

# Experience mapping: exploring the thoughts, feelings, and actions of youth as they enrol and complete an IPS program.

[Mr. Matthew Wenger \(Canada\)](#), [Ms. Cassia Warren \(Canada\)](#), [Ms. Anna-Joy Ong \(Canada\)](#), [Ms. Diana Al-Qutub \(Canada\)](#), [Ms. Raysa Camara \(Canada\)](#), [Dr. Karen Tee \(Canada\)](#), [Dr. Skye Barbic \(Canada\)](#)

## Introduction

Foundry Works is a new evidence-based supported work and study program offered within Foundry, a provincial integrated youth service organization in British Columbia (BC), Canada. Foundry Works utilizes an Individual Placement Support (IPS) model to help meet the wellness needs of diverse youth by coordinating their health, work, and study goals. Although this model is centred on an individualized approach, youth engagement and retention can be a challenge. To best support youth in this program and understand some of the barriers to engagement and retention, a project was developed to map out the experiences and actions of youth across the various phases of the program and critical transition points (e.g., starting a new job). The results of this process are being used to design core elements of the program and create engagement strategies for IPS staff during identified periods of risk for youth who are not in employment, education, or training programs.

## Objectives

To 1) understand the thoughts, feelings, and actions of youth through the various phases of the IPS service model (contemplation/ discovery, engagement/ enrolment, active search, post-placement support, and completion), 2) identify risks to engagement during phases and transition points of the IPS program, and 3) describe solutions co-designed with a youth advisory committee to mitigate youth risks in transition phases and improve the overall quality of the program.

## Approach/Methods

Focus groups were conducted with 15 youth and 8 family members/ caregivers and led by family and youth peer engagement coordinators. The focus groups explored the thoughts, feelings, and actions, of participants through a journey mapping exercise. Recordings from the focus groups were transcribed and a thematic analysis used to identify themes. Youth and family members were recruited from across the province, incorporating considerations for equity, diversity, and inclusion of various individuals who may access the Foundry Works program.

## Results

Sustained and meaningful engagement in higher education and work opportunities is a major indicator of recovery. IPS programs, such as Foundry Works, can be critical in supporting individuals living with mental health and substance use concerns in achieving their work and study goals through an integrated youth service. By understanding the thoughts, feelings, and actions of youth considering or engaged in an IPS service, programs

can better support participants and mitigate some of the risks to engagement and completion, leading to higher success rates and recovery outcomes.

## **Conclusion**

The results of this experience mapping project will help to inform and shape Foundry Works, BC's first provincial youth IPS program.

