRESS LEVEL



TEAM COMPOSITION

- Outreach Worker
- Mental Health Clinician
- Housing Navigator
- Employment Specialist
- Peer Support Specialist
- Guest Speakers & Workshop Leaders

COMMONLY USED TOOLS

- **Community Resource Directories** – local services for housing, food, clinics, legal aid
- **Intake Form** – assesses youth needs during first contact
- **Quick Resource Lists** – for immediate referrals to food, hygiene, shelter, and support

PRIMARY TASKS

- Greeting youth and creating a welcoming atmosphere.
- Assessing immediate needs (food, water, hygiene, safety).
- Building rapport to foster trust and open communication.
- Providing initial referrals to internal case managers.
- Facilitating workshops to support youth wellbeing.
- Support youth in redefining intimacy and boundaries.

GOALS

- Provide crisis intervention and stabilization.
- Connect youth to transitional and permanent housing.
- Facilitate access to education, employment, and health services.
- Build trust and resilience through trauma-informed care.
- Help youth navigate public systems by creating inclusive, non-stigmatizing environments.

NEEDS

- Access to comprehensive resource lists.
- Effective communication tools (phone, computer).
- Ongoing training (first aid, de-escalation, mental health).
- Support for managing vicarious trauma.
- Collaboration with outreach workers, mental health clinicians, housing navigators, and job support.
- Flexibility in grants to cover urgent needs (e.g., bus tokens).
- Infrastructure to support peers (HR, training, supervision).
- Time and space for youth to acclimate before paperwork.

CHALLENGES

- Managing high needs with limited resources.
- Safety concerns from client conflicts or external threats.
- High mobility of youth disrupting continuity of care.
- Burnout from working with deeply traumatized individuals.
- Bureaucratic barriers to simple referrals and service access.
- County systems are rigid and slow, especially on weekends.
- Intake systems often fail to capture youth nuance ("I'm fine" blocks access).
- Peers require intensive support and training; some lack basic skills.
- Institutional barriers (e.g., clinics closing early, lack of phones) damage trust.



Marcus Jones, 48, he/him

TITLE

Senior Life Coach

Department

CBO

Location

South LA

Demographic

Gen X

Experience

5 years at a CBO

"People always let them down and lie. I pride myself in being that one person who won't let you down. I'm going to get it done for them."

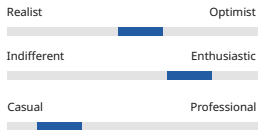
BIO

Marcus was raised in South LA amid instability, addiction, and trauma. He was raised by his grandma and drawn into gang life by 12. At 20, he was sentenced to 31 years for a crime he didn't commit. While incarcerated, he battled depression but found healing through mentorship and faith. He earned his GED, led therapeutic circles, and began to understand the roots of his pain and the systemic failures.

Released in 2021 through legislative reform, he returned with a mission: to be the person he needed growing up. He believes in the power of authenticity, accountability, and faith. He doesn't shy away from hard conversations, and he challenges youth to confront their trauma and shift their mindset.

Marcus is known for his fierce advocacy. He doesn't clock out at 5 p.m.; he answers calls at 3 a.m., shows up to court dates, and fights for youth who've been written off. His coaching blends tough love with deep compassion, challenging young people to confront their trauma while reminding them they are worthy of love, stability, and purpose. For Marcus, this work is sacred. It's not about saving anyone - it's about standing beside them, especially when no one else will.

