



Youth Well-being

Yusra Benhalim MD
Senior National Medical Director
Optum Behavioral Health Solutions

July 18, 2023

Stock photo used



Agenda

1

Where we've been

A closer look at the young and the changes around them

2

Where we are now

Understanding through the lens of the young

3

Where we go from here

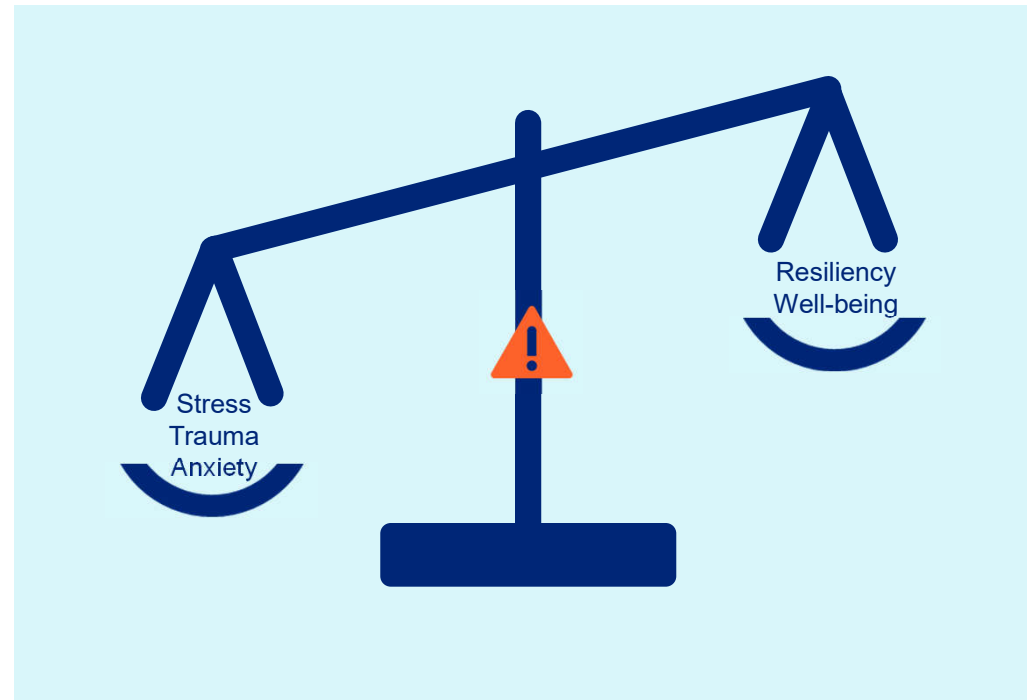
A different approach to change the future

The COVID-10 pandemic tipped the scales for many

Youth mental health has been declining for more than a decade due to a variety of causes, but the pandemic accelerated the shift



Major transition
High stress period
High risk period
Adverse childhood experience (ACE)



Sounding the alarms



As of October 2022, 229,000 children younger than 18 lost one or both parents and 291,000 lost a primary or secondary caregiver to COVID-19

