

Untangling the Truth: Coordinating systems and lived experience for CHANGE

COMMUNICATE & WORK WITH YOUTH
BECAUSE COURTS ARE PENDING

COUNTY
TEXAS CROSSOVER CONVENING
— 2020 —

INCREASED IN AMOUNT OF PARTICIPATION 

GETTING MORE CREATIVE TO GET WORK DONE 


FAMILIES MORE INVOLVED BECAUSE THEY DO NOT HAVE TO COME TO THE OFFICE

WENT ON A HIKE WITH A YOUTH

Harris County Youth Collective
Kelly Opot, Executive Director

WEEK OF 3/16/2020	TOTAL DS 98	TOTAL REG 6A 55	DETAINED 20	6A CVS 13	6A INV 1	ADULT JAIL 1	CWOP 2	RUNAWAY 2
CURRENT VOLUME (AS OF 9/28)	TOTAL DS 71	TOTAL REG 6A 50	DETAINED 7	6A CVS 4	6A INV 1	ADULT JAIL 0	CWOP 2	RUNAWAY 3

Agenda and Objectives



- ✓ Introduce Harris County Youth Collective and our work
- ✓ Outline our evolution of collaboration and integration of lived experience within HCYC
- ✓ Describe the progress and changes to systems working with Dual Status Youth
- ✓ Share the success and ongoing gaps in serving youth
- ✓ Identify ways that you can support the needs of Dual Status Youth
- ✓ Provide recommendations on how to integrate lived experiences into your work

Understanding Dual Status Youth





A Story and a journey





Storytelling



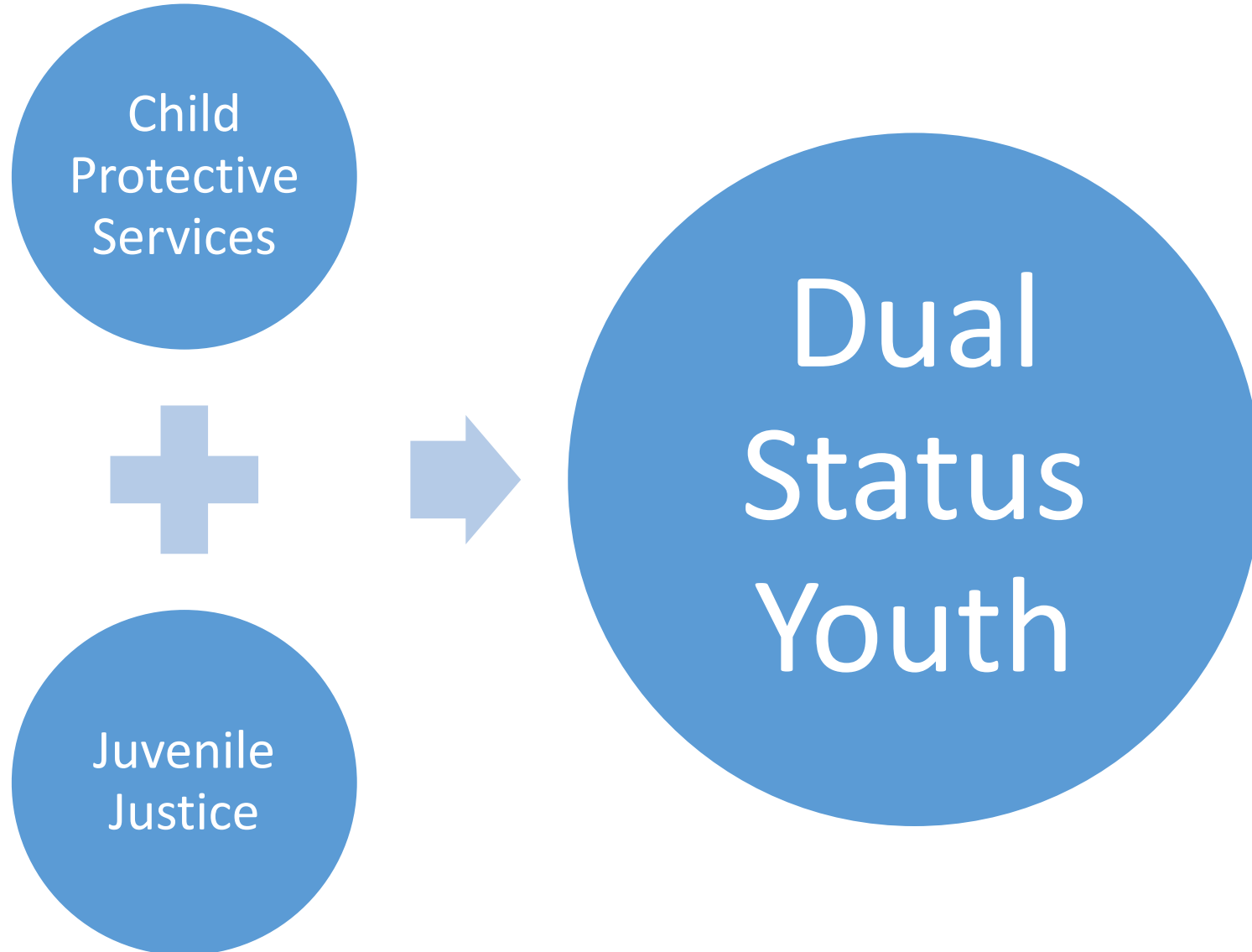
“It's a huge accomplishment. Also a huge weight, To expose yourself like that is so painful.”
“Emotionally, it does a horrible job on my psyche.”



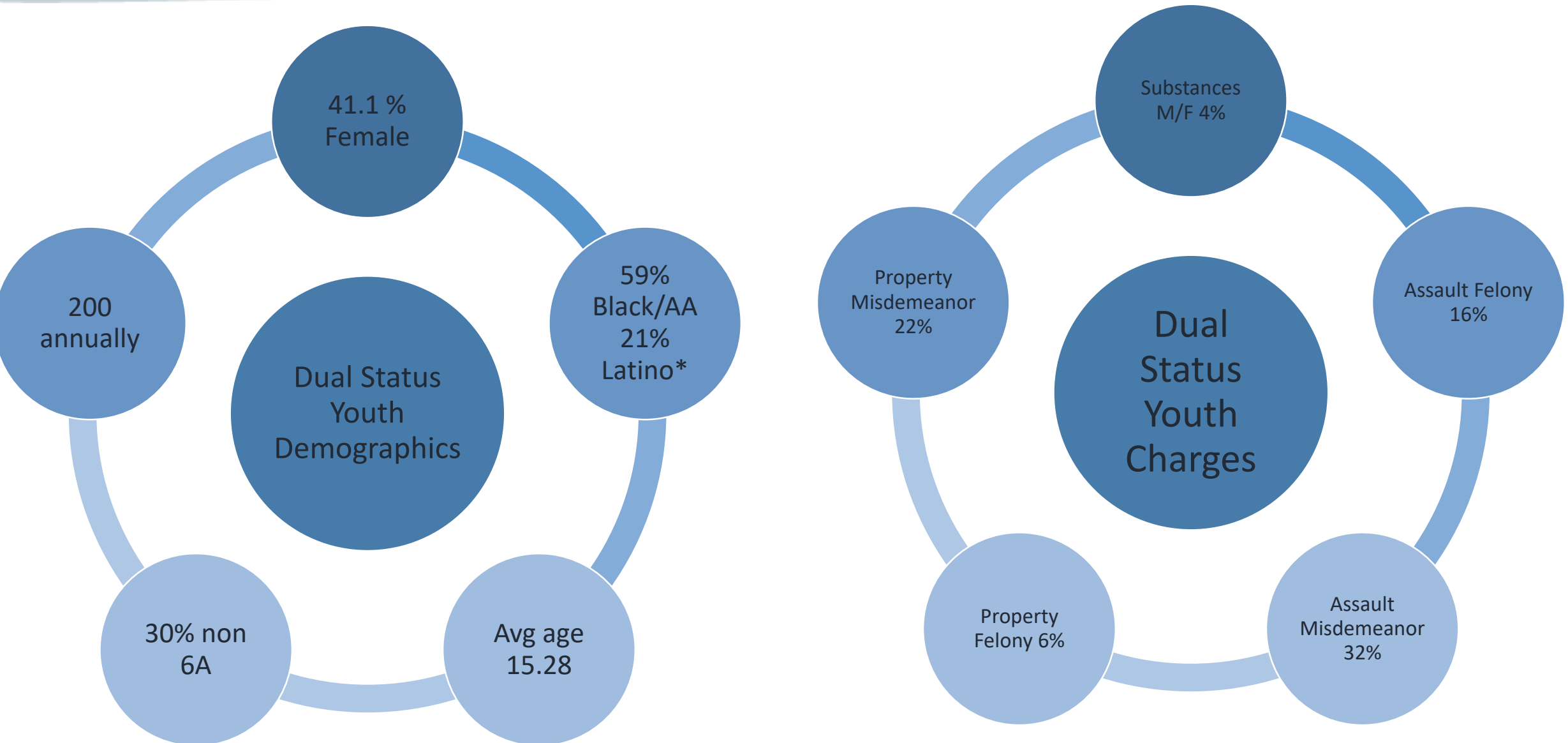
--C.T. Wilson, Maryland representative
On sharing his story of abuse to encourage legislation



