

# Business as Usual is Not Enough:

Engaging and Innovating with Young Adults in Research and Practice

Kathryn Sabella, PhD & Amanda Costa, BS, Transitions to Adulthood Center for Research

University of Massachusetts Medical School

Stephanie Sikes-Jones and Tyler Clark, Kentucky TAYLRD

*The Transitions to Adulthood Center for Research*



# Acknowledgements

The Learning & Working Center at Transitions ACR is a national effort that aims to improve the supports for youth and young adults, ages 14-30, with serious mental health conditions to successfully complete their schooling and training and move into rewarding work lives. We are located at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, Worcester, MA, Department of Psychiatry, Systems & Psychosocial Advances Research Center.

Visit us at:

<http://www.umassmed.edu/TransitionsACR>

The contents of this presentation were developed under a grant with funding from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research, and from the Center for Mental Health Services of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, United States Department of Health and Human Services (ACL GRANT # 90RT5031, The Learning and Working Transitions RRTC). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Additional funding provided by UMass Medical School's Commonwealth Medicine division. The contents of this presentation do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, HHS, SAMHSA, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.



*The Transitions to Adulthood Center for Research*



# Presentation Disclaimers:



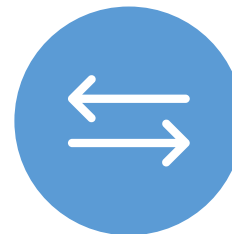
**Young adults** are the experts of this topic!



In recognition of the value of young adult expertise, this presentation was co-developed and presented by young adults

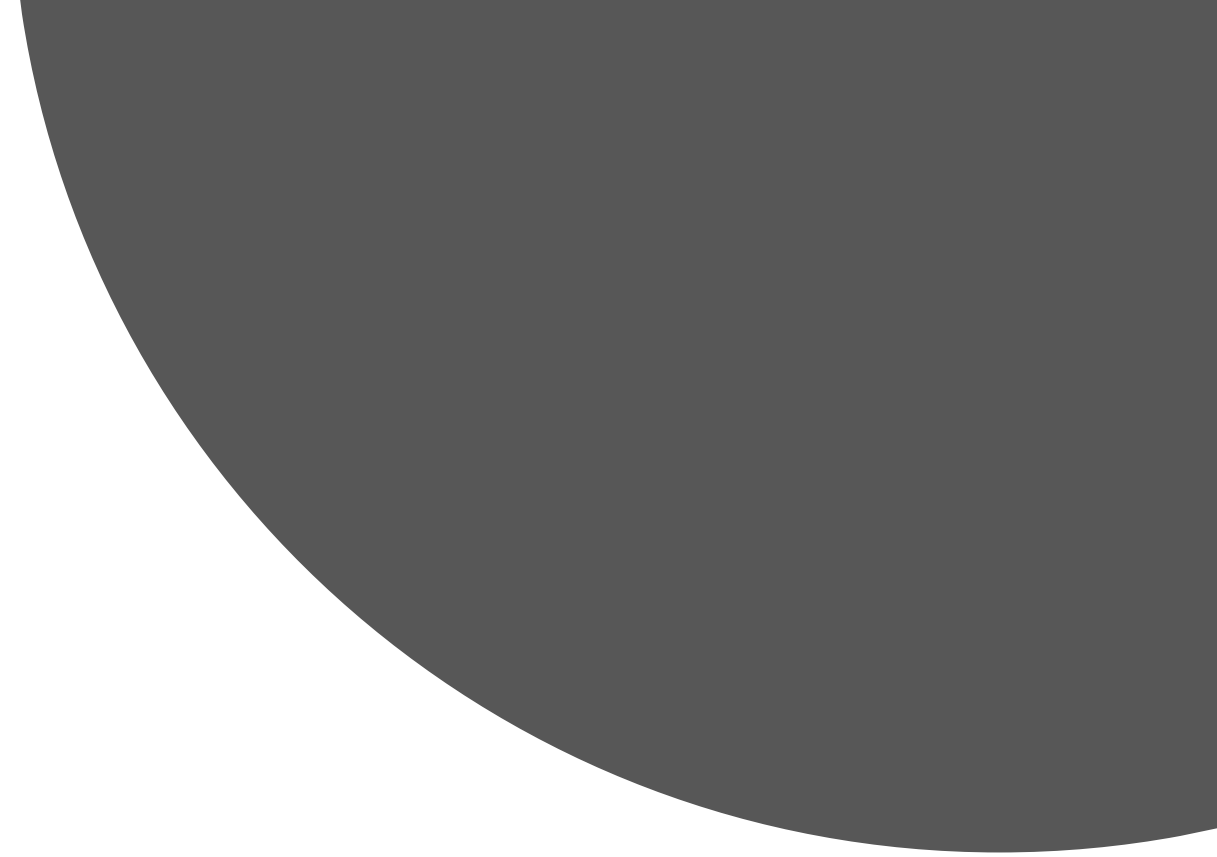
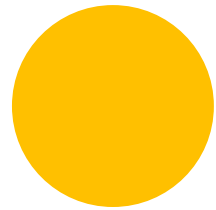
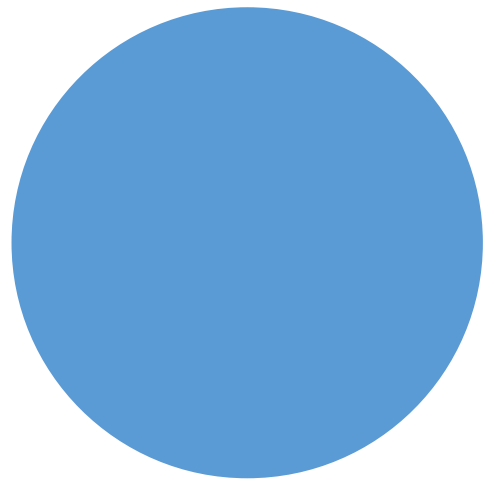