PERSONALITY



TECHNICAL COMFORT



STRESS LEVEL



TEAM COMPOSITION

- Critical Messengers
- Life Coaches & Mentors
- Therapists & Behavioral Health Specialists
- Housing Navigators
- Employment Coordinators

COMMONLY USED TOOLS

- **Peer-Led Support Groups** - focused on trauma, accountability, and healing
- **Victim Impact Circles** - help youth understand the consequences of their actions
- **Welcome Home Kits** - essentials, clothing, and orientation for youth post-release
- **Accountability Plans** - used when youth struggle with program compliance
- **Spiritual Reflection Spaces** - optional, non-denominational support
- **Community Referrals** - for services beyond the CBO's scope (e.g., psychiatry, housing)

PRIMARY TASKS

- Reconnecting with youth post-release through relationships built by critical messengers during incarceration.
- Facilitating therapeutic and accountability groups with youth.
- Providing 1:1 coaching and 24/7 crisis support.
- Advocating for youth in court, parole hearings, and with service providers.
- Coordinating housing transitions and referrals.
- Tracking youth progress and maintaining monthly reports.
- Building trust through consistent, trauma-informed engagement.

GOALS

- Prevent homelessness among justice-involved youth exiting detention.
- Ensure youth feel seen, heard, and valued.
- Help youth build stable, independent lives through housing, employment, and healing.
- Shift youth mindset from survival to self-worth.
- Advocate for systemic reform through lived experience.

NEEDS

- Emergency and transitional housing options.
- Culturally competent mental health services, including psychiatric care.
- Flexible funding for wraparound services.
- Systemic support for youth with high trauma and low trust in institutions.
- Strong partnerships with County departments and other CBOs.

CHALLENGES

- Youth often enter programs with deep trauma, gang affiliations, and distrust of systems.
- Limited housing options for youth over 25.
- High rates of recidivism and substance use.
- County systems are slow, fragmented, and often gatekeep access to services.
- Compassion fatigue among frontline workers.
- Long wait times for therapy under Medi-Cal.
- Lack of spiritual and cultural integration in mainstream services.



Dr. Amina Patel, 42, she/her

TITLE

Obstetrician

Department

LA County Department of Health Services

Location

Van Nuys

Demographic

Gen X

Experience

15 years in maternal health

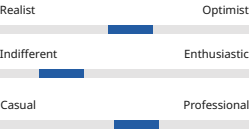
As an OB, I see how much more my patients need beyond medical care. **Time and resources are limited, but the need is endless.**

BIO

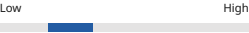
Dr. Patel is a dedicated prenatal care provider in Los Angeles County, specializing in serving low-income and disconnected pregnant women. With a strong commitment to maternal health, she collaborates closely with social workers, public health nurses, and other healthcare professionals so that her patients have access to essential services such as housing, nutrition, and behavioral health support.

Dr. Patel utilizes various tools, including the ORCHID electronic health record system, to streamline patient care and improve health outcomes. Her approach is characterized by a balance of realism and optimism, allowing her to navigate the complexities of her role while maintaining a hopeful outlook for her patients.

PERSONALITY



TECHNICAL COMFORT



STRESS LEVEL



TEAM COMPOSITION

- Public health nurse
- Social worker
- Nutritionist
- Behavioral health clinician

COMMONLY USED TOOLS

- **ORCHID (Online Real-time Centralized Health Information Database)** – LA County DHS electronic health record system
- **Prenatal Risk Assessment Form** – used to identify high-risk pregnancies
- **WIC Referral Protocol** – for nutrition support
- **CaAIM Enrollment Flyer**– for linking patients to community supports
- **Benefits Eligibility Flyer** – to help patients access Medi-Cal and other benefits
-

PRIMARY TASKS

- Conduct prenatal, intrapartum, and postpartum assessments to monitor maternal and fetal health.
- Diagnose and manage pregnancy-related conditions, including high-risk pregnancies and complications.
- Provide individualized treatment planning for labor and delivery, including birth plan discussions and pain management options.
- Conducting prenatal exams to monitor the health of mothers and their babies.
- Screening for social determinants of health that may impact pregnancy outcomes.
- Referring patients to WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) for nutrition support.
- Connecting patients with housing and mental health services.

GOALS

- Improve birth outcomes for low-income pregnant women.
- Reduce maternal stress and trauma through comprehensive support.
- Connect women to long-term resources and community supports.
- Foster coordinated care systems that address the multifaceted needs of patients.