Defining Dual Status Youth

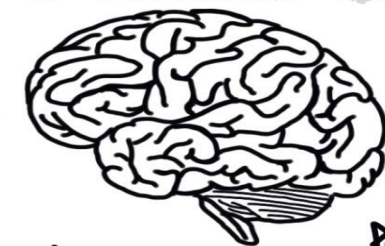


Dual Status Youth Demographics



EMOTIONAL CONTROL

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT



PEER SOCIAL SKILLS



8 PLACEMENT CHANGES

3 PLACEMENT CHANGES

13 YEAR OLD CAME INTO CPS CUSTODY AGAIN

4 PLACEMENT CHANGES

1 YEAR OLD CAME INTO CPS CUSTODY

5 YEARS OLD 1st PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALIZATION

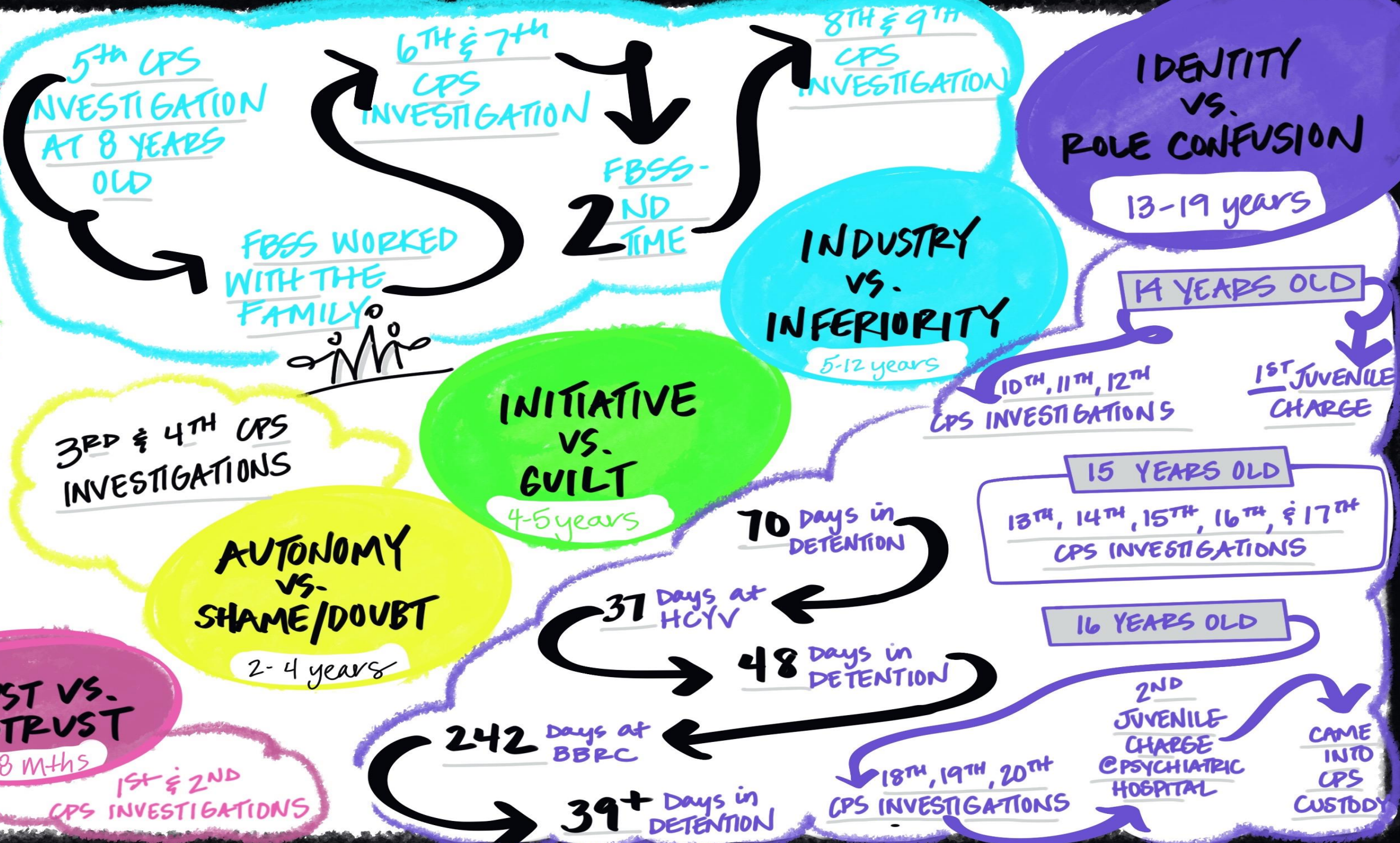
6 YEARS OLD 2nd PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALIZATION

PMc TO RELATIVE

14 YEARS OLD 1st JUVENILE CHARGE

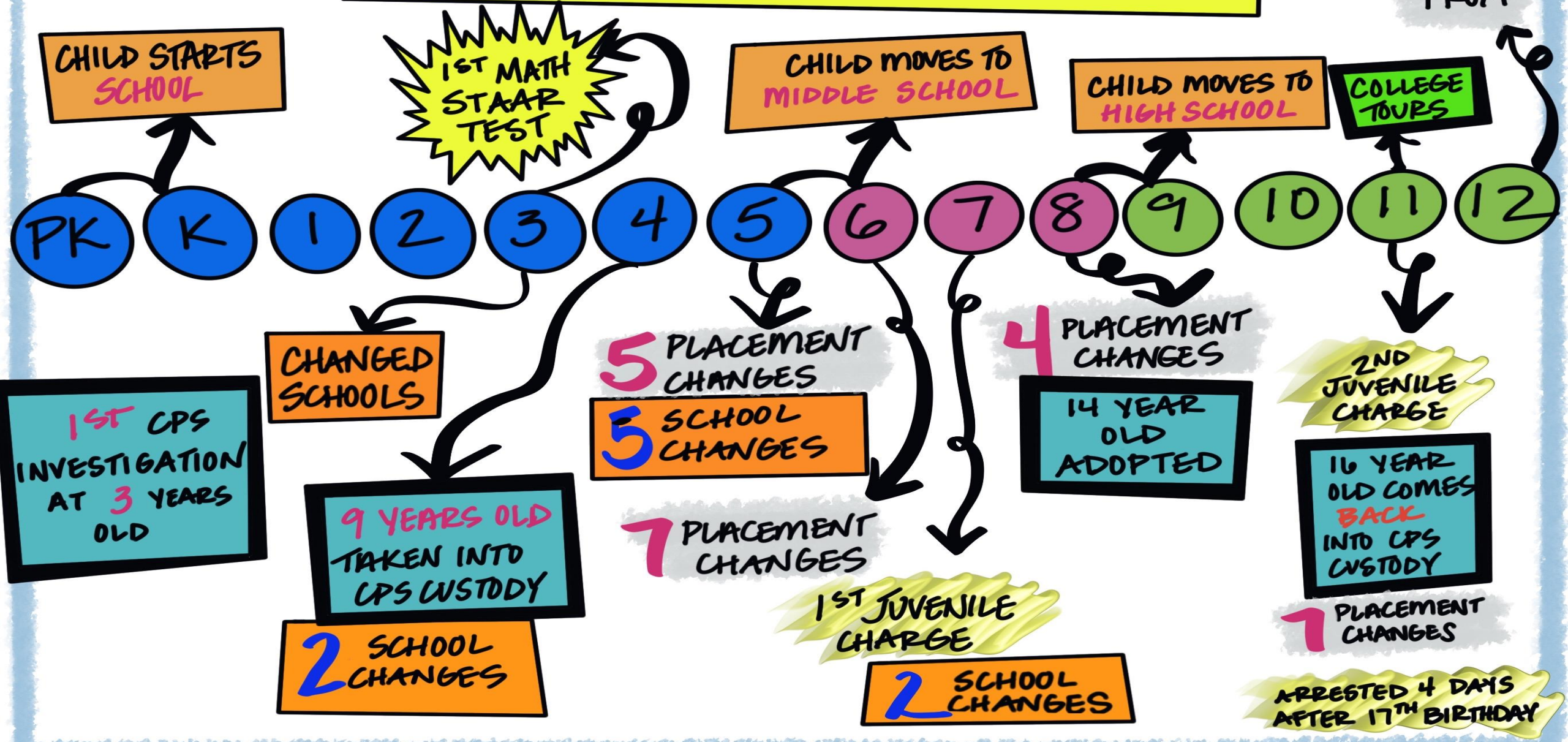
16 YEARS OLD DID NOT COMPLETE PROBATION RECEIVED TWD SENTENCE

PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



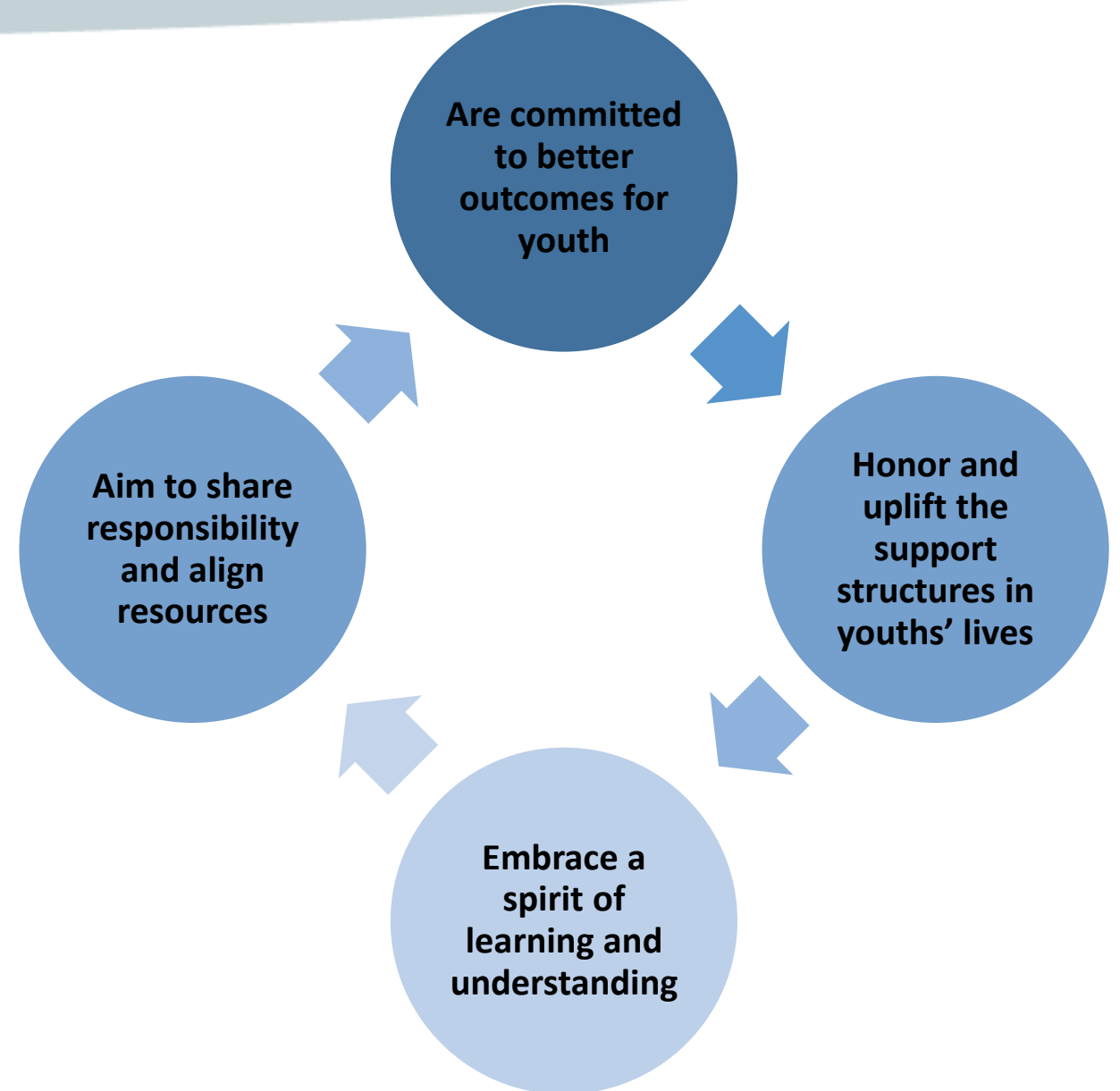
EDUCATIONAL IMPACTS

GRADUATION PROM



Overview

*Our vision is that all **dually-involved youth** can thrive in the areas of **wellness, education, and transition to adulthood**. In support of this vision, we aim to create an aligned and data-driven system that is inclusive of **families and caregivers**, committed to **equity**, and responsive to **youths' individualized needs***



Focus Areas and Strategies

Capacity Building



Cross-system training, peer networks, organizational leadership

Data Sharing and Evaluation

Create publicly available data, develop long term collection process, evaluate progress

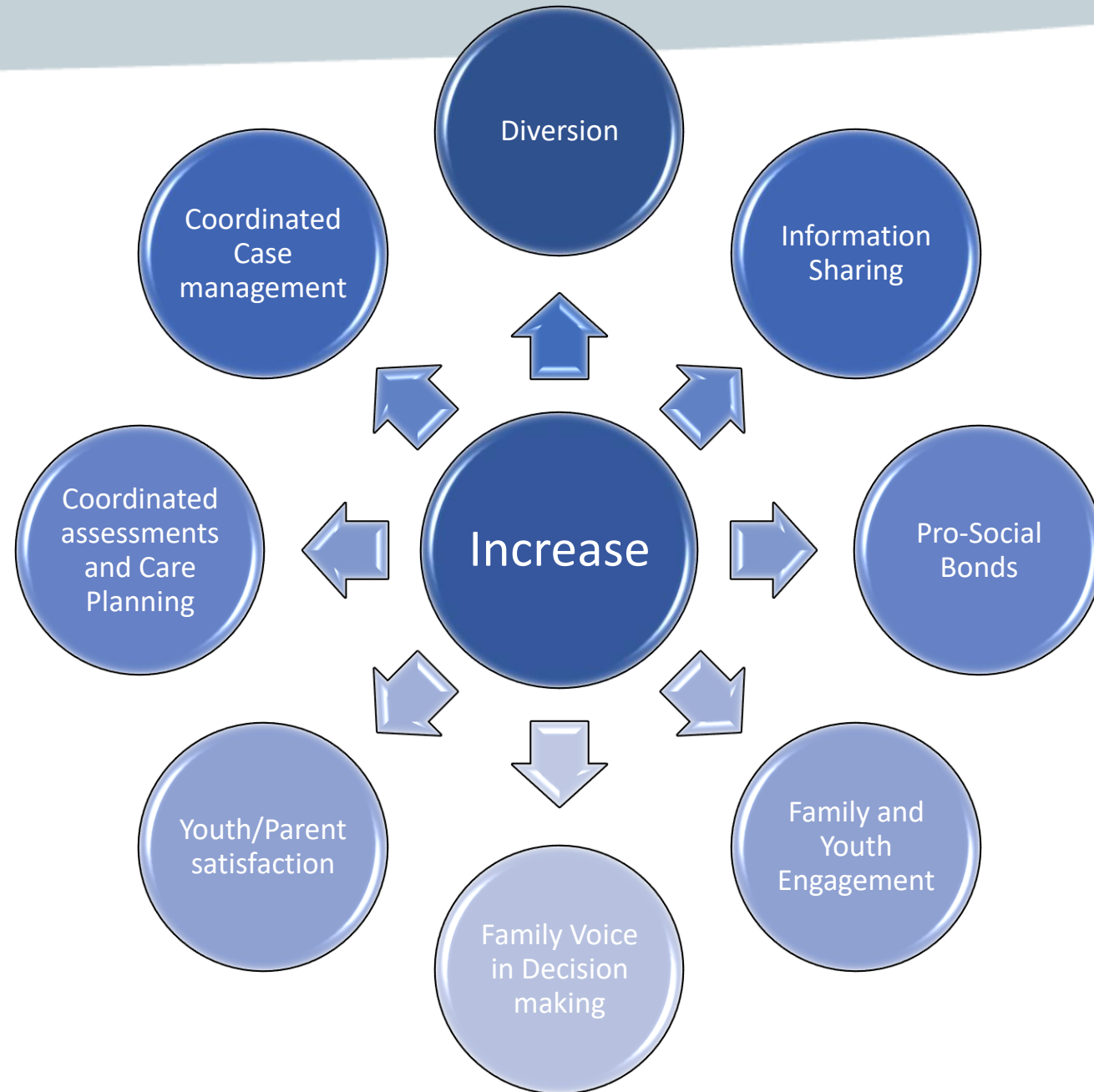


Youth and Community Collaboration



Integrated youth employment, community building and leadership

OUR GOALS



Timeline

**May 2016:
Dual Status
Task Force
Created**

**January
2017: Staffed
initiative**

**February
2017: began
developmen
t of CYPM**

**August 2017:
First YAB,
staff
dedicated in
DFPS and
HCJPD**

**May 2018:
CYPM
implementat
ion begins**

**August 2018:
Youth and
Community
PM**

**June 2019:
YAB
becomes
Youth and
Community
specialist**

**September
2019: Data
analyst for
HCJPD**

**January
2020:
Awarded 3
years
funding**

**September
2020: 4 YCS
hired and
onboard
virtually**

**October
2020: Youth
organizing
award**

DEFINING COLLABORATION



All levels,
all the
time

Levels of engagement and practice – lived experience

Tokenizing

- Asked only about experiences as a youth
- Asked to share experience but not make decision
- Being the only or one of a few
- Told what to say and do

Inviting

- Creating a space physically, not an environment
- Giving limited information on their purpose
- Expecting to “fit”
- Questioning expertise

