



# **Young Adults in Transition: Oregon Moves Forward**

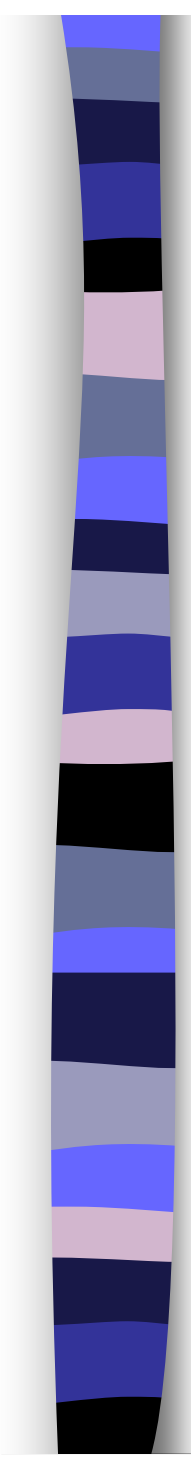
**Addictions and Mental Health Division**  
**Integrated Conference**  
*Hope, Resilience, Recovery*

**MOO.  
VIE.**

**YOUTH**

**MOVE**

**OREGON**



# Who are **Young Adults in Transition (YAT)** and why are we focused on them?

- 14 – 25 years old
- Caught between youth and adult community supports and resources
- 80% less likely to receive services
- Less than 30% have medical insurance
- 75% of mental health problems occur before the age of 25





# The New Adulthood

- Bachelor's degree is the economic equivalent of high school degree in the 60's
- Fewer opportunities to earn incomes that allow for independence (with college degree)
- Average age of independence in the US is 27.
- Unaffordable housing
- More dependence on families for longer time

(Settersten, Furstenberg & Rumbaut, 2004)



# Developmental Age vs. Chronological Age

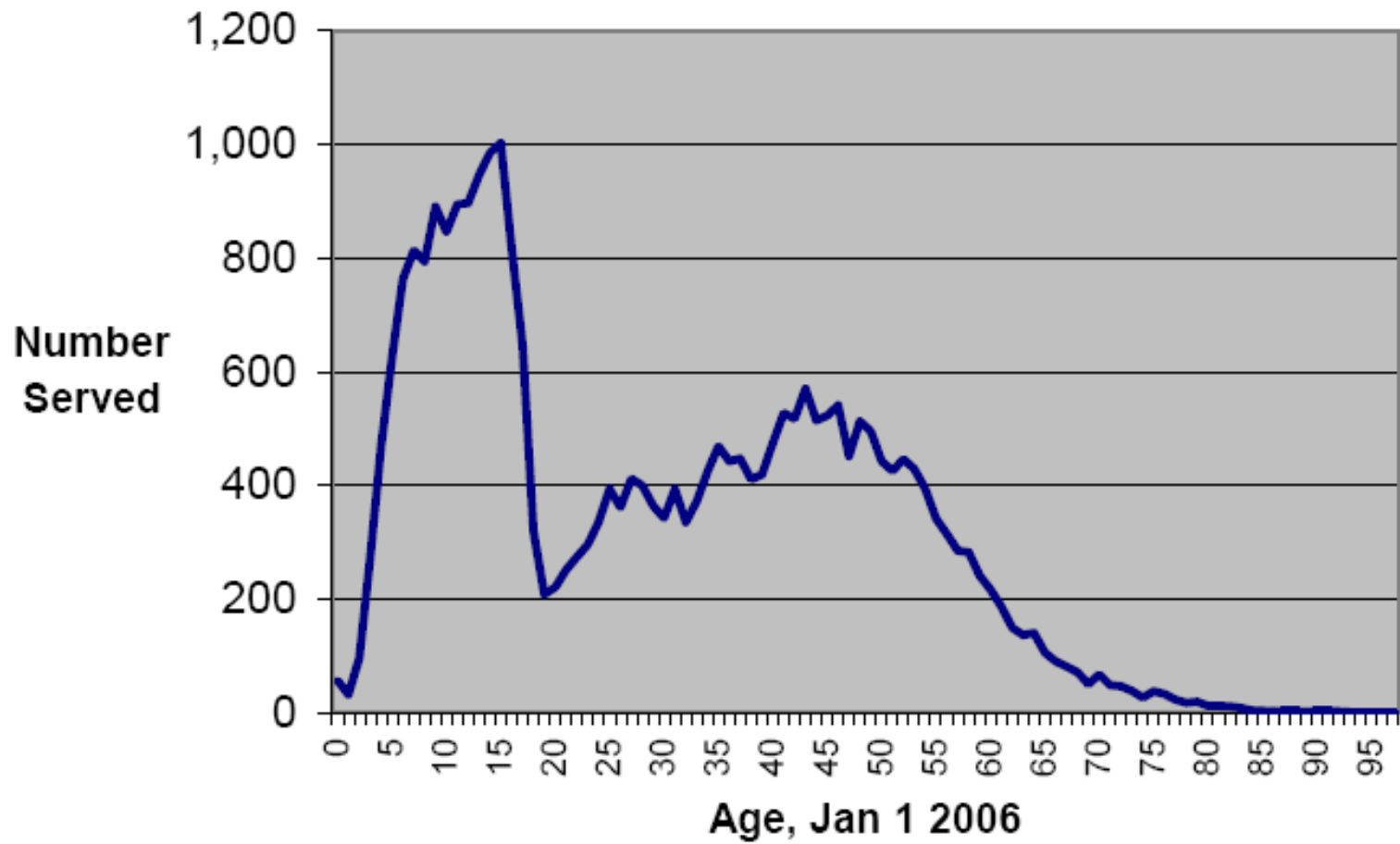
- The goal of most interventions focus on “helping” the youth “act their (chronological) age”.
- Interventions that are not developmentally focused may cause frustration for staff and clients.
- Brain development continues into people’s mid-twenties.
- People with developmental interruptions and/or FASD often have uneven growth and development in different areas.
- Dysmaturity, referring to developmental immaturity, may be a symptom of a disability rather than irresponsibility.