NEEDS

- Access to coordinated care systems that facilitate collaboration among healthcare providers.
- Language access services to effectively communicate with diverse patient populations.
- Resources for housing and food security to support patients' basic needs.

CHALLENGES

- Managing high-risk pregnancies with limited access to wraparound services.
- Overcoming transportation and childcare barriers that hinder patients from attending appointments.
- Navigating the complexities of the healthcare system to ensure patients receive necessary benefits.
- Prioritizing medical care while remaining attentive to social determinants of health that may require external referrals.



Rosa Jimenez, 38, she/her

TITLE

Parent Coach

Department

Home Visiting Program

Location

Inglewood

Demographic

Millennial

Experience

12 years in early childhood and family services

"I have built that strong relationship with my clients. **They're able to trust me and tell me their personal issues** or things that they've been going through since they were children. And I always tell them, thank you for trusting me, and thank you for telling me this."

BIO

Rosa is a dedicated Parent Coach with over 12 years of experience in early childhood and family services. She specializes in supporting mothers with children under the age of 5, providing essential parenting education, referrals to early intervention, and support with public benefits. Rosa builds trust with families through culturally responsive care, utilizing tools to monitor child development and identify needs.

Rosa believes that knowledge is power, and is passionate about facilitating parenting workshops that empower mothers with knowledge and skills to enhance their parenting practices. Rosa's commitment to improving child developmental outcomes makes her an invaluable asset to her community, as she fosters strong parent-child attachments and advocates for mental health supports for mothers

PERSONALITY

Realist Indifferent Enthusiastic Optimist

Indifferent Enthusiastic

Casual Professional

TECHNICAL COMFORT

Low High

STRESS LEVEL

High

TEAM COMPOSITION

- Home Visitor
- Early Childhood Specialist
- Benefits Navigator
- Peer Parent Mentor
- Community Outreach Coordinator

COMMONLY USED TOOLS

- **Family Intake and Needs Assessment Form** – used during home visits
- **Early Childhood Development Screening Tools** – such as ASQ-3
- **211 LA Resource Directory** – for referrals to housing, food, and childcare
- **DCFS Benefits Eligibility Finder** – for navigating foster care-related supports

PRIMARY TASKS

- Conducting home visits to assess family needs and monitor child development.
- Facilitating parenting workshops to educate and empower parents.
- Connecting families to WIC, CalFresh, and childcare resources.
- Monitoring child development and strengthen parent-child attachment.
- Collaborating with other CBOs to enhance community resources and support networks.

GOALS

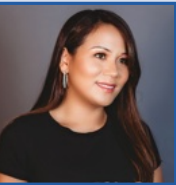
- Improve child developmental outcomes through early intervention and education.
- Reduce maternal isolation by providing support, resources, and community connections.
- Strengthen parent-child attachment to foster healthy relationships and emotional well-being.
- Advocate for systemic changes that improve access to services for low-income families.

NEEDS

- Infant supplies and diapers for families in need.
- Access to mental health supports for mothers, including counseling and support groups.
- Transportation and flexible scheduling to accommodate families' varying needs.
- Ongoing training and professional development opportunities to enhance her skills.

CHALLENGES

- Housing instability affecting families' well-being and ability to access services.
- Language and literacy barriers that hinder access to resources and information.
- Limited access to childcare, making it difficult for parents to attend workshops and appointments.
- Navigating complex bureaucratic systems to secure benefits for families.
- Caring for her own needs in addition to the needs of her family such as financial needs, personal needs, mental health needs, and family needs.



Jordan Alvarez, 34, she/her

TITLE

GED Program Coordinator

Department

GED Program

Location

Maywood

Demographic

Millennial

Experience

10 years in youth development and education

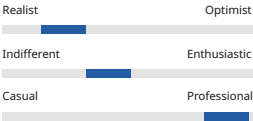
"I'm **not** here to fix anyone."