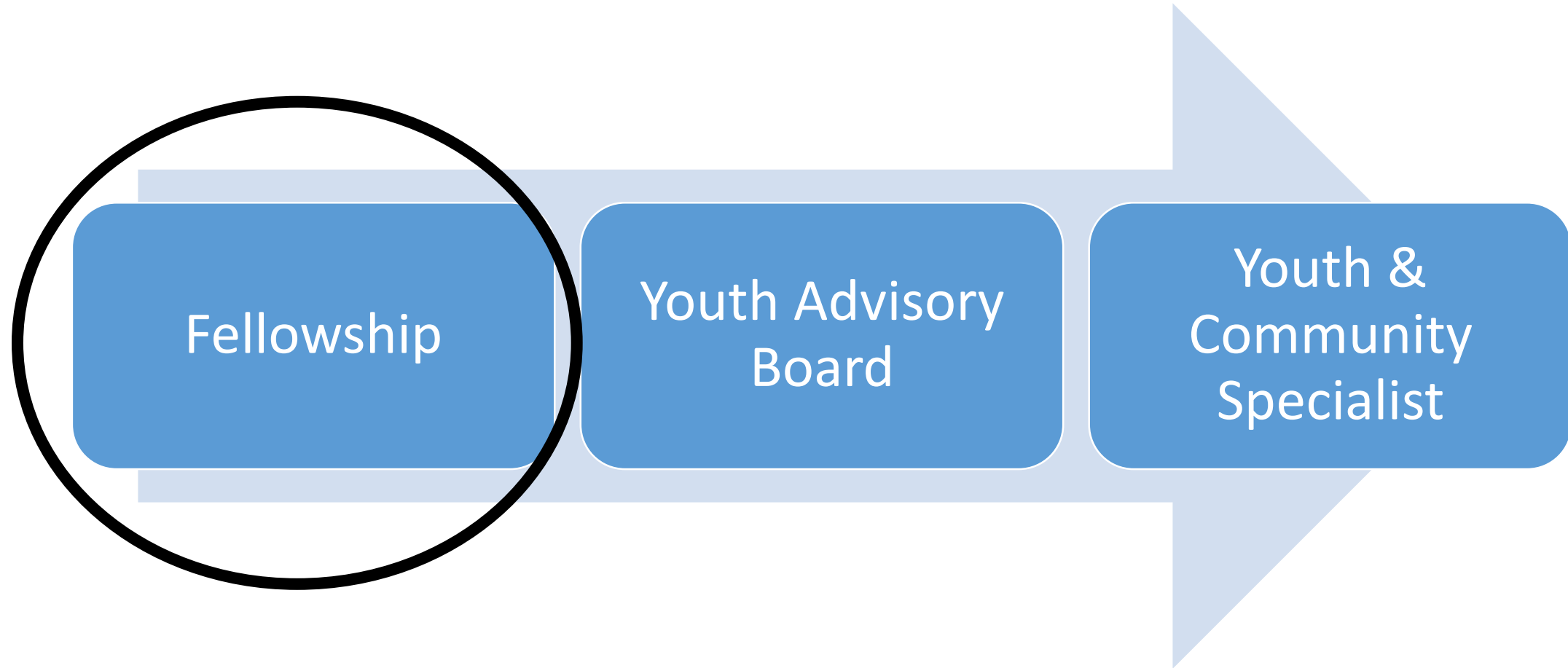
Including

- Asking to help build an idea
- Creating a welcoming and affirming environment
- Supporting learning and development

Collaborating

- Sharing power in decision making
- Providing opportunities
- Compensating fairly
- Honoring experience as expertise
- Investing in growth

Evolution of HCYC Youth Work





Opportunities For Transitioning into Adulthood!!!

- New Transitional Living Programs Being Created in Texas

Opportunities For Education!!!

- New Department called HISD. Liaisons

Partnership with J.P.D.

- 5 Newly elected HISD board Members

Opportunities For Mental Health!!!

- New CEO of The Harris Center

- The County Judge Ed Emmett Find Importance in Mental Health



TOPIC OF 2018 CHOICES

Education Opportunities

Mental Health Opportunities

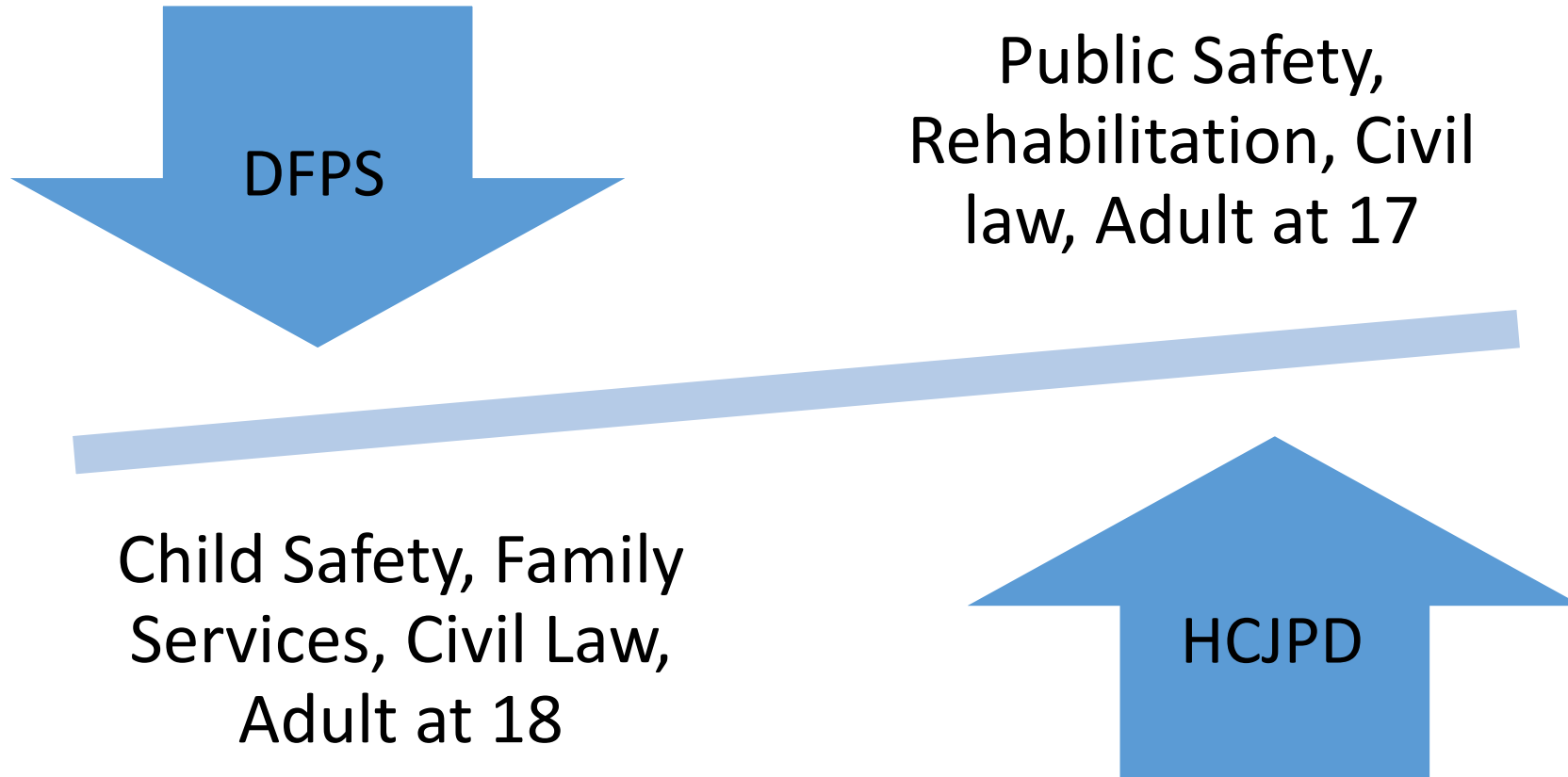
Transitioning into Adulthood Opportunities