We're going to poke fun at you, and ourselves, in the name of positive growth!



Change doesn't often happen in your comfort zone...prepare to get uncomfortable!





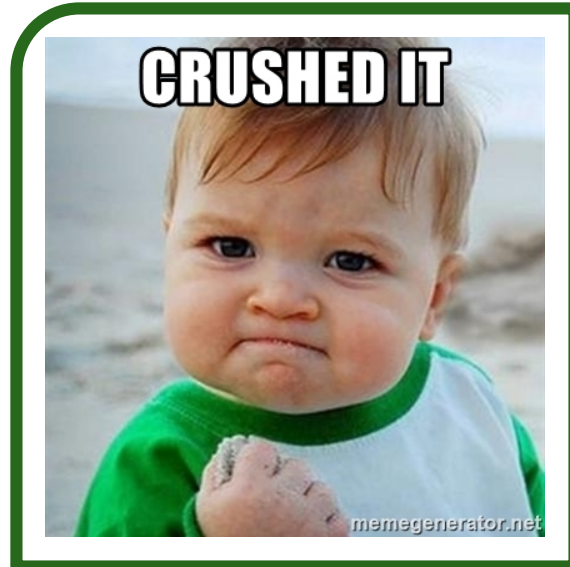
# The Why, Where & How of Engaging Young Adults

*Don't stress, it's only  
taken us 8 years and  
counting to figure it  
out...*

The mic-drop worthy  
sales pitch...

Why engage Young  
adults?!


---






**Young Adults &  
Advisory Boards:  
History in the making**


---



*I can give advice to those who need it, those who have lived experience might need those services and you can find out about resources from other members"*



*"Because we are all from different areas, we can all see the different perspectives of people from around the country"*



*"Being able to learn from other people, you can take that knowledge and grow from that and garner life experience"*

**Council Members speak out**



Thanks for allowing me to work for free.

It is my dream to work without the stress of getting a paycheck.




someecards  
user card

Food, Funds & Feedback...the winning trio

---



A diverse group of five young adults are gathered around a wooden table in a bright, modern office setting. One woman with curly hair stands in the center, leaning on the table. Four others are seated around the table, smiling and looking towards the camera. The background features a brick wall and large windows. A black circular graphic with a white border is overlaid on the top left, containing the text 'Young Adult Researchers on Staff'.