# Developmental Age vs. Chronological Age. Cont.

A simple strategy is to step back and ask, “What is the developmental age of this person’s behavior?” If they reflect an earlier stage: think younger and meet the youth where they are developmentally. (Puts a whole new spin on meet them where they are)

**Figure 3. First Quarter Served, By Age**





# Challenges for Foster Care

## Aging out of Foster Care

- 18 year old barrier
- Ending guardianship interrupts resources
- Long waiting lists for services beyond 18 years old
- Limited housing options



# Challenges for Mental Health

## Aging out of youth/adolescent system

- Eligible diagnoses
- Conflicting roles of service providers
- Developmentally appropriate services are often age defined
- Misdiagnosis in early adolescence
- 50% of youth with Severe and Persistent Mental health challenges graduate from high school
- YAT with mental health challenges are 4x *less* likely to be involved in activities



# Challenges for Juvenile Justice

- 70% of youth incarcerated experience mental health challenges; 25% of whom have function impairment as a result
- Limited resources for support, advocacy or case management upon release
- Expectation for youth to enter adult system that is not age or culturally appropriate

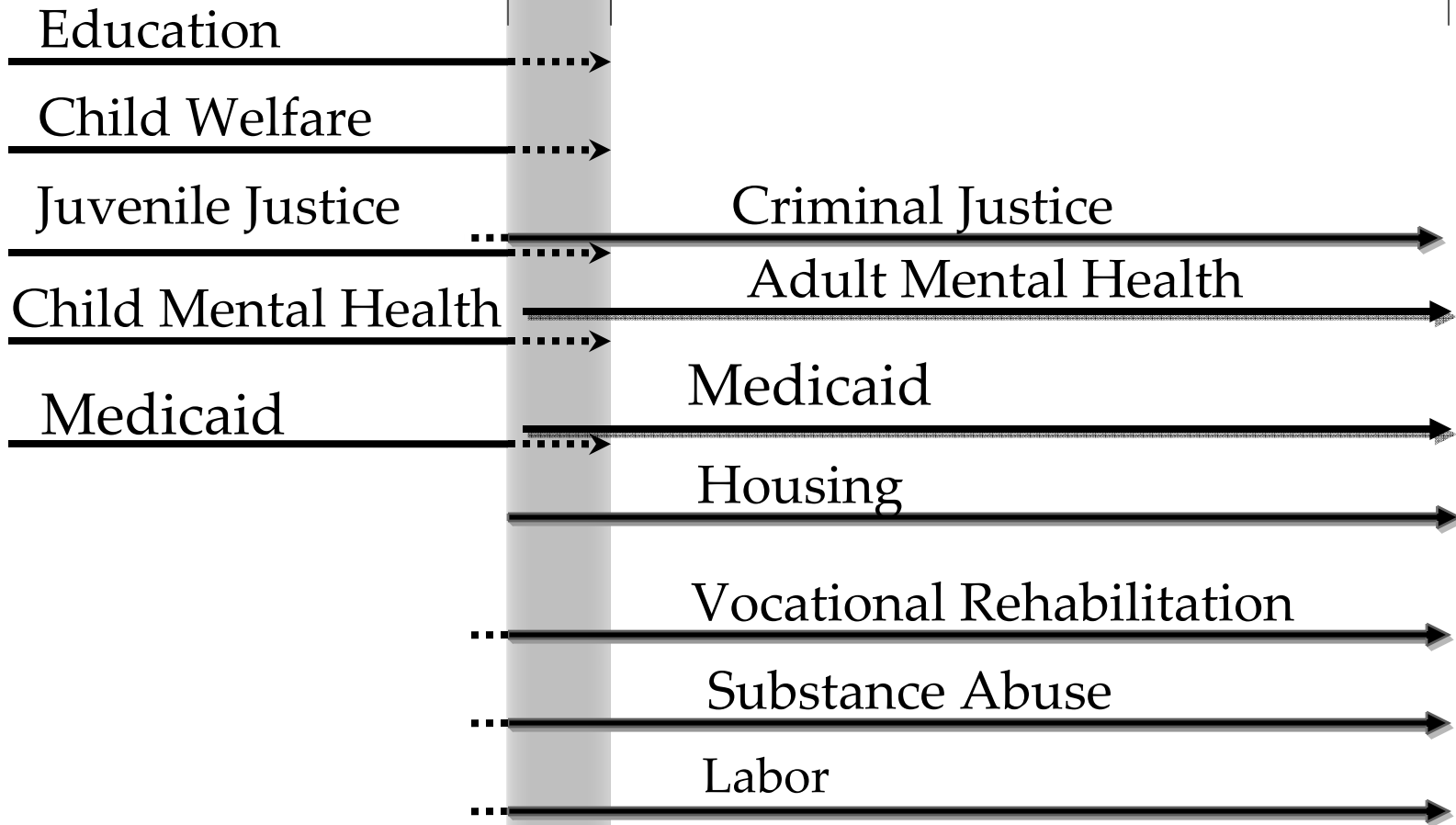


# Challenges for Homeless

- Chronic and situational homelessness
- Histories of developmental interruptions