May the odds be ever in your favor

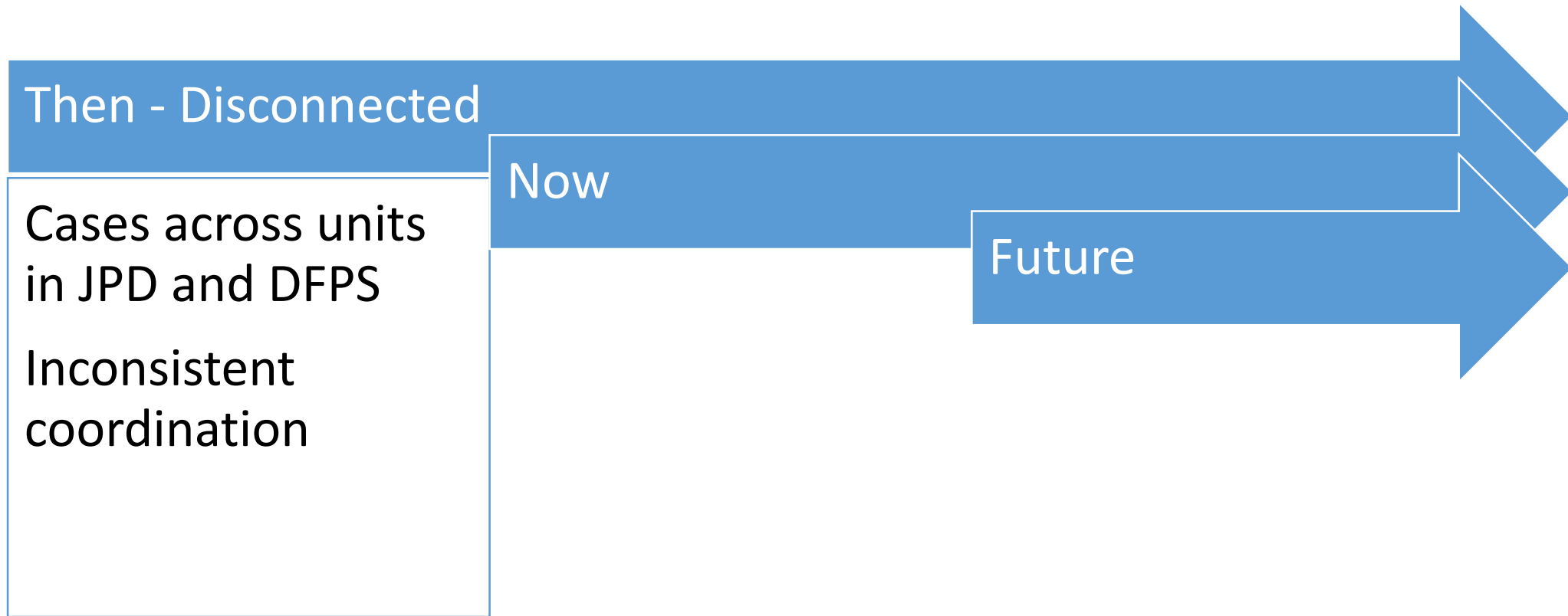
Evolution of HCYC Systems work



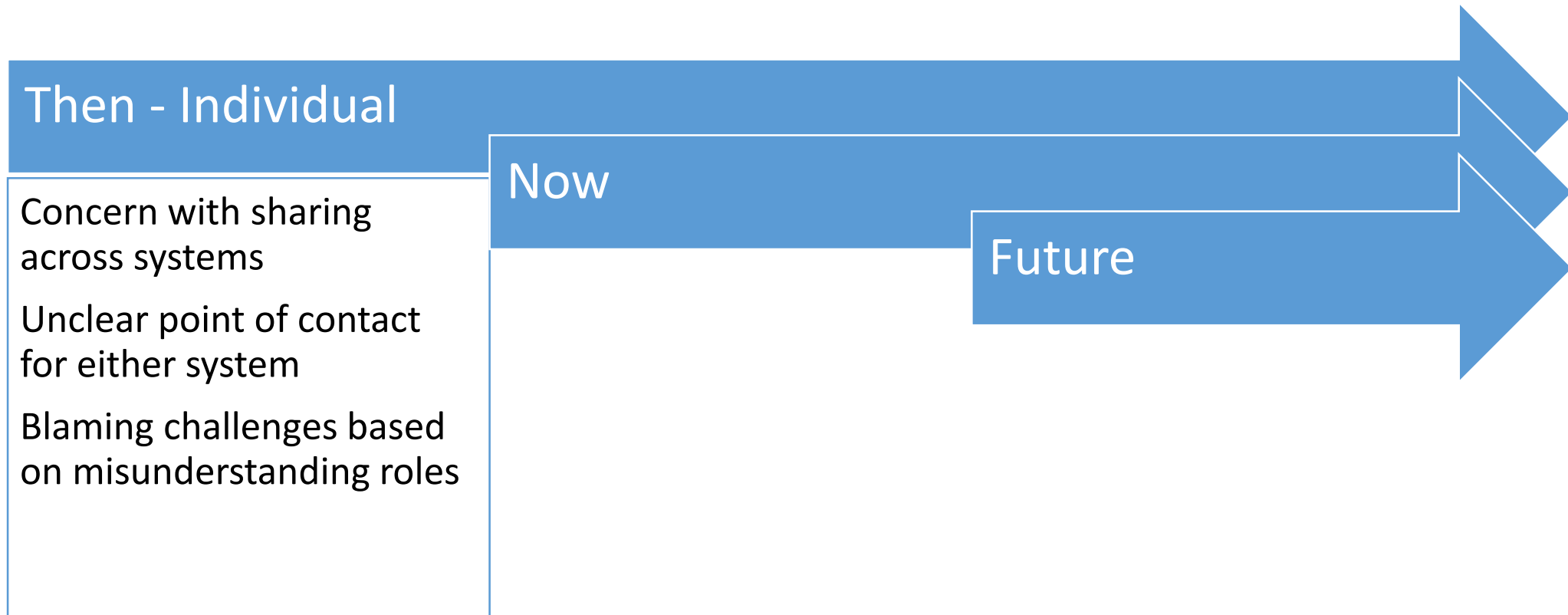
Two Systems: Different Roles



System work



Case work



Services

Then – Disjointed support

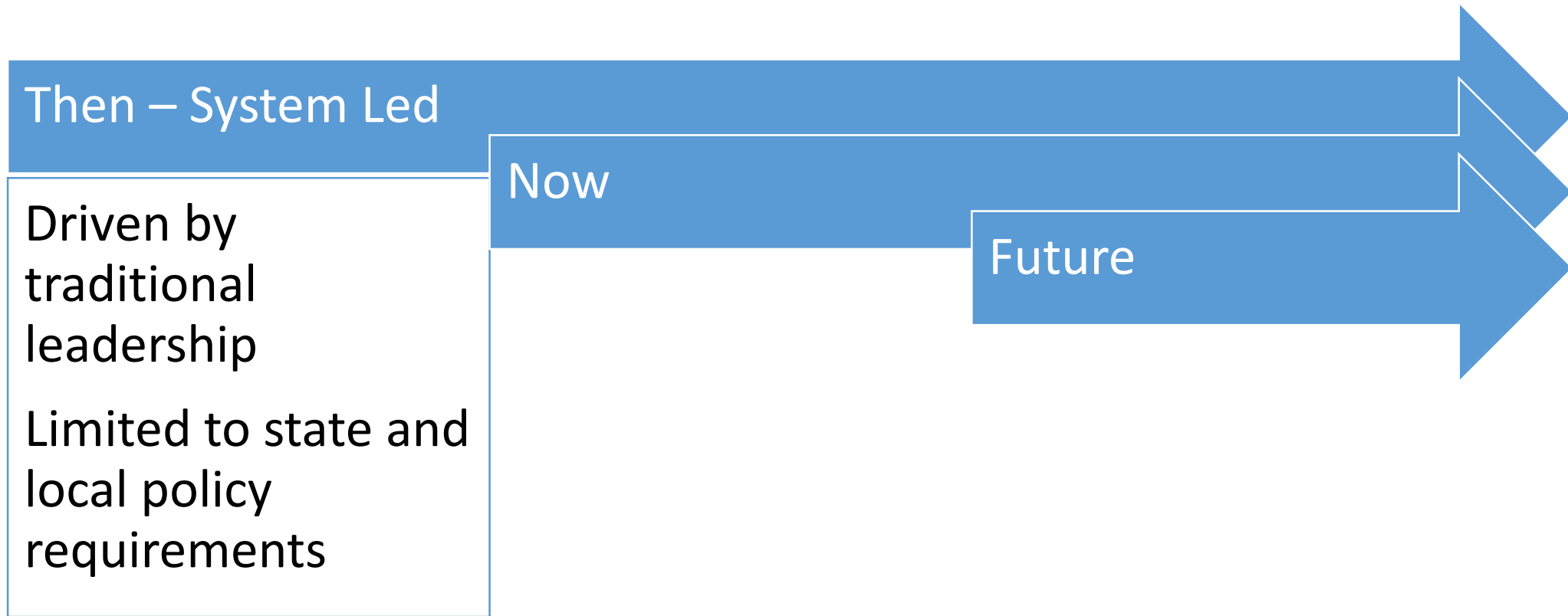
Attorneys and caseworkers operating in silos
Conflicting orders
Long detention stays
Limited diversion

Now

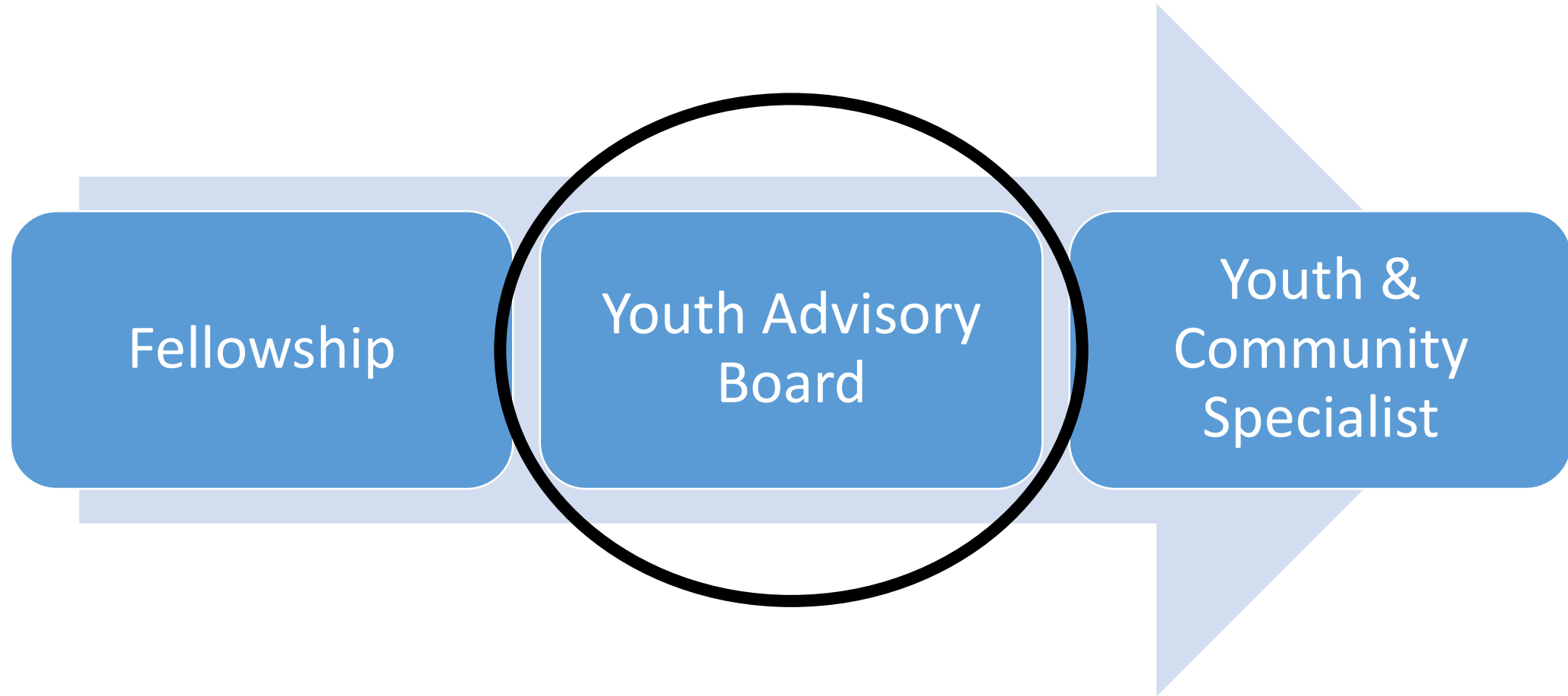
Future



Process for change



Evolution of HCYC Youth Work





Youth Advisory Board - Evolution

Youth Fellowship Program

A part-time leadership development opportunity for 2-3 dual status youth, in which they would:

- Serve on the Steering Committee and Working Groups
- Co-develop and execute the youth outreach strategy
- Receive supervisory and coaching support
- Be “hosted” by a youth-serving organization

Youth Outreach Strategy

A strategy of engaging non-fellows with lived dual status experience, that would:

- Incorporate the perspectives of a diverse set of dual status youth (i.e., lived mental health experience, homelessness, LGBTQ youth)
- Tap into trust and relationships of existing youth-serving organizations
- Facilitate youth co-creation and vetting of the initiative’s strategies

Meeting structure and goals

Professional Development

- Educate members on DS issues, processes
- Guest speakers from Steering Committee
- Developing skills/trainings
 - Professional Speaking
 - Organizing: Power Mapping, Phone Banking, Rap Practice
 - Court Observations

Personal Development

- Employment (Resume Building, Mock Interview)
- Financial Literacy (Investing, Insurance, Car Shopping, Credit)
- Documents and Identification

YAB new structure

Monthly Stipend

Compensated for Public
Speaking

Therapy and Counseling
Services

Gym Membership

Transportation assistance

Legal Representation

Driver's License
/Reinstatement/ Surcharge

Professional Attire

Resources for Personal Needs

Membership Package



Our "Core Values" define who we are

- Excellence
- Integrity
- Learning
- Cooperation





CREATING COMMUNITY

DEVELOPING SOLUTIONS AND REALIGNING
RESPONSIBILITIES WITH RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT
CENTERS

January 16th | 6-8 pm
Greater Ward AME Church
6822 Arabella
Houston Tx 77091

HARRIS COUNTY
YOUTH COLLECTIVE

For info contact Dieter Cantu (210) 273-4062

HARRIS COUNTY YOUTH COLLECTIVE

HEALING OUR YOUTH

COMMUNITY GIVEBACK AND FEEDBACK



GARDEN CITY APTS

2611 Garden City Dr
Houston Tx 77088

2-17-19
SUNDAY
FRIDAY 5-7 PM

- FREE FOOD
- REFRESHMENTS
- RAFFLE/PRIZES
- DIALOGUE
- COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

CONTACT DIETER CANTU (210) 273-4062



CREATING COMMUNITY

DEVELOPING SOLUTIONS AND REALIGNING
RESPONSIBILITIES WITH RESIDENTIAL
TREATMENT CENTERS

HARRIS COUNTY
YOUTH COLLECTIVE

March 19th, 2019

For info contact Dieter Cantu (210) 273-4062



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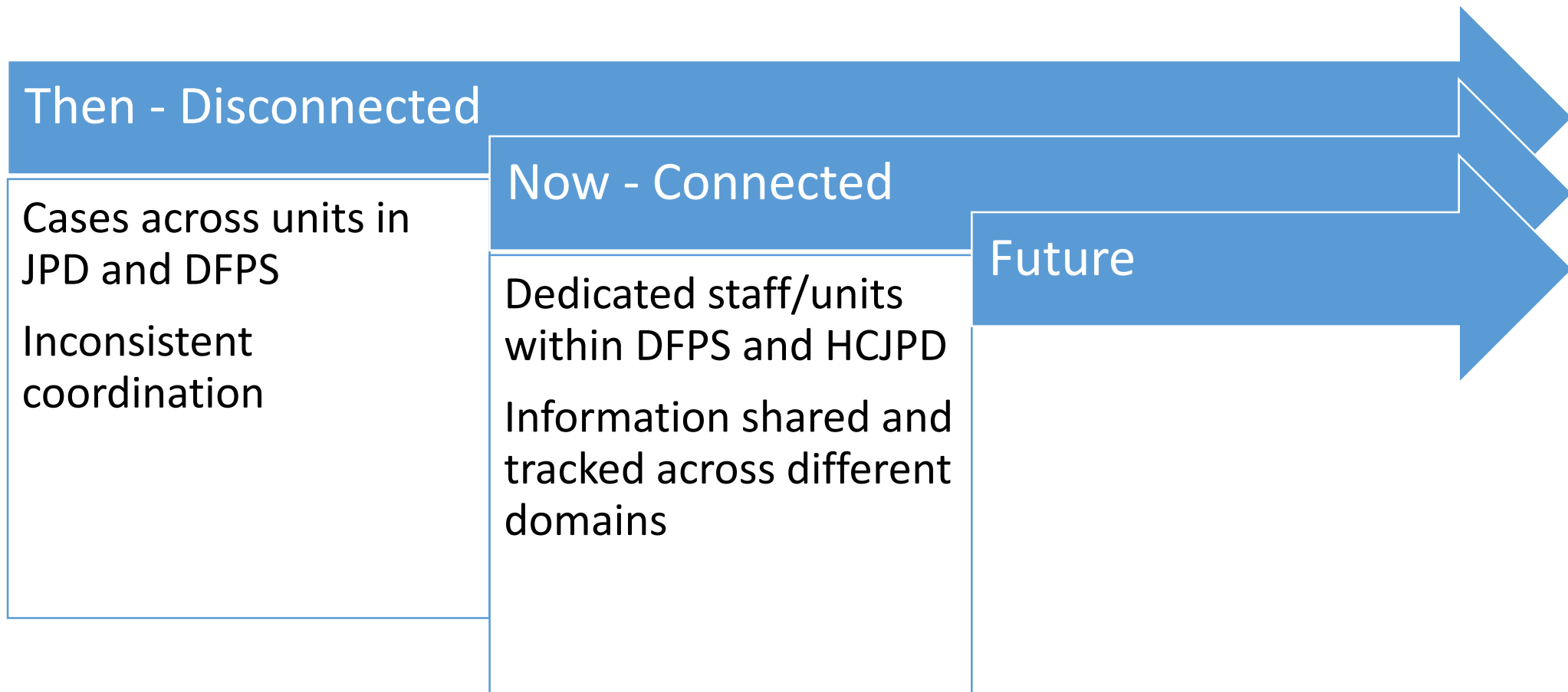
HARRIS COUNTY
YOUTH COLLECTIVE