Young Adult  
Researchers  
on Staff

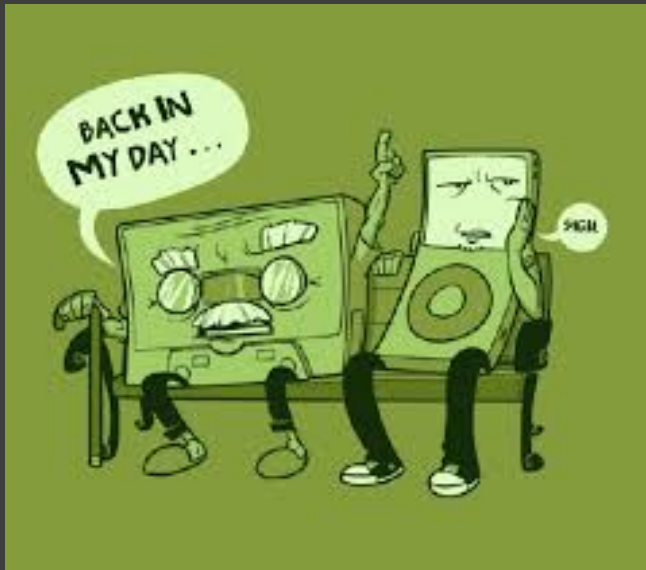
---

Research lessons  
learned:  
from bland to  
brilliance....



# Step #1: Recruitment

# Out with the old...



## Join the BLAND Research Study

We are the BLAND research study and we are going to tell you what we are doing with a bunch of fancy jargon you'll have to google in order to understand.

Still don't understand? Pick up the phone and call us to answer your questions! (no, we aren't joking...)

**Criteria:** We are recruiting young folks with severe psychiatric disorders with high symptomatology who meet DSM criteria

**Dates:** Probably when you're at school or at work

**Stipends:** Low money, low engagement

**Travel:** Don't you all have cars???

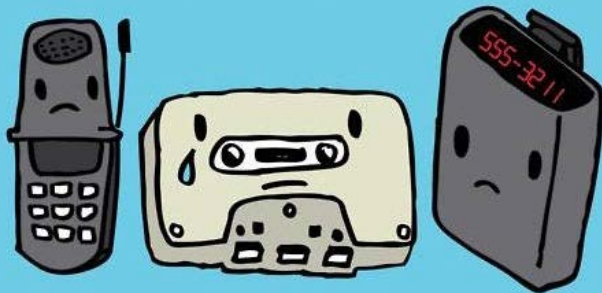
**Food:** Bring your own bagged lunch or soup thermos

Want to join us? Send your contact information:

- By carrier pigeon
- By snail mail
- By smoke signal

# In with the new!

NOW WE'RE JUST SOMEBODY



THAT YOU USED TO KNOW.

## New Career Development Course for Young Adults!

Are you a young adult with lived experience of a mental health condition?

Are you interested in pursuing your goals around school and work?

Do things get in the way of pursuing those goals, like low energy, feeling forgetful or stuck?



### What is HYPE?

Helping Youth on the Path to Employment (HYPE) will provide flexible, solution-focused, career-oriented services based on your needs and preferences including but not limited to:

- ✓ Finding out what you want to do
- ✓ Getting a job
- ✓ Enrolling in and completing college or vocational-technical programs
- ✓ Securing academic funding

### Visit our website:

[umassmed.edu/hype/hype-course-in-ma/](http://umassmed.edu/hype/hype-course-in-ma/)

### Is HYPE right for me?

We are seeking young adults interested in developing and working on employment and education skills to participate in an inspirational and informative **FREE** 12-week HYPE career development course **beginning in March!**

Location: Webster House, 746 South Street, Roslindale  
When: Weekly, from March 14<sup>th</sup>-May 30<sup>th</sup>  
Time: Thursday's from 12:30-3:30pm