Youth are not simply young adults

Nature

The inside world



The brain develops through the age of ~26



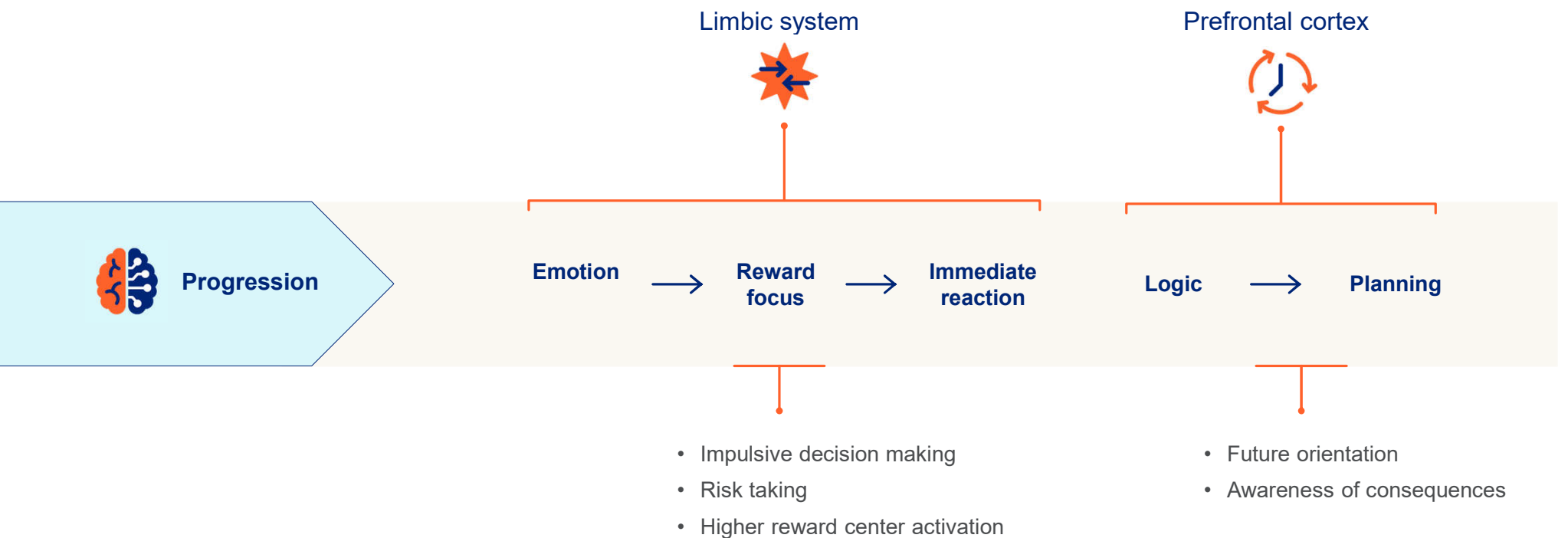
Nurture

The outside world



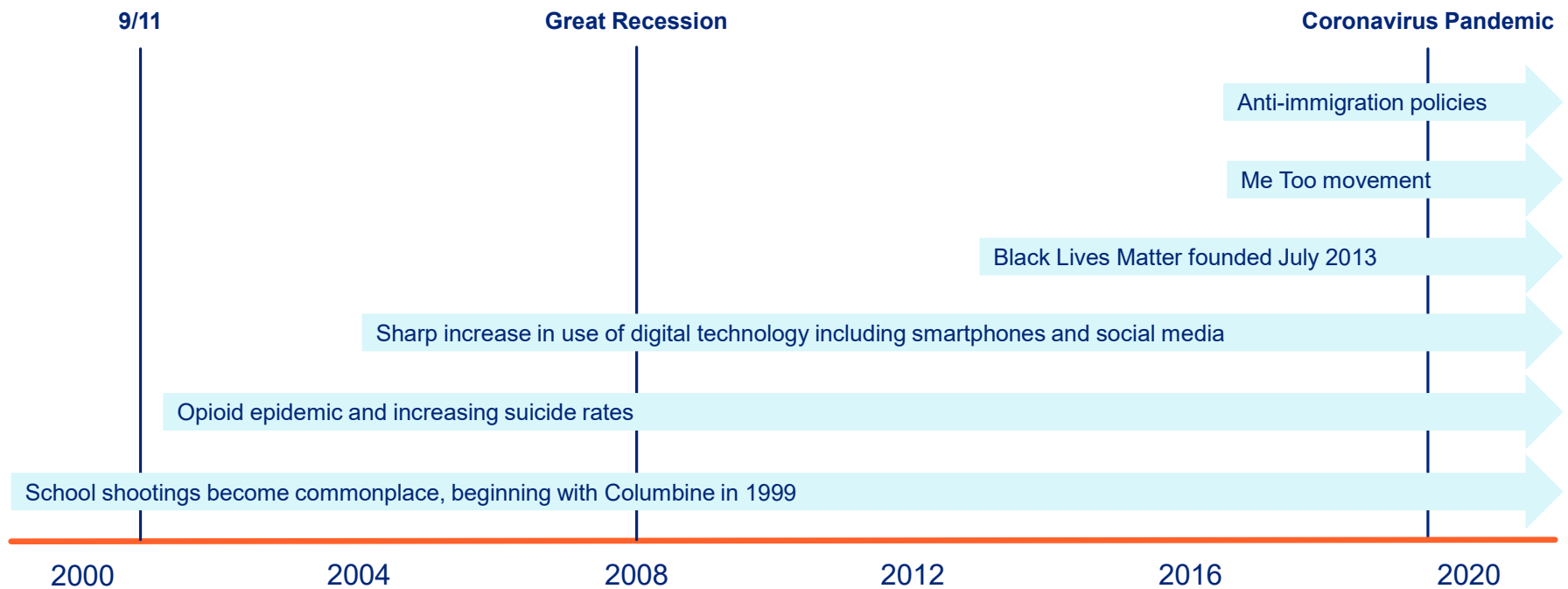
The world continues to change at a rapid pace