7'-6"
BE PART OF SOMETHING
7' **BIG**
6"
和我们一起
开创大场面

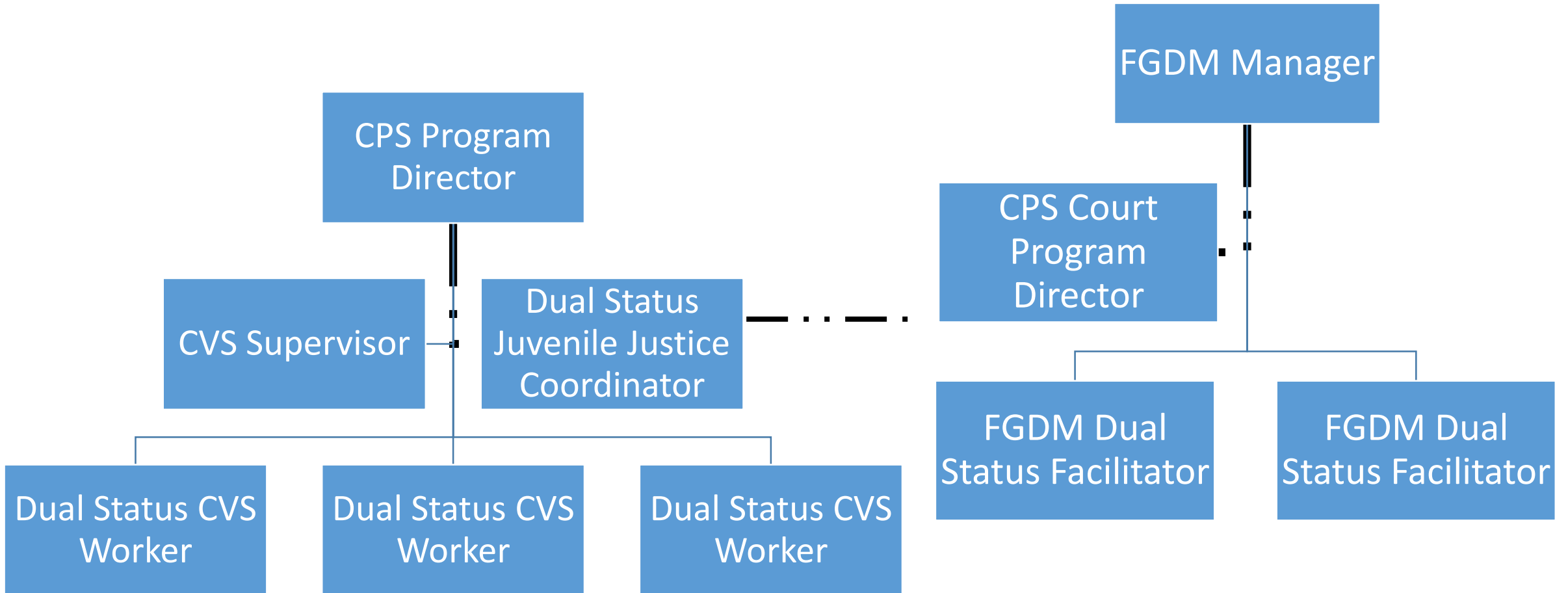
Evolution of HCYC Systems work



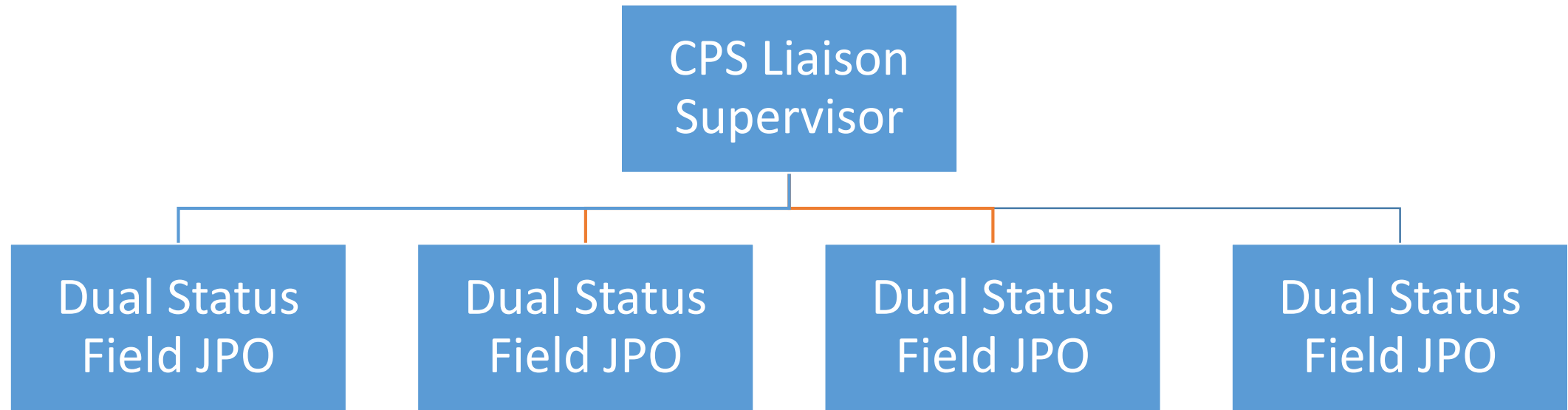
System work



Dual Status Teams – DFPS



Dual Status Teams – HCJPD



Case work

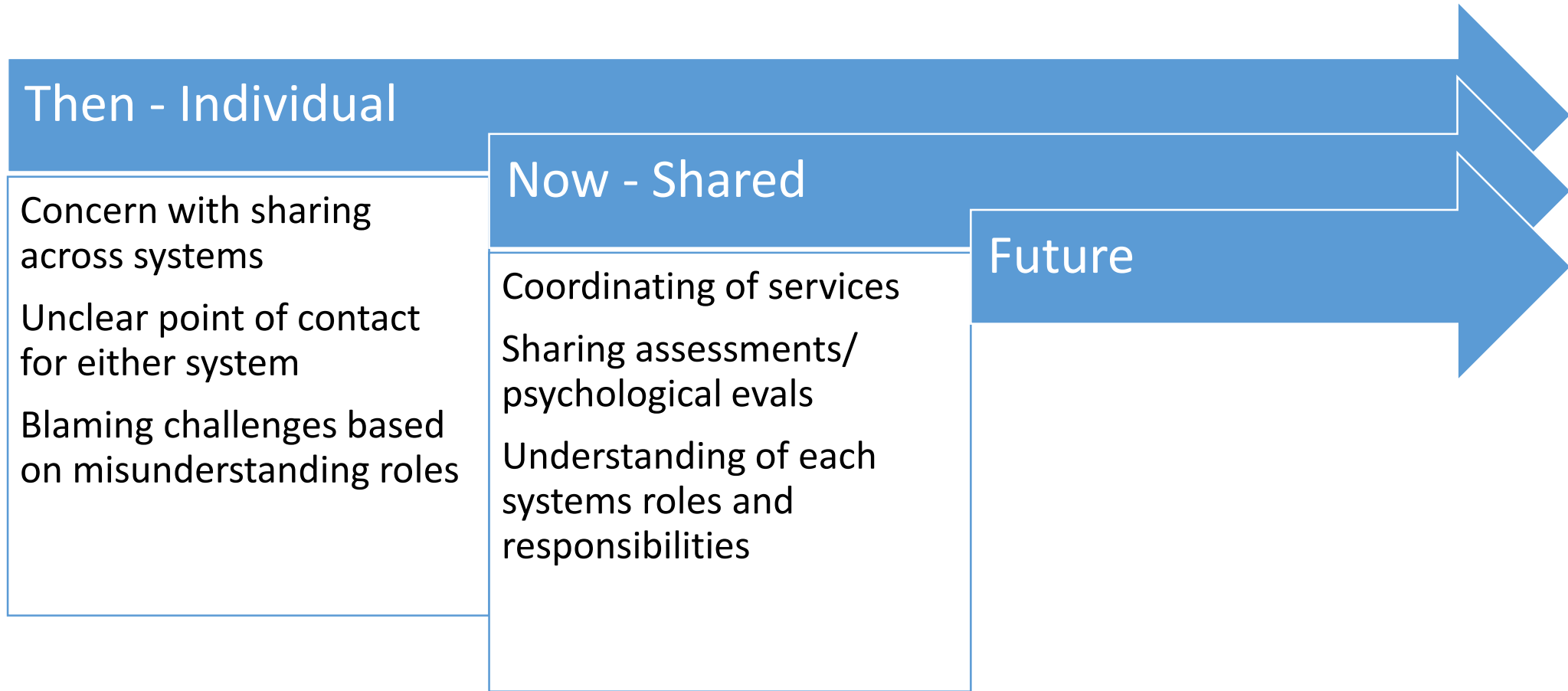
Then - Individual

Concern with sharing across systems
Unclear point of contact for either system
Blaming challenges based on misunderstanding roles

Now - Shared

Coordinating of services
Sharing assessments/ psychological evals
Understanding of each systems roles and responsibilities

Future



Services

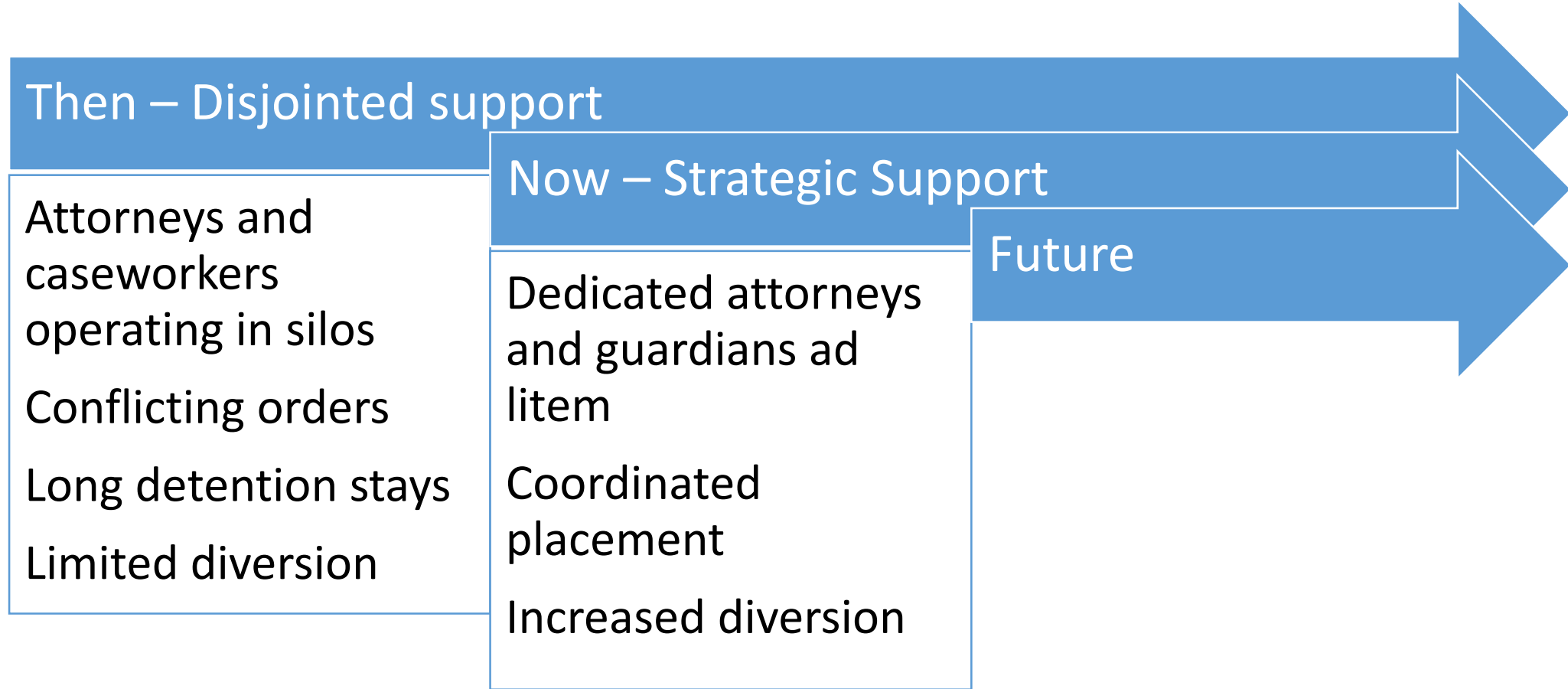
Then – Disjointed support

Attorneys and caseworkers operating in silos
Conflicting orders
Long detention stays
Limited diversion