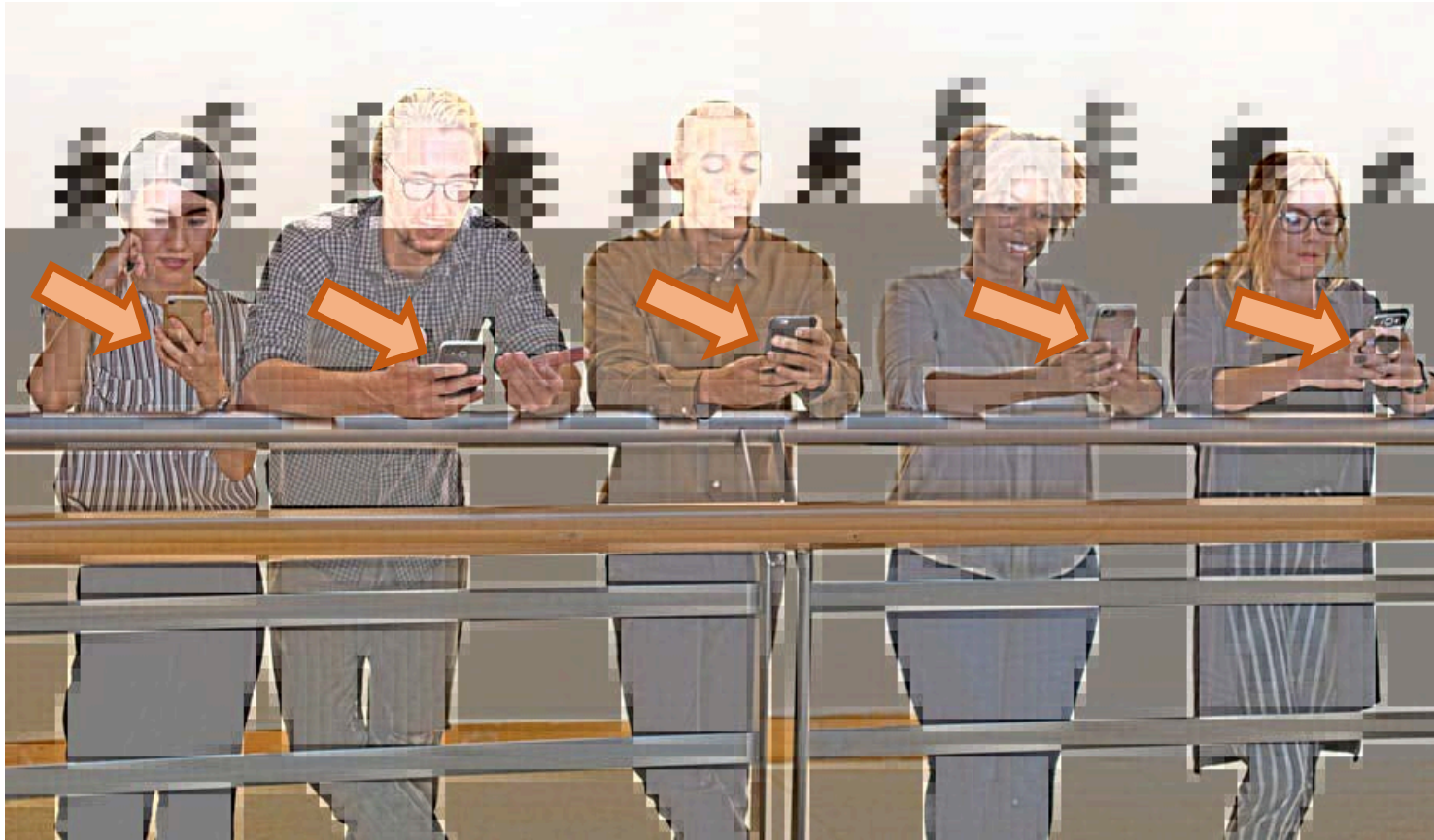
**\*\*Free Lunch Provided \*\***

### Interested in learning more?

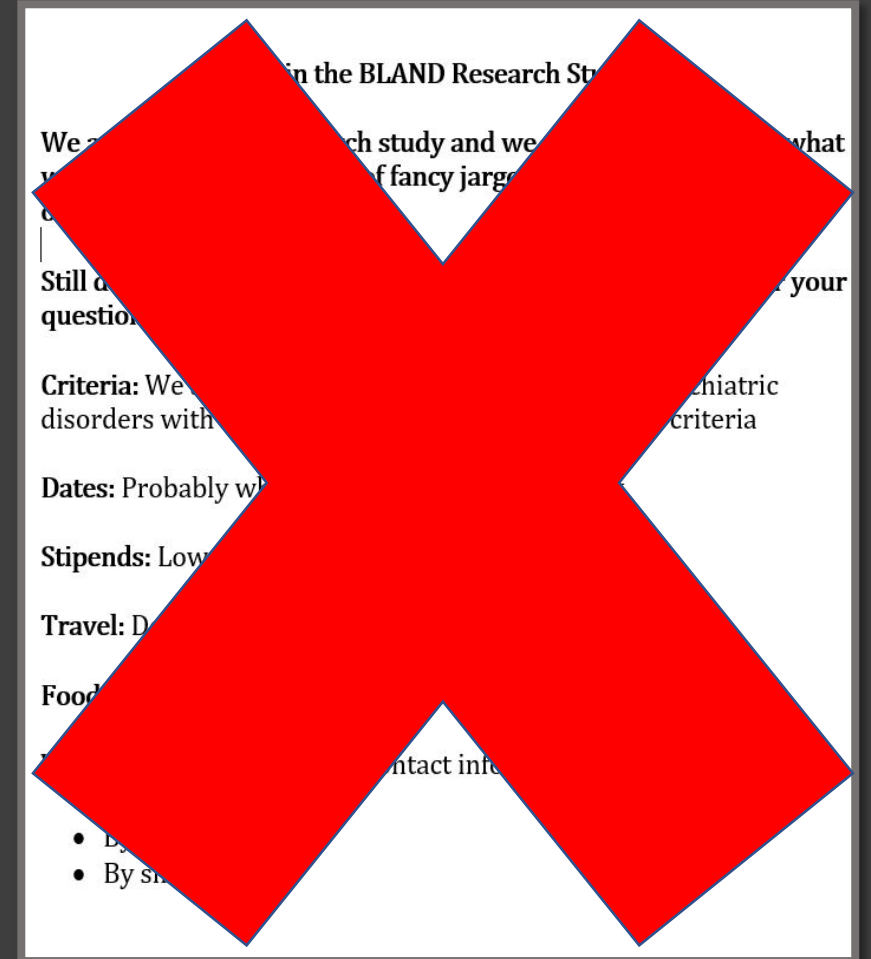
- Attend a HYPE Information Session at Webster House:
  - Thursday March 7th, 1-2:30pm
- Contact HYPE facilitator (Amanda) to RSVP:
  - Text/Call: 781-454-6247
  - Email: [Amanda.costa@umassmed.edu](mailto:Amanda.costa@umassmed.edu)

This HYPE training is offered by The Transitions to Adulthood Research and training Center in partnership with The Massachusetts Department of Mental Health






Tap technology...  
young adults already did!





**The SEED Study**

Sponsored · 



UMass Medical School is seeking young adults (ages 16-25) with mental health conditions to participate in a study about school & work activities. Complete 4 online surveys over 12 months. Earn up to \$95. All information will be kept confidential.



voices4hope.net

**The SEED Study**

The Sequences of Employment ...