The developing brain impacts how youth think, feel and behave



Youth are at the center of ongoing external flux

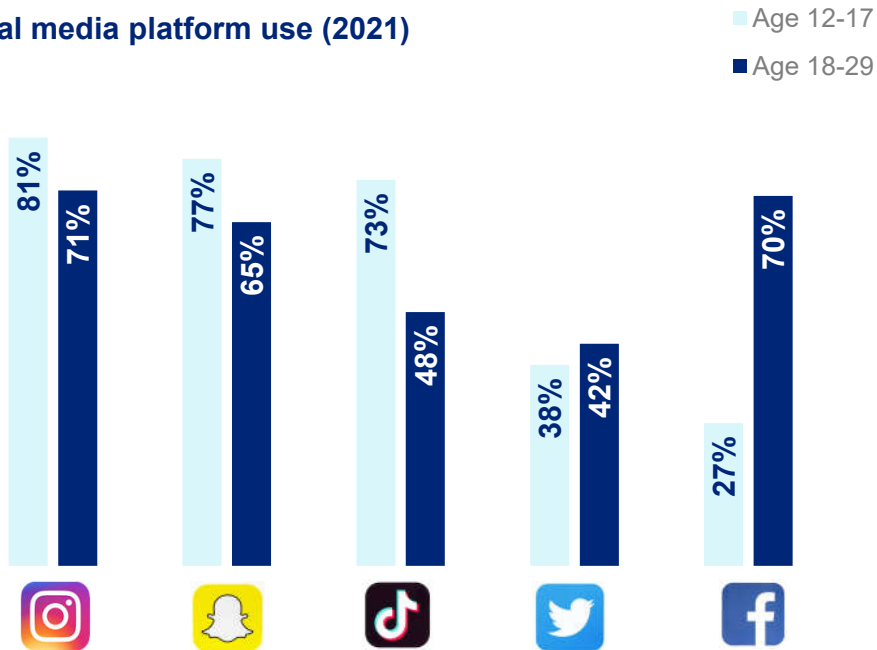
This generation has come of age amongst significant national and global events



Technology's impact on today's youth

Excessive use, harmful content, overlaid on vulnerable predispositions

Social media platform use (2021)



Screen time and social media are habit-forming

- Teens consume just under **7.5 hours** of screen media per day*
- **63%** of teens use social media **every day***
- **44%** of teens check their phones **as soon as they wake up****
- Teens from higher-income homes use screen media 1h43 less per day vs lower-income*

Piper Sandler: Taking Stock with Teens Fall 2021
Pew Research Center: Social Media Use in 2021

*Common Sense Census: Media Use by Tweens and Teens (2019)
**Pew Research Center: How Parents and Teens Navigate Screen Time and Device Distractions (2018)

Hidden in plain sight

Making it easier to access drugs



FAKE PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

PERCOCET & OXYCODONE 🟡🔴 ● 🟦 P 🍌	XANAX 🟡🔴 🟪🔴 🚚	ADDERALL 🟡🔴 A- 🤖
---	-------------------------	----------------------------

DEALER SIGNALS

DEALER ADVERTISING 💰💰👑💰💰🔌	HIGH POTENCY 🚀💣💥	UNIVERSAL FOR DRUGS 🍁	LARGE BATCH 🍪
-------------------------------------	----------------------------	---------------------------------	-------------------------

Source of graphic: Drug Enforcement Administration. Emoji Drug Code Decoded.
<https://www.dea.gov/sites/default/files/2021-12/Emoji%20Decoded.pdf>

Lack of regulation to support oversight and safety of technology in the United States

53% of youth received their first smartphone at age 11*



Driving Age

Permit: 15-16 years old
License: 17-18 years old



Tobacco

21 years old



Alcohol

21 years old



Gambling

18-21 years old

Regulation guardrails exist elsewhere

National concerns and conversations are growing



Social media can help to improve an individual's sense of **connectedness** with real or online communities and can be an effective **communication** tool.