BIO

Jordan is a GED coordinator at a local community-based organization (CBO). She approaches youth like Jamal with patience, empathy, and zero judgment. Jordan understands the importance of trust-building and creates a welcoming, flexible learning environment - offering food, small class sizes, and familiar faces. She avoids pressuring youth to commit and instead focuses on consistent support.

Jordan connects students with peer mentor who have similar life experiences. Her trauma-informed, relational approach helps youth feel seen and supported, even when they're hesitant or disconnected.

PERSONALITY



TECHNICAL COMFORT



STRESS LEVEL



TEAM COMPOSITION

- School Counselor and/or therapist
- Administrator who collects attendance data
- CBO Liaison
- Peer Mentors

COMMONLY USED TOOLS

- **Student Information System (SIS)** - for tracking attendance and academic performance
- **LAUSD MISIS** - for student records and case management
- **Referral Forms** - used to refer youth to external services
-

PRIMARY TASKS

- Identifying disconnected students through attendance and academic data.
- Conducting one-on-one re-engagement sessions.
- Coordinating referrals to mental health, housing, and tutoring services.
- Leading youth group sessions that are created around common concerns or identifies.

GOALS

- Reduce dropout rates.
- Increase school re-enrollment.
- Build trust and connection with youth.
- Improve access to wraparound services.
- Connect with other resources such as help with finding a job or tutoring.

NEEDS

- Trauma-informed training.
- Flexible funding for student incentives.
- Integrated data systems across departments.
- More staff to reduce her caseload.
- More up-to-date resources to share with youth.

CHALLENGES

- Balancing high caseloads and determining which cases to prioritize, resulting in some youth with a high need for support not receiving it.
- Limited transportation for youth.
- Lack of coordinated care across the school, agencies, and families.

STAFF PERSONAS

County Staff



Marisol Ortega, 40, she/her

TITLE

AB 12 Social Worker

Department

Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)

Location

SPA 6 (Compton-Carson, Wateridge, Hawthorne)

Demographic

Millennial

Experience

9 years in child welfare

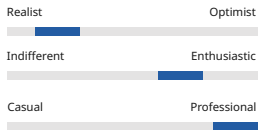
BIO

Maria is an AB 12 social worker with almost a decade of experience in child welfare and is known for her steady presence in the lives of youth navigating the complexities of foster care, education, and early adulthood.

Maria is deeply committed to helping young people build autonomy while making sure they have the support to succeed. She finds herself balancing the urgency of housing crises with the slow-moving gears of interagency coordination. Maria is a fierce advocate, but she's also realistic - she knows that some youth won't engage until they're in crisis, and that some systems won't respond until it's too late. Maria's greatest frustration is the lack of housing options and the emotional toll it takes on youth who are already juggling school, work, and trauma.

Despite these barriers, Maria remains hopeful. She celebrates small wins: a youth securing a THP+ placement, re-enrolling in college, or reconnecting with a sibling. She believes that success looks different for every young person, and she's willing to meet them where they are, even if that means helping them fill out a job application at a shelter or driving across town to attend a college orientation.

PERSONALITY



TECHNICAL COMFORT



STRESS LEVEL



TEAM COMPOSITION

- Supervising CSW
- ILP Coordinator & ILP Staff
- THP-NMD and THP+ Providers
- SHD Social Workers
- DPSS & DMH Liaisons
- Education Liaisons & Guardian Scholars

COMMONLY USED TOOLS

- **Transition Conference Templates** – Used at 6-month and 90-day meetings to plan housing, education, and employment
- **Shared Living Agreements (SLA)** – Required for SILP placements
- **SOC 161 & SOC 162 Forms** – For AB 12 eligibility and mutual agreement
- **ILPonline.org** – Resource hub for youth and staff
- **Case Connect** – Multidisciplinary support tool for complex cases
- **Universal Job Application** – Used to connect youth with employment opportunities

PRIMARY TASKS

- Conducting monthly visits and documenting progress.
- Facilitating 6-month and 90-day transition conferences.
- Coordinating housing placements (THP-NMD, THP+, SILP, non-contracted THPs, shelters).
- Supporting youth with parenting, education, employment, and mental health needs.
- Collaborating with caregivers, attorneys, CASAs, and school staff.
- Manually completing and submitting required forms (e.g., SOC 161/162, DCFS 5204A), often with limited digital infrastructure.
- Tracking housing availability through email updates and word-of-mouth from providers.

