

**Transition-age Youth (TAY) Planning Group**  
**January 7, 2013**

Meeting Notes:

*Item:* Successful transition to adulthood for older adolescents with serious mental health needs (treatment, housing, education/employment, independent living skills)

*Question #1:* How would you rate where our community is now (grade A-F)?

Results: 5 Ds and 11 Cs

*Question #2:* What key features would be present if we were where we wanted to be? What would success look like?

**\*Housing:**

- Supportive housing options just for 16-24 year olds
- Supportive housing assistance
- Supportive housing specifically for transition-age youth (TAY) (like State St. Apts.)
- Youth would be housed in (or have access to) safe, stable, affordable housing
- Ample and appropriate supportive housing

**\*Employment:**

- Sustainable employment opportunities that provide income and experience
- Job training services, resume building, job readiness
- Businesses that employ TAY (like "Provisions")
- Support for employment: job coach, broker to develop employment opportunities with flexible employers
- Career planning for the not college-bound
- Thinking everyone can work; "employment first" thinking
- More young adults able to support themselves

**\*Education:**

- More kids going to higher education or vocational training
- Plan for post high school graduation would be in place (i.e. work or continuing ed)
- All TAY on an Education or Career path
- TAY would stay in school and graduate; upon which they would be prepared to enter college, trade school or the workforce

**\*Independent Living:**

- More young adults able to live independently
- Training, groups, skill-building for skills such as independent living (budgeting, laundry, driving), parenting skills, money management
- Being able to function (employment, basic needs, relationships) independently

**\*Mental Health:**

- Families of TAY introduced to adult family supports
- Mental Health resources specifically for TAY: easily accessible, affordable, no waiting list, tolerance, flexibility
- Clinical supports (therapy, medications) available unconditionally
- Continuity of clinical treatment

**\*Social/Natural Supports:**

- Community Center specifically for TAY
- Ample and appropriate social outlets
- Identified circle of support
- More young adults have a natural support system
- Integration with non-disabled peers
- TAY "Peer Bridgers"

**Care Coordination:**

- More transition planning in case management to prepare youth for adulthood
- Care Coordinators dedicated to work with 16-24 year olds to walk them through the transition
- Case Management services monitor the transition successfully
- Eligibility for Case Management (and other services) same as for the youth system

**Benefits:**

- Provide SSA work incentives; benefit advisement
- Support for financial assistance; navigating the TA system; assistance with applying for SSI

**Transition-age System:**

- Services would be in place on the date the transition becomes official
- Everyone using the TIP model (looking at life domains)
- Smoother transitions to adult services/providers
- Process and introduction to adult services are in place
- Dually diagnosed children would not have to fight each side to get picked up for services

**Quality of Life Characteristics:**

- A community where youth can be heard
- Each youth would have a meaningful relationship with a healthy, dedicated adult
- The absence of fear
- Youth would have access to quality health care
- A non-discriminating environment

\*Themes that were identified by the group most often or as priorities. The remaining questions were posed in relations to these themes.

*Question #3: What would the impact be on children and youth with serious emotional/behavioral challenges if we made these improvements? Impact on their families?*

**Housing:**

- Ensure safety of otherwise homeless youth
- Provide a foundation for youth to build on
- Youth will be in a safe environment with peers
- Safety, security, stability for youth
- Youth will not be living on the street and not be as vulnerable to human trafficking and sexual exploitation
- Youth will have a sense of pride and confidence
- Increased independence (3x)
- Increased “mainstreaming”
- Decreased homelessness
- Decreased institutional care
- Ease tension in families that just can’t live together; improve relationships
- Families will feel confident and comfortable with youth’s living situation
- Sense of relief and security for families
- More success for youth means less stress for families and better relationships
- Increased sense of hope for youth and families