However, social media can have **negative effects** as well, including cyberbullying, internet addiction, and mental health problems such as including anxiety, depression, and body image concerns.

~American Psychological Association ⁴



U.S. Surgeon General ¹

Social Media and Youth Mental Health Advisory - 2023



American Academy of Pediatrics ²

Mental Health Minute



Mainstream media ³

Dove Self-Esteem Project

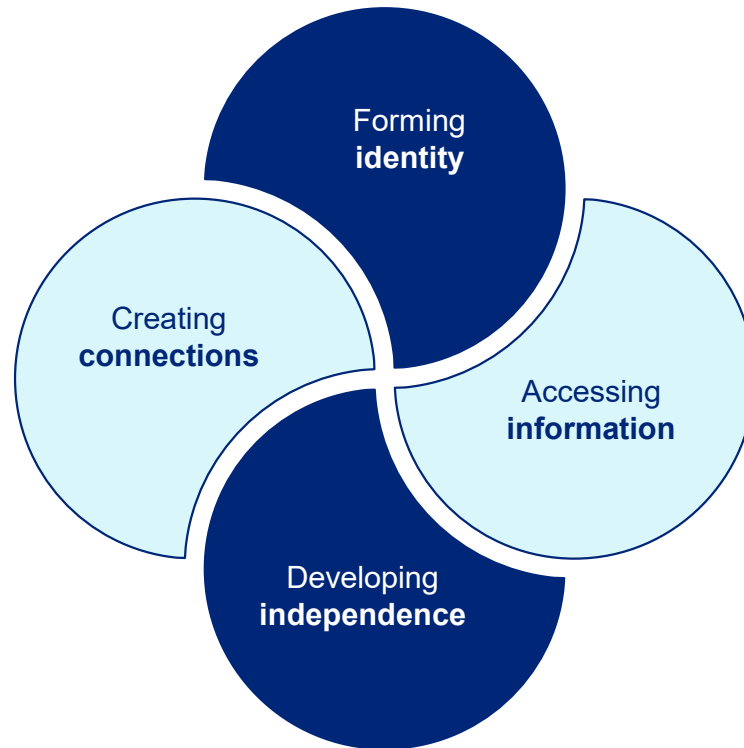
1. <https://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/priorities/youth-mental-health/index.html>

2. <https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/mental-health-minute/social-media-and-adolescent-mental-health/#:~:text=Currently%2C%20nearly%20all%20US%20teens%20are%20active%20on%20social%20media%20use%20and%20adolescent%20depression%20and%20anxiety.>