LEARN MORE

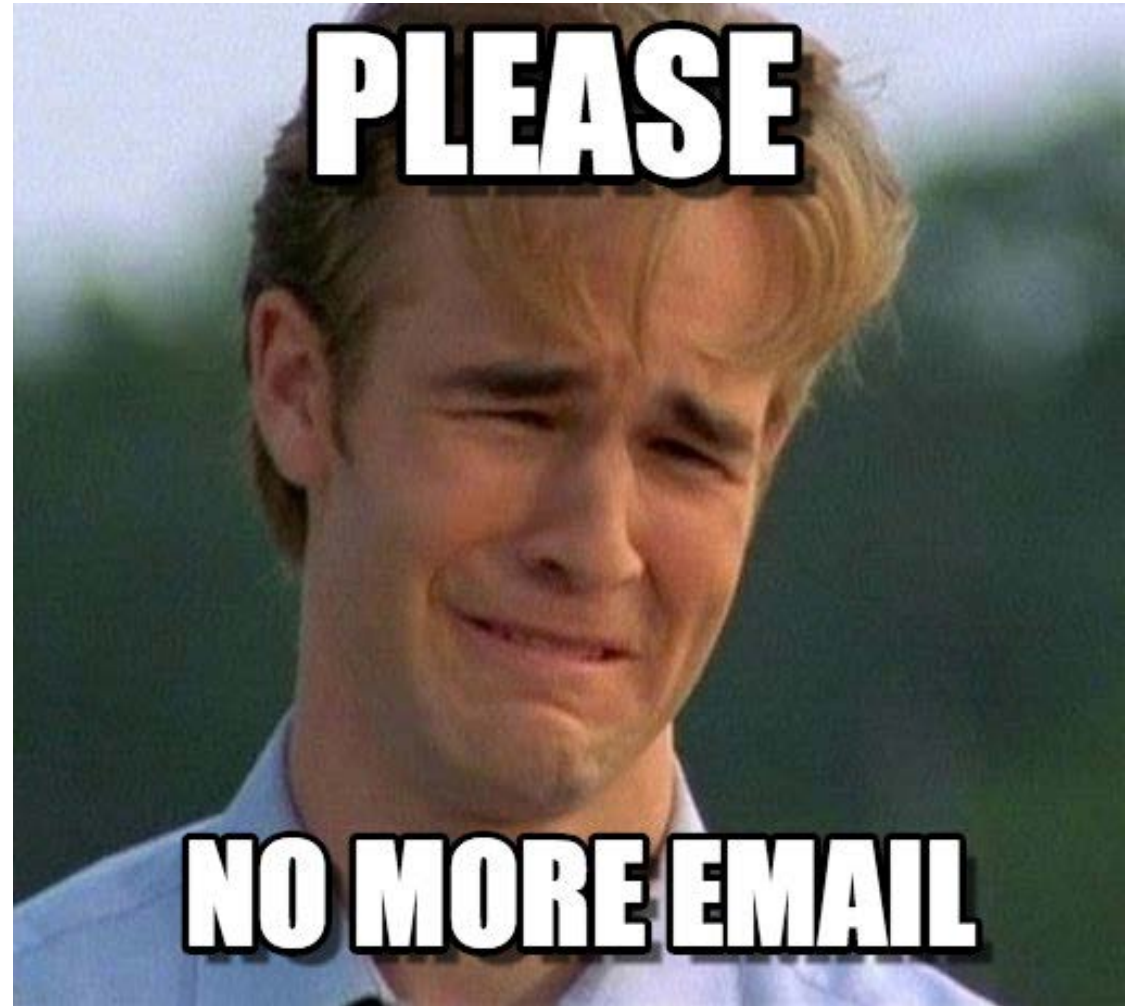


# Step #2: Screening





**YET ANOTHER ANCIENT  
RELIC FROM HUMANITY'S  
DISTANT PAST**



**PLEASE**

**NO MORE EMAIL**



**This short 5-10 minute screening survey** will ask you some short questions about your school, work, and mental health experiences **to help us determine if you are eligible to participate in the SEED study.**

If it appears that you are eligible, you will be asked to provide some basic contact info (first name, phone number, email, city/state). **A member of our team will then be in touch to tell you more about the study!**

---

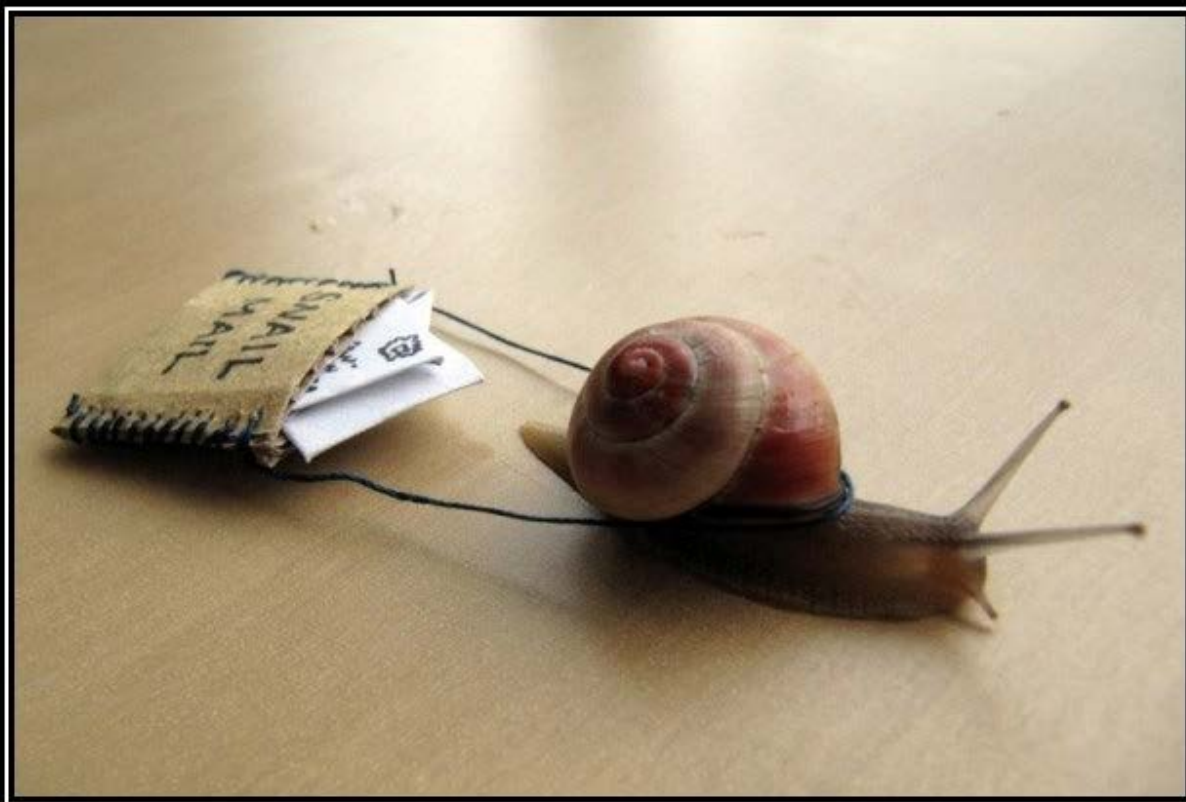
**I SHOULD JUST  
CHANGE MY  
VOICEMAIL GREETING  
TO: "PLEASE HANG UP  
& TEXT ME"**