**Employment:**

- Sense of purpose and increased feelings of self-worth for youth (3x)
- Help youth find their passion and give purpose
- Build confidence and build relationships for youth
- Have a job that is satisfying and provides an adequate income for youth
- Valued social role, income, connections, meaningful use of time, structure for youth
- Increased confidence, empowerment/independence (3x), integration, social development and citizenship for youth
- Success via community jobs
- Youth will have a sense of pride and confidence
- More encouragement of independence for learning
- Decreased homelessness
- Sense of financial relief for families (2x)
- Relief and less care giving for families
- Provide a role model for younger children in families
- Increased sense of hope for youth and families

**Education:**

- Creates the ability to find employment or better employment in a field they want
- Money to live independently
- Increased independence
- Confidence in themselves (3x)
- Better self-esteem
- Help youth find their passion and give purpose
- More choices to continue with their future dreams
- Help families with finances
- Provide a role model for younger children in families
- Increased sense of hope for youth and families

### **Independent Living:**

- Providing skills that will last; improving one's ability to care for oneself
- Important skills to help them be successful (e.g. manage their money, navigate public transportation, etc.)
- Improve youth's day-to-day living
- Build a future; Build confidence (3x)
- Helps youth make their own decisions (e.g. purchasing food, catching a bus, traveling to appts.)
- Increased self-esteem
- Increased independence (2x)
- Youth will learn to manage their mental symptoms
- Decreased homelessness
- Increased sense of hope for youth and families

### **Mental Health:**

- Youth will have the opportunity for greater success in all areas of life
- Helps youth become more stable (productive) in society with supports
- Youth will learn to manage their mental symptoms
- Youth will have a sense of pride and confidence
- Increased independence
- Decreased homelessness
- Decreased institutional care
- Increased sense of hope for youth and families

### **Social/Natural Supports:**

- Statistics state that youth who are able to form at least one positive bond with an adult are more successful throughout their life
- Youth will have friends and family to call for help; they will have positive social interactions
- Youth will have someone to call if happy, sad, in trouble, etc.
- Youth will have someone to celebrate holidays and special times with
- Having someone to listen to them without judgment; someone who truly cares about them
- Youth will have the opportunity to learn from a positive, supportive adult
- Youth will have a larger circle of "peeps"; more connections to help in times of need

- Youth will have a sense of pride and confidence
- Increased self-esteem, self-empowerment
- Increased independence
- Youth will learn to manage their mental symptoms
- Decreased homelessness
- Decreased institutional care
- Families will have help in dealing with the youth person when other supportive relationships exist
- Families will have increased independence from the youth; not having to be the only person in their life
- Increased sense of hope for youth and families

*Question #4: Where are the opportunities to make the desired changes? What existing strengths/initiatives/services can we build upon?*

**Housing:**

- More varieties (specialization) in SILP programs
- Build, expand upon SILP programs
- Toomey's SILP
- Salvation Army's State Street Apts. (2x)
- Available \$ for housing
- Increase funding for services in housing
- A few programs to learn from to strengthen future housing programs

**Employment:**

- Have BOCES vocational opportunities offered in all city schools
- CNY Youth Works program (2x)
- Jobs are available
- Provisions Bakery
- ACCESS-VR
- GSW
- CCA

**Education:**

- More info provided about what their options are
- Onondaga County has many different educational opportunities (BOCES, OCC, colleges, etc.)
- BOCES
- Sidney Johnson Center
- OnCare
- Syracuse City School District
- More opportunities for educational services; other than OCC course

**Independent Living:**

- Use skill building programs that already exist to focus on independent living skills
- Toomey's SILP
- Peer Recovery Centers
- Increased Mental Health Clinic access
- Family support at TLS
- All on Medicaid will have Case Management
- Subsidized Housing

**Mental Health:**

- Existing agencies: OCM, Liberty Resources, Hillside
- Several clinics exist
- Many mental health agencies serving this population group

**Social/Natural Supports:**

- Need to have groups for 21+ year olds to have social opportunities (other than Day Hab)
- Support Groups and Organizations such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters
- CCA/OnCare
- Supportive Communities
- Offer more Family Finding (program/training) to help discover youth's natural resources
- "Parent Project" builds a natural network between parents; develop the teen group to do the same thing
- Bruce's group
- Salvation Army's Supportive Housing Initiative services for young adults (allows us to stay connected even after SSA move out)