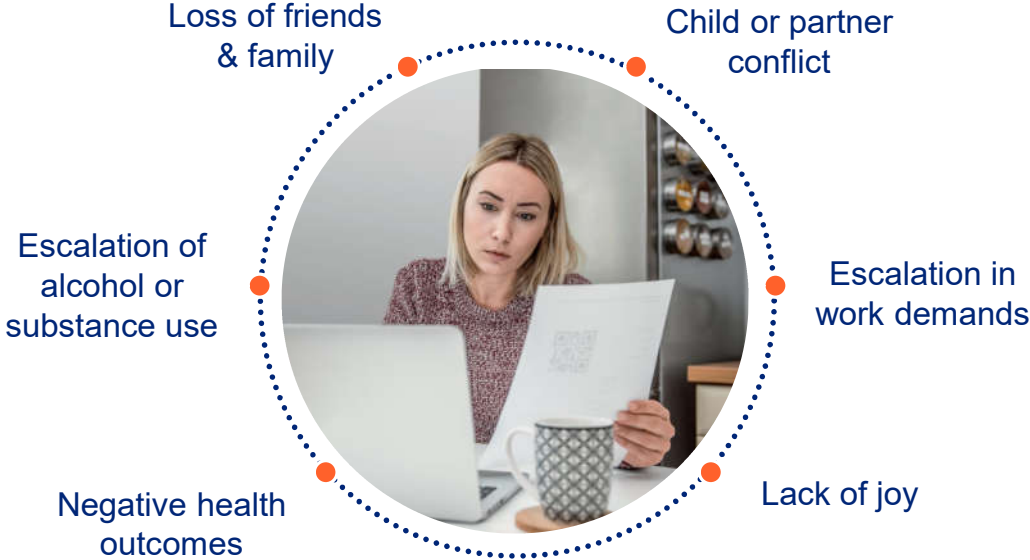
3. <https://youtu.be/2ngESNoacxM>

4. <https://www.apa.org/topics/social-media-internet>

Youth turn to the internet for support



The caregivers in your workforce are also struggling



The impact of children's mental health on the workforce



At least once a month...

75% of parents **missed work** (full or partial day)

72% of parents had **work interrupted**

58% of parents felt like work **quality was negatively affected**

50% felt **unprepared** in a meeting

50% fell **behind on workload**



Our research



We asked, they answered

Through one-on-one interviews with teens, young adults and parents/caregivers we learned about their lives, needs and values

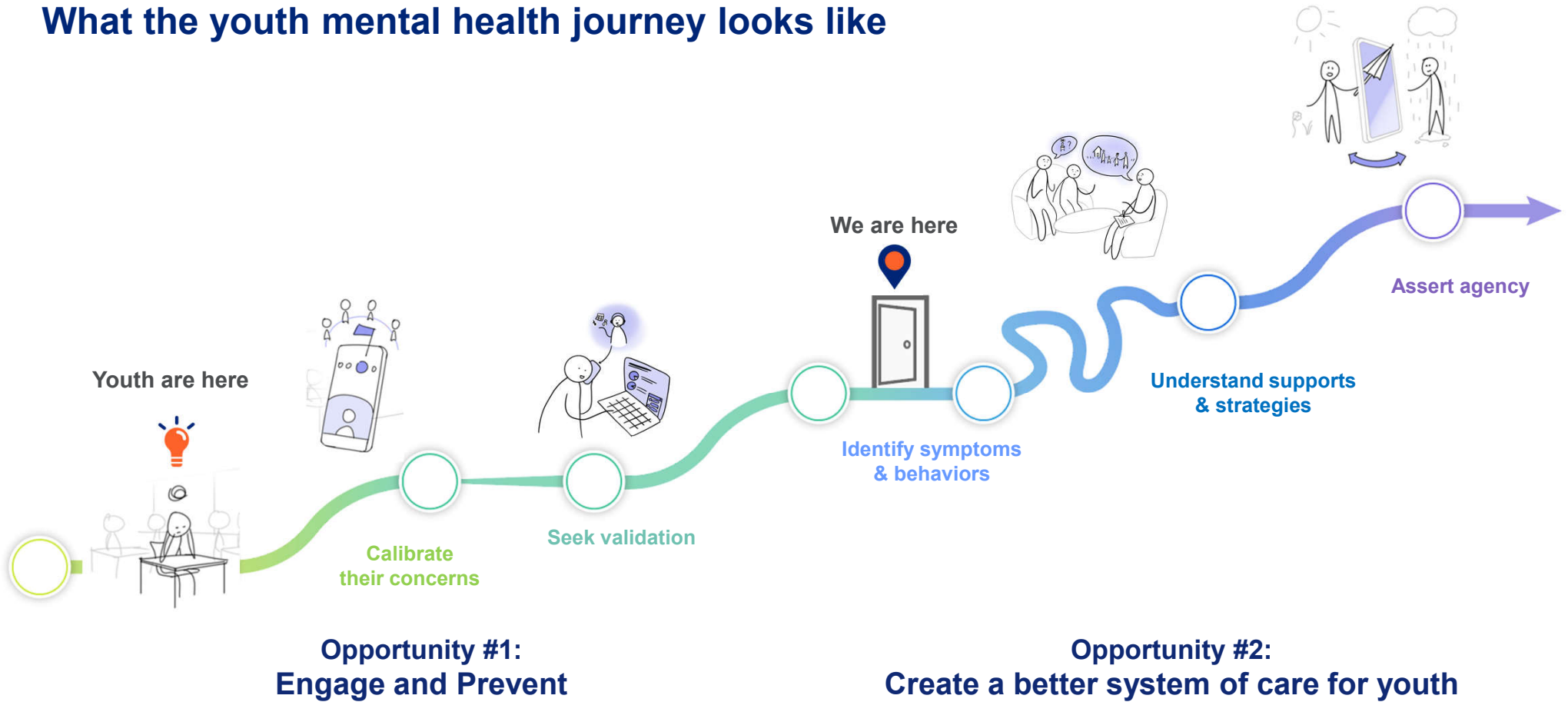
Young people
13-25 years old,
with and without
formal diagnosis