---

-MILLENNIALS

# Step #3: Consent and Data Collection





# SNAIL MAIL

Don't worry, it'll get there

<http://2dchew.deviantart.com/>

A close-up shot of Steve Carell as Michael Scott from the TV show 'The Office'. He has a confused and questioning expression on his face, looking slightly to the right. The background consists of horizontal window blinds. The text 'FAX?' is superimposed in large, white, bold, sans-serif font with a black outline at the top of the image.

**FAX?**

**WHY DON'T YOU JUST SEND IT OVER ON A  
DINOSAUR?**





Carrier 

3:31 PM



Cancel

# Signature

Please sign using your finger on the line below.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John'.

Clear







# Drop-In Centers are Engagement Tools

CONNECT	ENGAGE	CONTRIBUTE



Be helpful, be flexible

---



Step #4:  
Thank you

---





Switch up your Swag!

The background features a series of concentric circles, some solid and some dashed, radiating from the center. A large blue speech bubble is positioned in the center, containing the text. The speech bubble has a white outline and a small tail pointing downwards.

Step #5: Spreading the word



---

# Video Engagement



From words to images

---



# Engaging Young Adults in Services: Success in Kentucky

Shifting from a place to a  
movement

**Engaging Youth.**



# History

---

- Young adult partnership: how do we write the grant?!
- Was impressed with Youth ERA
- YA Partners: Kentucky Youth MOVE
- Consultation with Voices of the Commonwealth
- Partnership from start to finish





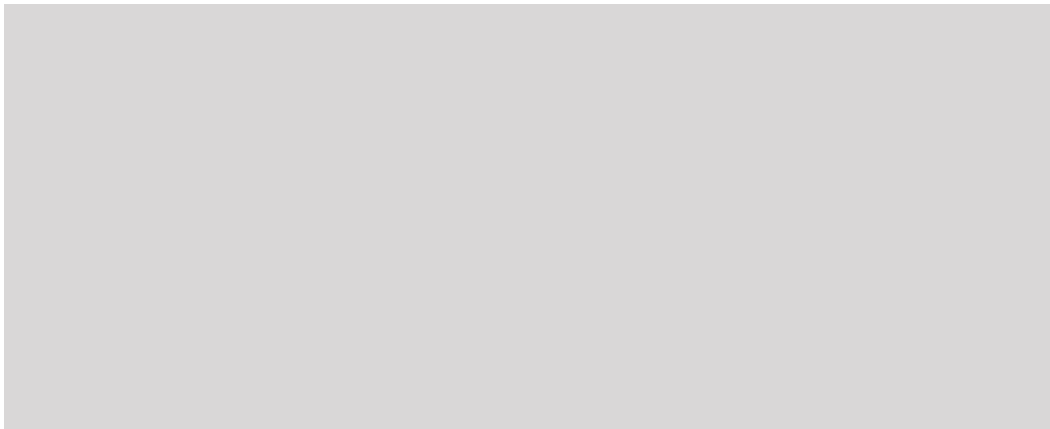
Shifting from  
ragged...