- Prevalence of health, mental health and alcohol/drug issues – ongoing, emerging and impacting brain development/function.
- Incomplete educations
- Unemployed or under-employed
- Gay, lesbian, bi-, trans, or questioning (30-34%)
- Engage in survival behaviors: operate in crisis mode, self-medication, and survival sex.
- Risk of victimization by predatory adults and other youth.

**CHILD SYSTEM**

**ADULT SYSTEM**



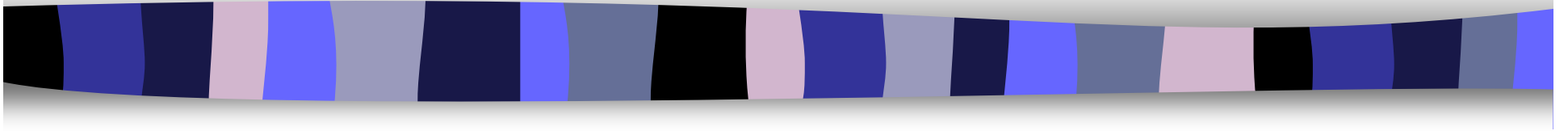
**18-  
21  
Yrs.**

*Birth*

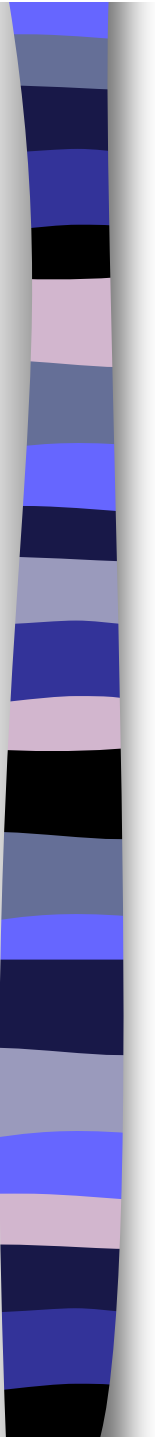
**AGE** → → → → → → → →

*Death*

SO WHAT DOES  
WORK?



# YAT Core Elements



# Functional Expectations of Young Adults



**Complete schooling & training**



**Contribute to/head household**



**Obtain/maintain rewarding work**



**Develop a social network**



**Become financially self-supporting**



**Be a good citizen**



# Core Principles of Some Effective YAT Systems

- Accessibility of Services
- Client Directed (voluntary)
- Non-judgmental
- Developmental Focus (inevitability of growth and change)
- Engage with Relationship
- Relational Continuity
- Solution Focused



# Core Interventions

- Co-location and other integration of holistic services
- Limited barriers to access
- Services available on-demand
- Specialists visible within programs
- Specialists integrated into care teams



# CULTURALLY COMPETENT

Services provided to young adults in transition will honor identified cultural values and norms.