Parents and
caregivers
providing support
to affected young
people

Medical and
behavioral health
clinicians and
providers



What the youth mental health journey looks like



Key findings that set youth apart to help guide our approach



Mental health is NOT a part of everyday life

Stigma: It's a negative problem
It's about high severity (suicide)



Young people don't have the ability to identify or signal a need for help

They are still actively developing and need outside support to build these skills



Young people want to have some control

Treatment happens "TO" the young, without their ability to have decision making power



Adults are NOT the first choice

Caregivers & professionals don't "get" young people so young people don't trust them



Young people want immediate resolution

Young people are not thinking ahead. They want in the moment help that works to resolve the challenge at hand.



Mental health supports do not exist where young people are

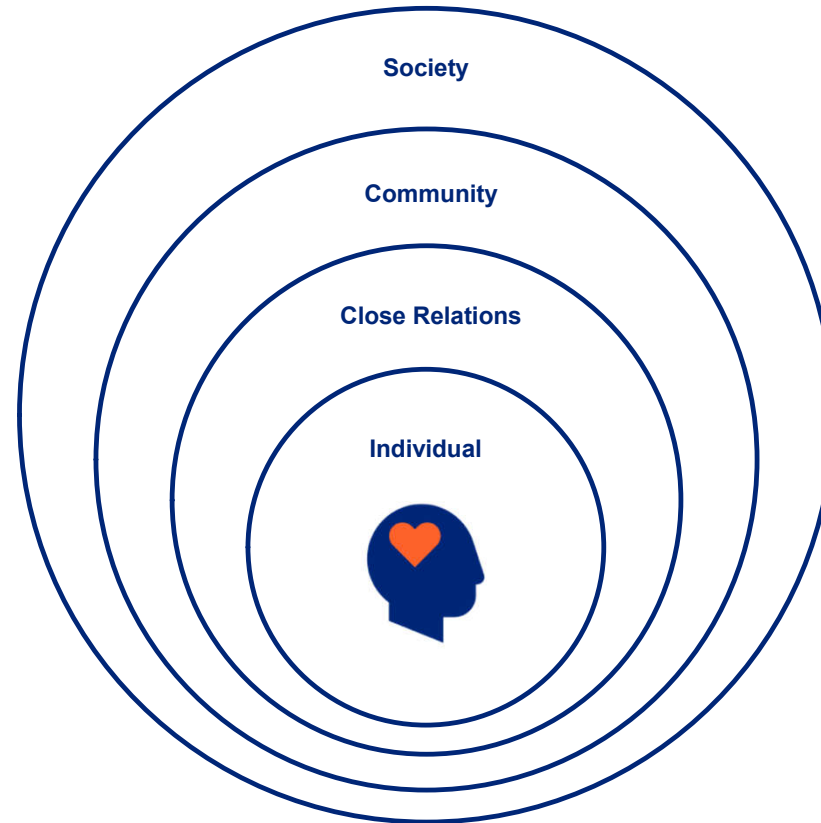
Solutions and services tend to require young people to connect with the healthcare system vs. engage with trusted supporters

The path forward



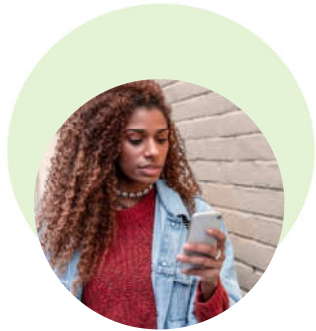
Learning how to connect with today's youth

Understanding the world that youth and young adults live in and the daily interactions that influence them.