*Question #5: Who is important to include in the change process?*

**Housing:**

- Office of Mental Health
- Local Agencies
- The Salvation Army (5x)
- Catholic Charities
- Rescue Mission
- Toomey
- Hillside
- Youth Services Directors
- Case Managers/Care Coordinators
- Discharge Planners
- Churches
- Landlords

- Youth (3x)
- Parents (2x)

**Employment:**

- Employers (2x)
- Agency supporting client through transition
- School Social Workers
- BOCES
- Vocational/Technical Trainers
- Bridges to Health (B2H)
- ARC of Onondaga
- Youth (2x)
- Family
- Natural Supports

**Education:**

- EOC (2x)
- Sydney Johnson Center
- ITT Tech
- OCC (4x)
- Different Trades (e.g. electricians, masons, fire protection, etc.)
- Syracuse City School District; and other districts (2x)
- Teachers and other school personnel (3x)
- Therapists
- Syracuse University (2x)
- Lemoyne College (2x)
- BOCES (3x)
- Someone knowledgeable on financial aid
- Jobs Plus
- Community Organizations (like Contact)
- Peer Support
- Youth
- Families (2x)

**Independent Living:**

- Agency helping with transition
- Hillside
- Catholic Charities
- ARC of Onondaga
- Natural Supports
- Youth (3x)
- Families

**Mental Health:**

- Case Managers
- Nicole Semmens (Salvation Army)
- Catholic Charities
- SILP (Toomey)
- Vocational Programs
- Educational Programs
- Adult Providers
- Mental Health Providers (2x)
- Hillside
- Liberty Resources
- Onondaga Case Management Services
- ACCESS
- Youth (3x)
- Natural Supports

**Social/Natural Supports:**

- Youth (2x)
- Natural Supports
- Family Members (2x)
- Community Members
- Professional Personnel
- Faith Community Members

*Question #6:* What would be some initial steps we could take toward the changes we want to see? Are there any possibilities for quick wins to get momentum going?

**Housing:**

- Once safe/stable housing is found the other supports can be explored or fall into place
- Find funding to duplicate what's already doing well (e.g. increase beds at State St. Apts.)
- Talk to Housing Visions
- Get key players at the table willing to build working relationships to make the transition to adulthood work (2x)
- Provide families opportunities (e.g. workshops) for educational information

**Employment:**

- Approach businesses to partner with to hire/train TAY (2x)
- Facilitate resume development
- Teach job searching skills
- Get key players at the table willing to build working relationships to make the transition to adulthood work (2x)



- Provide families opportunities (e.g. workshops) for educational information

#### **Education:**

- Petition State Ed Dept to not charge for GED programs in 2014
- Get key players at the table willing to build working relationships to make the transition to adulthood work (2x)
- Provide families opportunities (e.g. workshops) for educational information

#### **Independent Living:**

- Include “independent living” in skill building programs
- Get key players at the table willing to build working relationships to make the transition to adulthood work (2x)
- Provide families opportunities (e.g. workshops) for educational information

#### **Mental Health:**

- Offer TAY the opportunity to attend a “Nurtured Heart Approach” workshop
- Get key players at the table willing to build working relationships to make the transition to adulthood work (2x)
- Provide families opportunities (e.g. workshops) for educational information

#### **Social/Natural Supports:**

- Help every youth find a mentor/adult to assist with navigation through themes 1-5 (2x)
- Teen Support Group
- Community Center programming
- Offer TAY the opportunity to attend a “Nurtured Heart Approach” workshop
- Organize, plan, put into action, review
- Make it necessary for case managers to have to help clients seek out natural supports that can be sustained
- Develop a handbook/guidelines for TAY and Families re: steps to transition to adulthood
- Implement the TIP model
- Get key players at the table willing to build working relationships to make the transition to adulthood work (2x)
- Provide families opportunities (e.g. workshops) for educational information

#### **Additional Initial Steps/Quick Wins:**

- Convince everyone that the foundation is unsound
- Financial Literacy education