GOALS

- Ensure youth exit care with stable housing, income, and a support network.
- Reduce the number of youth aging out of care without permanency.
- Promote educational attainment and workforce readiness.
- Build trusting relationships and elevate youth voice in planning.
- Foster stronger partnerships with DPSS, DMH, LAHSA, and other organizations to create a more integrated support system for youth.
- Work towards systemic changes to enhance support and resources available to foster youth.

NEEDS

- Early and consistent housing planning.
- Clear guidance on eligibility for THP+, SILP, and reentry.
- Streamlined inter-agency coordination across DCFS, DMH, DPSS, and LAHSA.
- Digital tools to replace manual paperwork and improve tracking of youth progress and housing options.
- More flexible funding for emergencies (e.g., transportation, furniture, food).
- Training on trauma-informed care, cultural humility, and youth engagement.
- More consistent access to liaisons and benefits specialists, especially in high-turnover offices.

CHALLENGES

- THP+ beds are limited and competitive; SILPs often fall through; non-contracted THPs may require rent.
- Youth must self-navigate systems with minimal guidance after 21; SHD offers resources but no funding.
- Reliance on paper forms, email chains, and phone calls slows down service delivery and increases errors.
- Miscommunication between departments on eligibility requirements, lack of data sharing, and inconsistent follow-through.
- Youth barriers like mental health, substance use, lack of life skills, distrust of systems, and trauma histories.
- Some placements don't serve LGBTQ+, undocumented, or high-needs youth effectively.
- High caseloads, emotional toll, and limited recognition for frontline workers.



David Ruiz, 45, he/him

TITLE

Eligibility Worker

Department

Department of Public Social
Services (DPSS)

Location

Lancaster

Demographic

Gen X

Experience

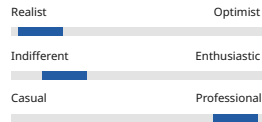
2 years in public benefits

BIO

David works for DPSS where he helps process applications for CalWORKs, CalFresh, and Medi-Cal. He treats every client with respect, but the nature of his role is transactional. Benefits depend on income, school enrollment, or job activity, and without the right documentation, he can't move applications forward.

David encounters significant challenges working with systems-involved youth. These youth generally don't want to interact with county systems, making them hesitant to trust. With a caseload that exceeds 100 clients, David doesn't have time to build personal connections or follow up in depth. He feels overwhelmed by the need to chase down documentation and engage youth who are reluctant to participate. He does his best with the tools he has, but often feels frustrated when he can't offer more than a checklist and a deadline.

PERSONALITY



TECHNICAL COMFORT



STRESS LEVEL



TEAM COMPOSITION

- Employment services counselor
- Housing navigator
- CalWORKs case manager
- Community-based outreach worker

COMMONLY USED TOOLS

- **BenefitsCal** - California's online portal for applying to and managing public assistance programs like CalFresh, Medi-Cal, and CalWORKs
- **EBT Edge** - an online platform where users can check their EBT card balance, view transaction history, and manage their food and cash benefits
- **CalSAWS** - case management system used by DPSS staff to process and manage eligibility for public assistance programs

PRIMARY TASKS

- Processing expedited CalWORKs and CalFresh applications.
- Collaborating with the LAHSA and SHD to connect clients with available housing resources and support services.
- Assisting youth in navigating the Medi-Cal enrollment process to ensure they have access to necessary health services.
- Evaluating client needs to determine the right benefits, while also identifying any barriers to access.