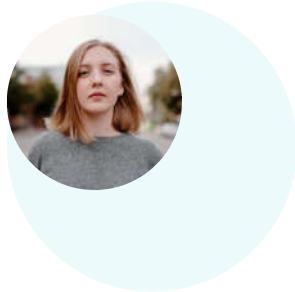


Connecting with youth differently

Early intervention tools

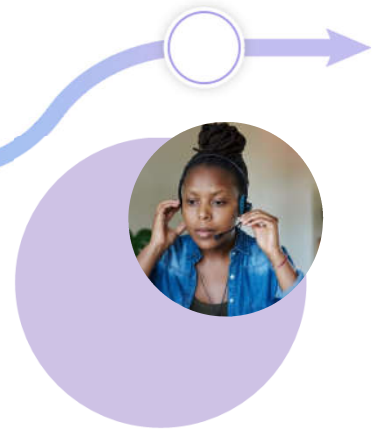


Community and school-based outreach



Collaborative care for youth

Improved crisis support and navigation



Showing up for youth

We're taking a fresh, comprehensive approach to move mental health care forward.

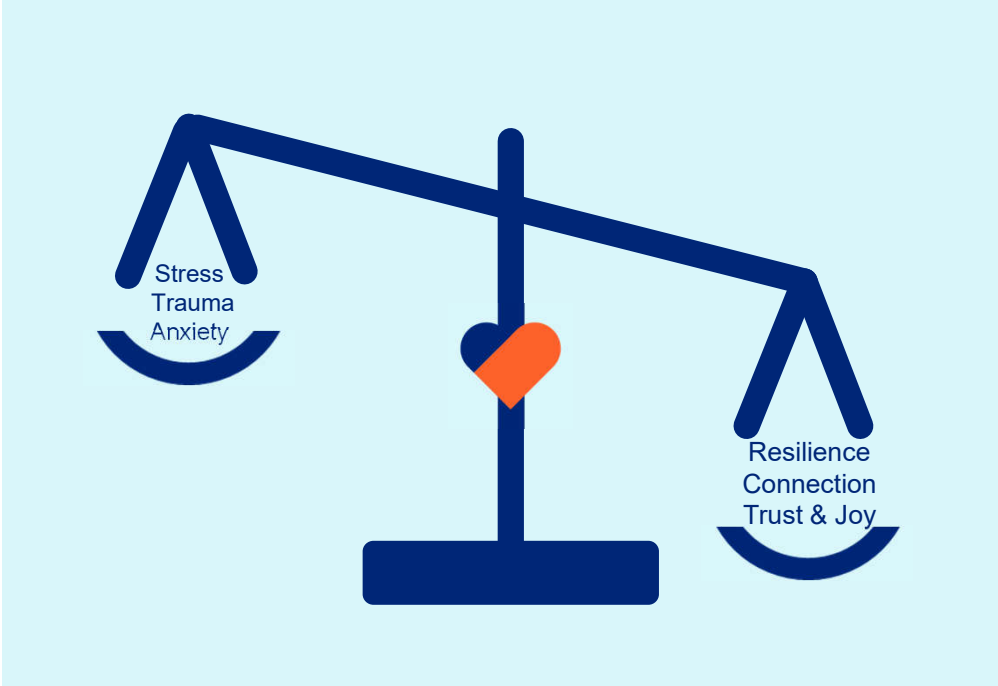
Visit: [Youth Mental Health Resources](#)

Create opportunities to tip the scale in the right direction

The more we understand youth,
the better we can connect with and support them



It takes a village



Q&A

Duration of segment

Optum

Optum is a registered trademark of Optum, Inc. in the U.S. and other jurisdictions. All other brand or product names are the property of their respective owners. Because we are continuously improving our products and services, Optum reserves the right to change specifications without prior notice. Optum is an equal opportunity employer.

© 2023 Optum, Inc. All rights reserved.