Mutual learning: Collaborating across sectors to support youth transitioning from child to adult services

Dr. Elizabeth Jackson, Director, Community Engaged Scholarship Institute
Sara Ropp, Manager of Support Services, Community Living Stratford

Webinar Series brought to you by Community-Based Research Canada

cesinstitute.ca
@CESIGuelph
Community-Based Research Canada

www.communityresearchcanada.ca
## Introductions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dr. Elizabeth Jackson</th>
<th>Sara Ropp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Director, Community Engaged Scholarship Institute (CESI)</td>
<td>• Senior Manager of Support Services, Community Living Stratford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CESI facilitates mutually beneficial community-university partnerships and fosters meaningful engagement between faculty, students and community</td>
<td>• Community Living agencies support individuals with developmental disabilities to live meaningful lives in their communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Located within the College of Social and Applied Human Sciences at the University of Guelph</td>
<td>• Branches have individual governance, structures, and services approaches</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outline

- Introductions
- Origins
- Process and Roles
- Sharing our Findings, Working for Impact
- Research and Findings
- Enabling and Supporting Factors
- Impacts and Next Steps (Policy, Programs, Processes)
- Learning
What participants told us

“Staff help me with like groceries budgeting, phone bills, a lot of stuff. I’m afraid if I move out on my own. I have a fiancée. If I do move I am going to be in debt and lose everything.”

– Transitional Age Youth

“Our connections to other sectors have broadened. We are connecting with sectors we historically haven’t needed to connect with. That is current and emerging practice, a good practice. And frankly at a systems level, at an upper level, we are getting a lot of push back around “you shouldn’t be doing that. Mental Health systems should be doing that”. And then the youth start falling between the cracks, again.”

– Direct Support Professional
Origins

• Early 2017: Directors of various support agencies identified challenges in the current system

• Supporting transitional age youth (TAY) identified as a consistent issue/struggle
  • How to support these youth?
  • What strategies to use to develop these supports?

• February 2018: Approached Liz/CESI via network connections for support analyzing data

• CESI joined as academic partner
Process and Roles

- Project driven by small working group of agencies, with CESI as a collaborator
- Data was community held
- CESI Director and Knowledge Mobilization (KMb) Coordinator consulted on analysis and reporting; assisted with student hire
- Costs were shared
  - CESI provided in-kind support via Director and KMb Coordinator, some student funds, venue for launch event
  - Community Living provided in-kind staff support, majority of student funds, and printing costs; split across branches involved in the working group
Sharing our Findings, Working for Impact

- November 2019: Launch event convened by the working group with CESI support
- Student presented research findings
- Working group explored implications and next steps
Research and Findings

• Thematic analysis of interviews and focus groups with managers, direct support professionals, and TAY

• Collaboratively designed KMb strategy

• Outputs: 2 targeted briefs – Policy Brief and Education Brief
  • 2 accompanying infographics, versions targeted to individual organizations
Enabling and Supporting Factors

• CESI
  • Mandate; Strong Institutional support and commitment
  • Financial capacity, strong student training
  • Staff skill and mandate

• Support agencies
  • Access to funding
  • Support from supervisors, organizations
  • Staff skill and commitment
Enabling and Supporting Factors

- Trust, collaboration, and relationships
  - Among agencies
  - Between Community Living and CESI
  - With faculty

- Openness and honesty
  - Pragmatic curiosity about how things were (not) working
  - Service providers’ willingness to change

- Flexibility
  - In student budget due to funding from Sunbeam service agency
  - From CESI RE: the research and dissemination agenda

- Valuing research as a tool and element of service decisions
  - Already knew the answers but needed to show the process
  - Provided stories directly from the youth; aligned with reflections from direct service professionals
Impacts and Next Steps (Policy, Programs, Processes)

- Research helped to validate and affirm knowledge held by direct support professionals and service users
- Findings and outputs enable further understanding by policy makers of client and staff experiences
- Results are being shared with colleagues, senior staff, and Ministry contacts
  - Advocate for changes to the way that funding is allocated and supports provided
## Learning

### CESI Perspective
- Importance of being led by community-identified priorities
- Leveraging our respective resources, knowledges, and skills for greatest impact
- Power of working knowledge and collaboration

### Agency Perspective
- Encouraged to see academics as potential collaborators and resources
- Strength of collaborating with counterparts across organizations
Still Curious?

Community Living – www.clsa.ca
sropp@clsa.ca

Community Engaged Scholarship Institute – www.cesinstitute.ca
e.jackson@uoguelph.ca

For more information and to access the reports and infographics visit
https://www.cesinstitute.ca/supporting-youth-transitions-respecting-dignity-fulfilling-dreams
Webinar Recordings

www.communityresearchcanada.ca/webinars
More Ways to Get Involved With CBRC

Sign up for CBRC e-News
Fall 2019 e-News

CBRC Webinars

Share Your News and Events!
info@communityresearchcanada.ca

C2UExpo 2020

www.communityresearchcanada.ca
Please Share Your Feedback

“Tell us what you think!”

Feedback Form:
Mutual learning: Collaborating across sectors to support youth transitioning from child to adult services

Start

press Enter ↓
Thank You!

www.communityresearchcanada.ca