

Improving Pathways for Transitional Aged Youth (TAY)

Defining the key challenges and actions needed to improve the experiences of TAY

For many youth in Ontario, the transition from child and youth mental health services to adult care can be a disruptive and challenging experience. Up to 60% of youth are estimated to lose access to mental health treatment during this period. The transition into emerging adulthood is a time when mental health issues can intensify, and a lack of continuity in care can have lasting effects, including impacts on employment, substance use, and overall well-being.

Despite varied efforts in research and innovative programs, a complex landscape of fragmented systems and inconsistent service delivery remains a barrier to widespread progress. These gaps in the system leave many youth without the support they need at a critical point in their development.

To address this, Capitalize for Kids partnered with Bridgeable to bring together service providers and sector leaders from across the province. Over three months, we worked to build consensus on the current challenges facing TAY today and actionable next steps to drive sector-level change. This collaboration led to the creation of a co-designed toolkit with a TAY journey map and roadmap to action, to support a shared understanding of key challenges and priority next steps for improving the experience for youth navigating the mental health system.



The Problem

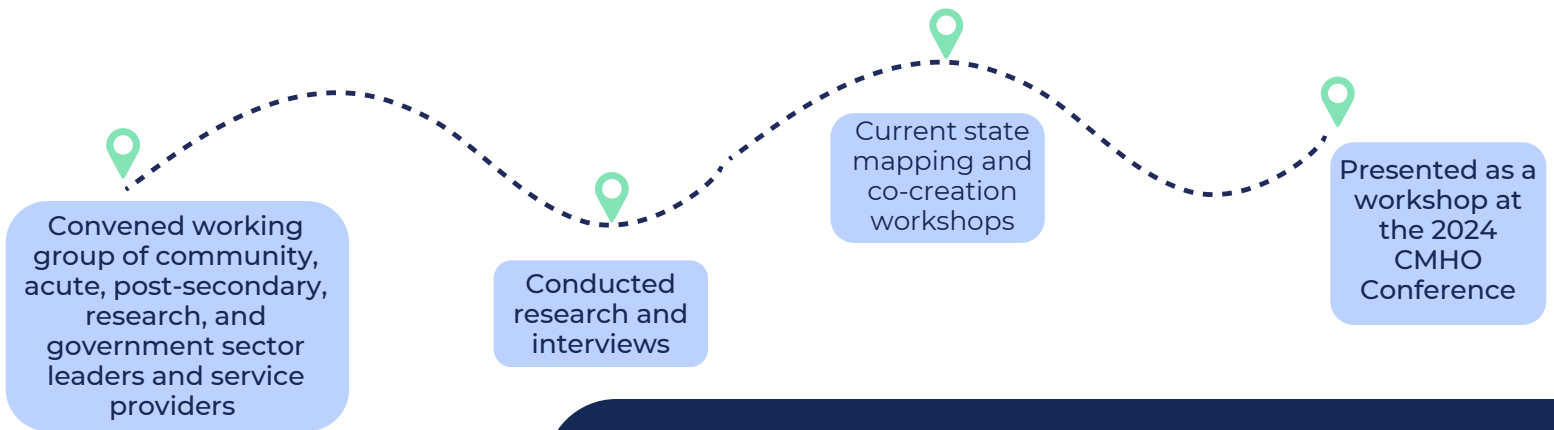
For Transitional Aged Youth (TAY) in Ontario, the transition from child to adult mental health services is critical—but too often, the lack of integration between systems can impede transition planning and disrupt continuity of care. This gap leaves many TAY feeling unprepared or losing access to essential support entirely during a key stage of emerging adulthood. Addressing this gap requires a clear understanding of the specific needs of TAY seeking mental health support and coordinated action across sectors to ensure youth receive the care they need to thrive.



The Solution

We partnered with sector leaders and service providers across Ontario to build consensus and co-create two tools to support education and collective action toward supporting the needs of TAY. The journey map highlights the current experience of TAY navigating the transition between services, while the strategic roadmap outlines calls to action for sector-level change. Together, these tools provide a framework to help educate and gain buy-in to address this pressing challenge. By aligning sectors and defining actionable next steps, we're working to support a future where TAY feel supported and empowered to access the integrated care they need during this transition.

Our Approach



Impact & Outputs

Capitalize for Kids and Bridgeable convened a working group representing multiple sectors supporting TAY, including community child and youth mental health agencies, hospitals, post-secondary institutions, researchers and government, to build consensus and co-design two tools:



Transitional aged youth journey map:

A journey map with illustrative case studies depicting the current experiences of youth transitioning to and between adult mental health services.



Roadmap to impact:

A strategic roadmap for the Ontario mental health and related sectors, highlighting priority areas and recommendations for sectors to come together and take action toward improving the experiences of TAY.

Pro Bono Partner:



Bridgeable is an award-winning service design consultancy located in Toronto, Ontario, with deep expertise working with community and healthcare organizations. They work with individuals and organizations to create a more human world, one experience at a time.



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