---



...to revolutionary





# More than just a place...a movement...



**WE COMMENCED OUR JOURNEY FROM  
THE BOTTOM**



**AND HAVE NOW ADVANCED TO OUR  
PRESENT SITUATION**

*State Level Efforts:  
Started from the bottom  
now we're here:*

- ✓ Increasing youth voice
- ✓ Youth Coordinator = network development & service engagement
- ✓ Network Development design

## Policy Level

- Policy Changes happening as result of increased youth voice
- More interest in other systems taking on youth voice
- Youth Seats on SIAC Standing Committees
- Youth seats on RIACS





# Local Level

Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)  
Teams & Youth Peer Support Services



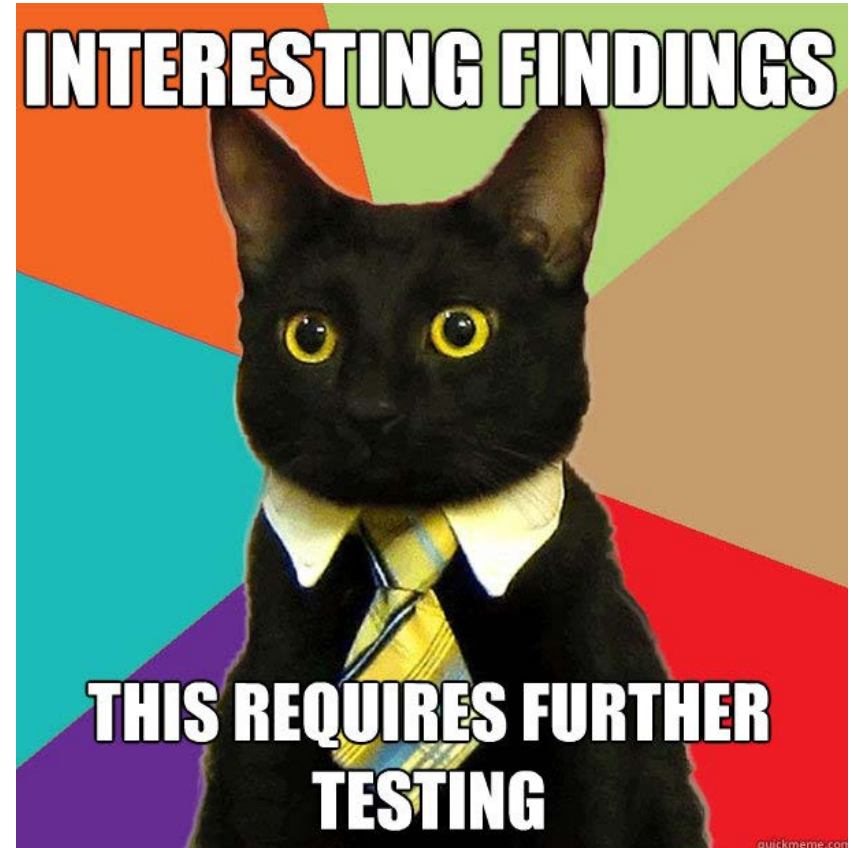
# Service Level (Community Efforts)



- Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Team
- Less about billing and more about relationships (Grant \$ now, but will continue without)
- Blended funding to support Tyler's time
- **SOMETIMES TO REACH PEOPLE, WE CANNOT BILL FOR OUR INTERACTION WITH THEM!!!**
- This requires community partnership to be feasible

# Adolescent ACT Data

- Small data set
- Short term Program
- **Meet the young person where they are at!**
- Hope to see consistent results over time with where program goes next



# The funding slide (womp womp)



It takes innovative funding to do this type of work



Traditional funding mechanisms will only get you so far



Get creative in thinking about contract and grant funding and monitoring activities



Short term pain for long term gain!!

# Take-A-Ways

- There's not many places where you cannot involve youth voice in some way...
- Programs that utilize youth voice work :)
- Getting out of your comfort zone and innovating and engaging with young adults IS WORTH IT!

*"If you are meeting about youth programming, and there is not a youth in the room...ask yourself why?"  
-Paula Saenz, KY DCBS*





# Shout Outs

- 
- Youth MOVE National
  - Pathways RTC (AMP+)
  - Youth ERA
  - Transitions ACR

Thank You!!



Questions??

**Contact Us:**

- [Kathryn.Sabella@umassmed.edu](mailto:Kathryn.Sabella@umassmed.edu)
- [Amanda.Costa@umassmed.edu](mailto:Amanda.Costa@umassmed.edu)
- [Tclark@4rbh.org](mailto:Tclark@4rbh.org)
- [Stephanie@kypartnership.org](mailto:Stephanie@kypartnership.org)

**Visit us at:**

- Transitions ACR: [www.umassmed.edu/TransitionsACR/](http://www.umassmed.edu/TransitionsACR/)
- TAYLRD: <http://www.taylrd.org/>