GOALS

- Timely and accurate processing of benefits such as CalWORKs, CalFresh, and Medi-Cal.
- Support youth in achieving short-term financial stability through emergency aid and expedited applications when possible.
- Build stronger relationships with high-need clients while balance efficiency.

NEEDS

- Clearer and more consistent training on updated eligibility rules and workflows.
- Access to a centralized resource directory for housing, youth services, and emergency supports.
- Reduced caseloads to allow for more personalized client engagement.
- Cross-departmental coordination with DCFS, Probation, and LAHSA to streamline referrals.
- Trauma-informed service delivery training to better support youth in crisis.

CHALLENGES

- High caseload that limits 1:1 engagement/follow-up, impacting service quality.
- Clients often lack documentation to complete applications, leading to delays and frustration.
- Unstable living situations for youth makes it difficult for consistent contact/follow through.
- Limited childcare and transportation supports, making it hard for clients to consistently engage.
- Client distrust and frustration with systems pointed at him.



Denise Carter, 52, she/her

TITLE

Eligibility Worker

Department

Department of Public Social Services (DPSS)

Location

Lancaster

Demographic

Gen X

Experience

18 years in public benefits

"There's an answer to every case...
but **we need experienced staff.**"

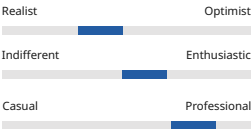
BIO

Denise is an experienced staff with 18 years of dedicated service in public benefits. She specializes in helping women with young children access programs like CalWORKS, CalFresh, Medi-Cal, and childcare subsidies. Known for her compassionate approach, she has a deep understanding of the challenges faced by her clients. She is committed to making sure that families receive timely access to benefits that promote stability.

Denise believes in empowering her clients through knowledge and support. She actively collaborates with CBOs and other stakeholders to create pathways to employment and improve family stability. Her extensive experience allows her to navigate complex family situations with empathy and professionalism.

Recognizing the increasing complexity of public benefit programs, Denise advocates for a department staffed with experienced professionals who deeply understand program and eligibility nuances. She believes that such expertise is essential to effectively serve families, reduce delays, and make sure that no one falls through the cracks.

PERSONALITY



TECHNICAL COMFORT



STRESS LEVEL



TEAM COMPOSITION

- Case Manager
- Supervisor
- Departmental Liaisons
- CBO Liaisons

COMMONLY USED TOOLS

- **CalSAWS** – for processing CalWORKS, CalFresh, and Medi-Cal
- **CalWORKS Welfare-to-Work Plan Form** – for employment services
- **CalFresh Application Packet** – for food assistance
- **Medi-Cal Managed Care Enrollment Portal** – for health coverage

PRIMARY TASKS

- Processing applications for DPSS programs.
- Referring clients to employment and training programs.
- Coordinating childcare and housing supports to provide clients wraparound support.
- Monitoring compliance and recertification periods for clients to prevent lapses in benefits coverage.
- Advocating for the needs of her clients.

GOALS

- Supporting timely access to benefits for families.
- Enhancing family stability through comprehensive support.
- Promoting pathways to employment for clients.
- Empowering clients with knowledge about available resources.

NEEDS

- Streamlined application systems to improve efficiency.
- Trauma-informed training to better support clients.
- Flexible eligibility rules for complex cases.
- Access to culturally appropriate, user-friendly resources for clients about benefit and program information.
- A team of well-versed staff who deeply understand program eligibility to provide consistent client support.

CHALLENGES

- Documentation delays affecting application processing.
- Giving each client the 1:1 support they need while managing large caseloads.
- Navigating complex family situations requiring individualized attention.
- Limited availability of childcare slots impacting client stability.
- Engaging clients who may be hesitant to utilize the system.
- Working with other staff who are less experienced and less familiar with programs and client eligibility.