Young adults age 14 to 25 represent a unique developmental group and services will be tailored to meet targeted population characteristics, attitudes and values.

Services will be sensitive to LGBTQQ and gender specific needs.

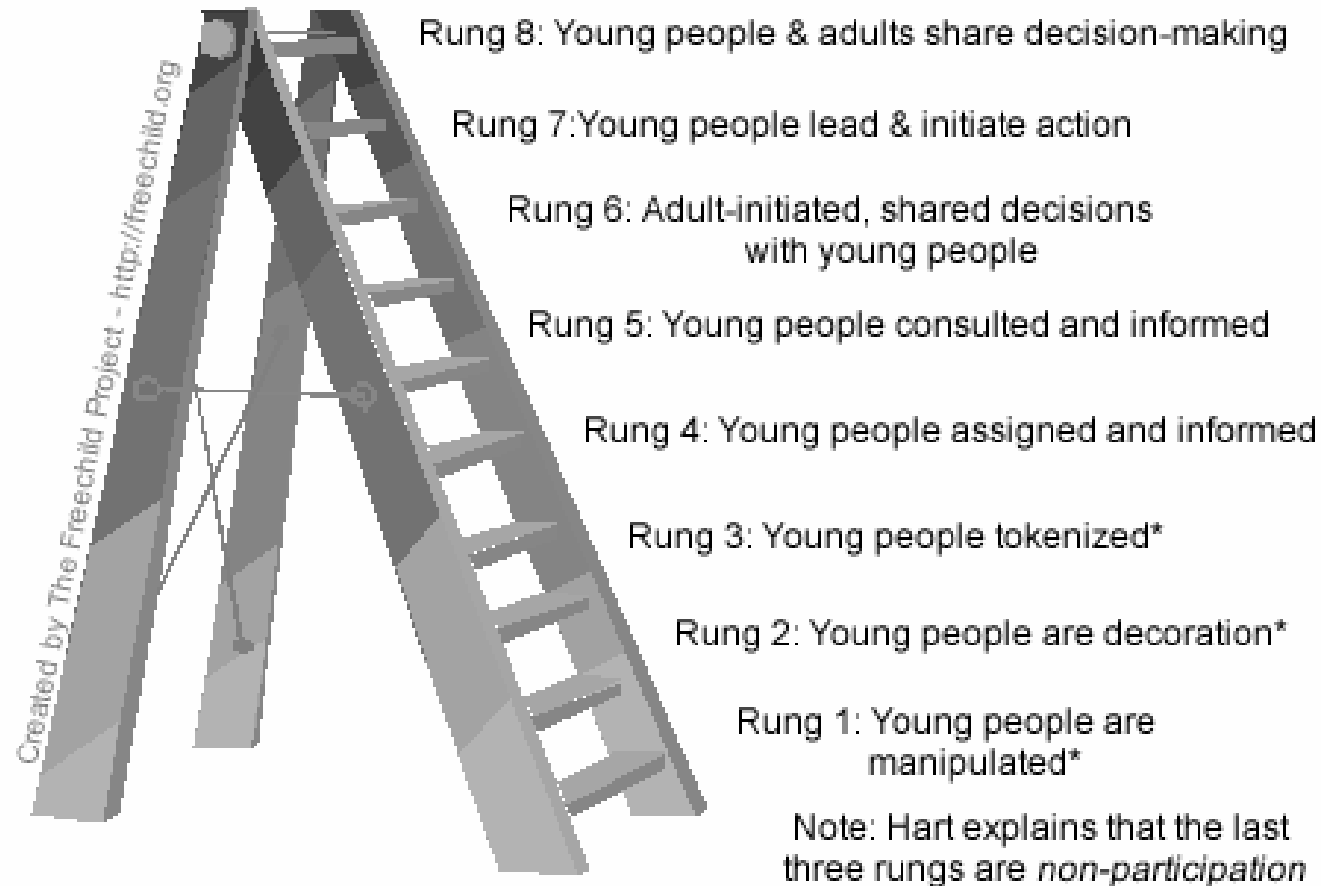


# YOUNG ADULT DRIVEN.

All parties will ensure that services are collaboratively designed with young adults to enhance the relevance to their lives while ensuring that they are offered in a manner young adults find meaningful.

Services and supports and functional expectations or goals will be matched to each individual's stage of development which will not be uniform across all areas of adult life skills.

## Roger Hart's Ladder of Young People's Participation



Adapted from Hart, R. (1992). *Children's Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship*. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.



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