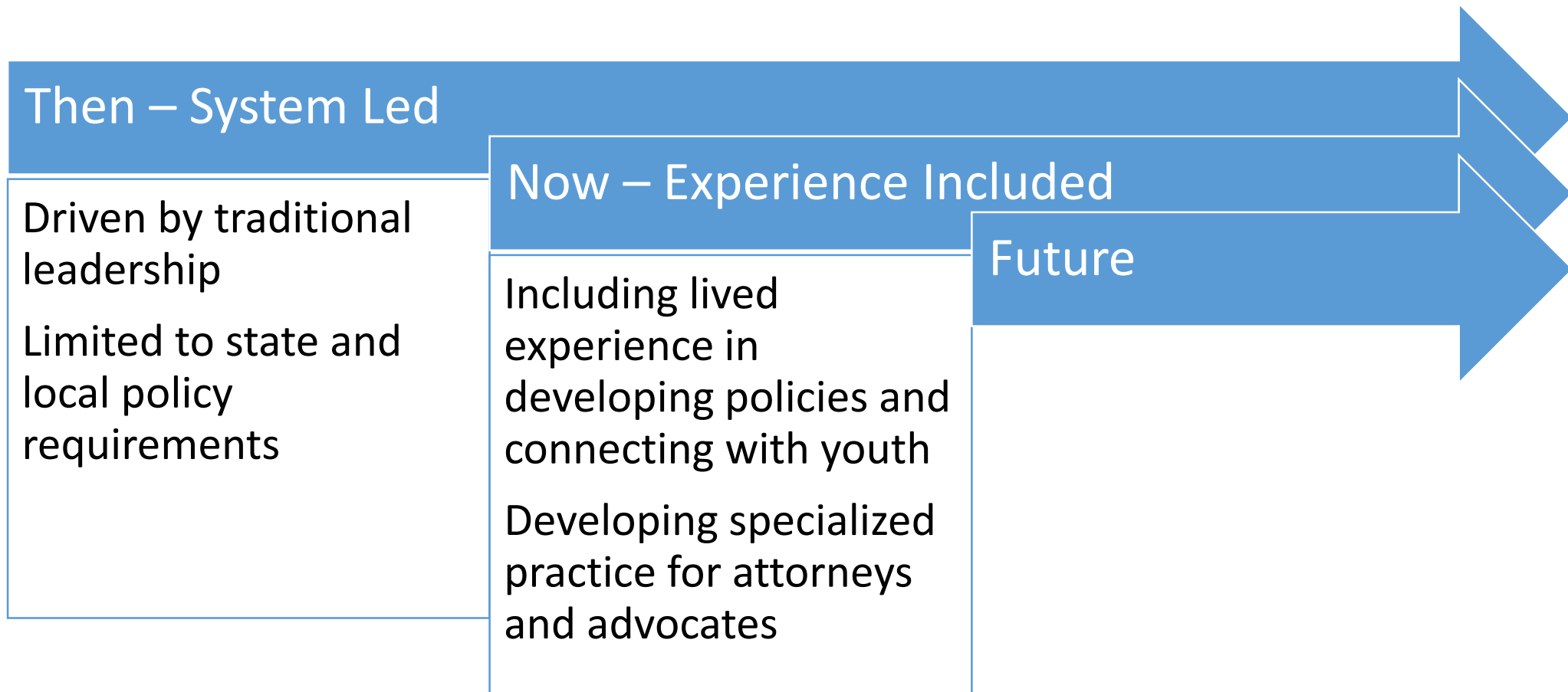
Now – Strategic Support

Dedicated attorneys and guardians ad litem
Coordinated placement
Increased diversion

Future



Process for change



Case work

Then - Individual

Concern with sharing
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Now - Shared

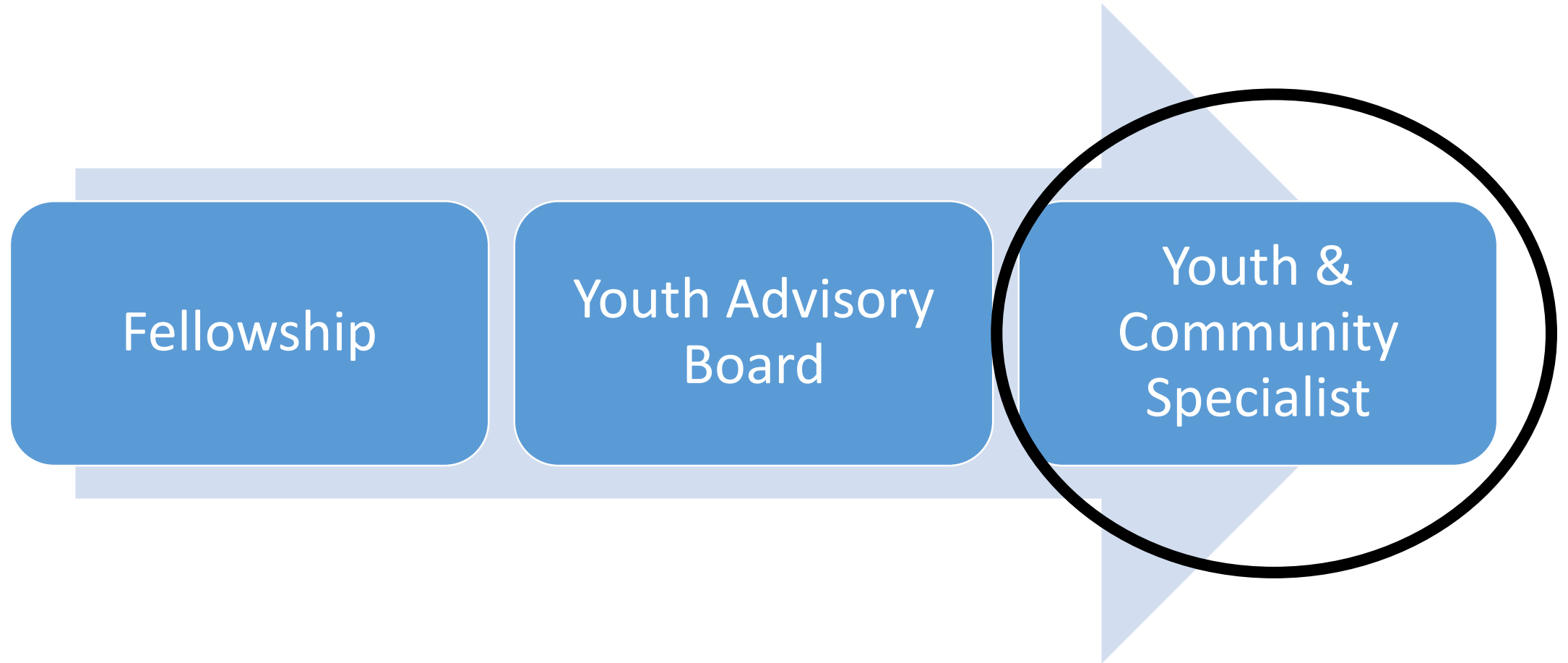
Coordinating of services

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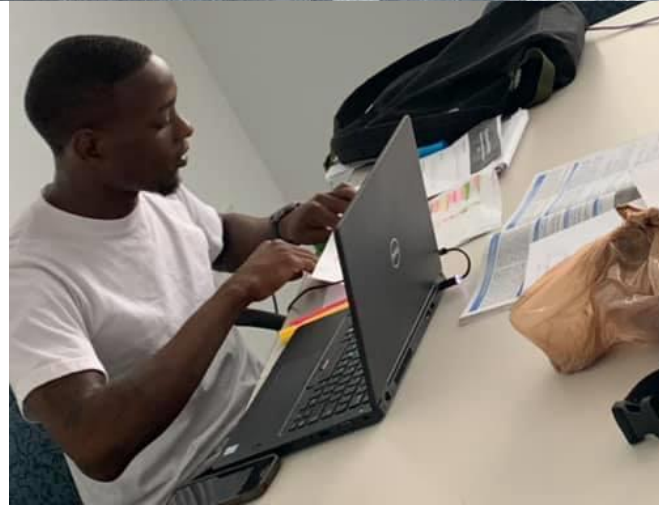
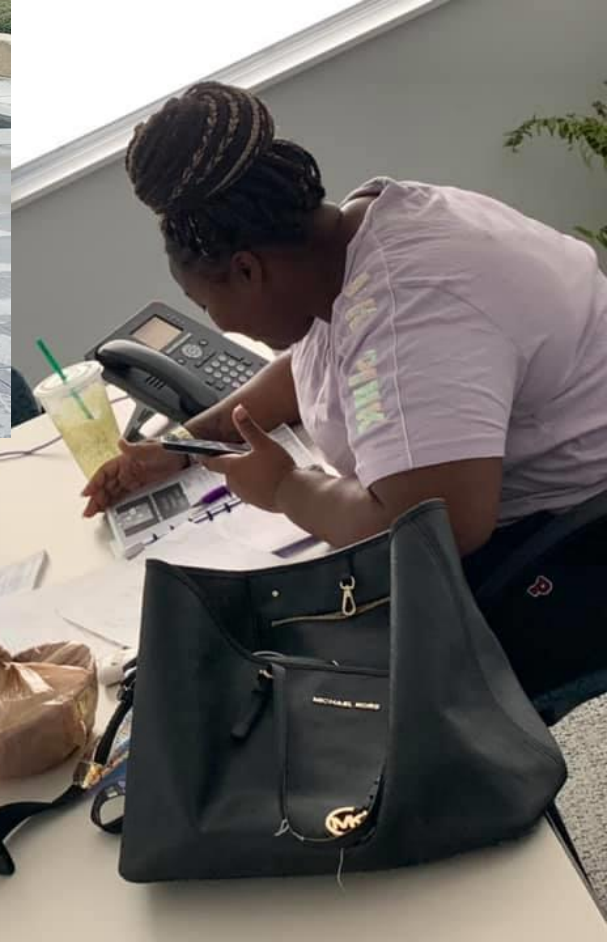
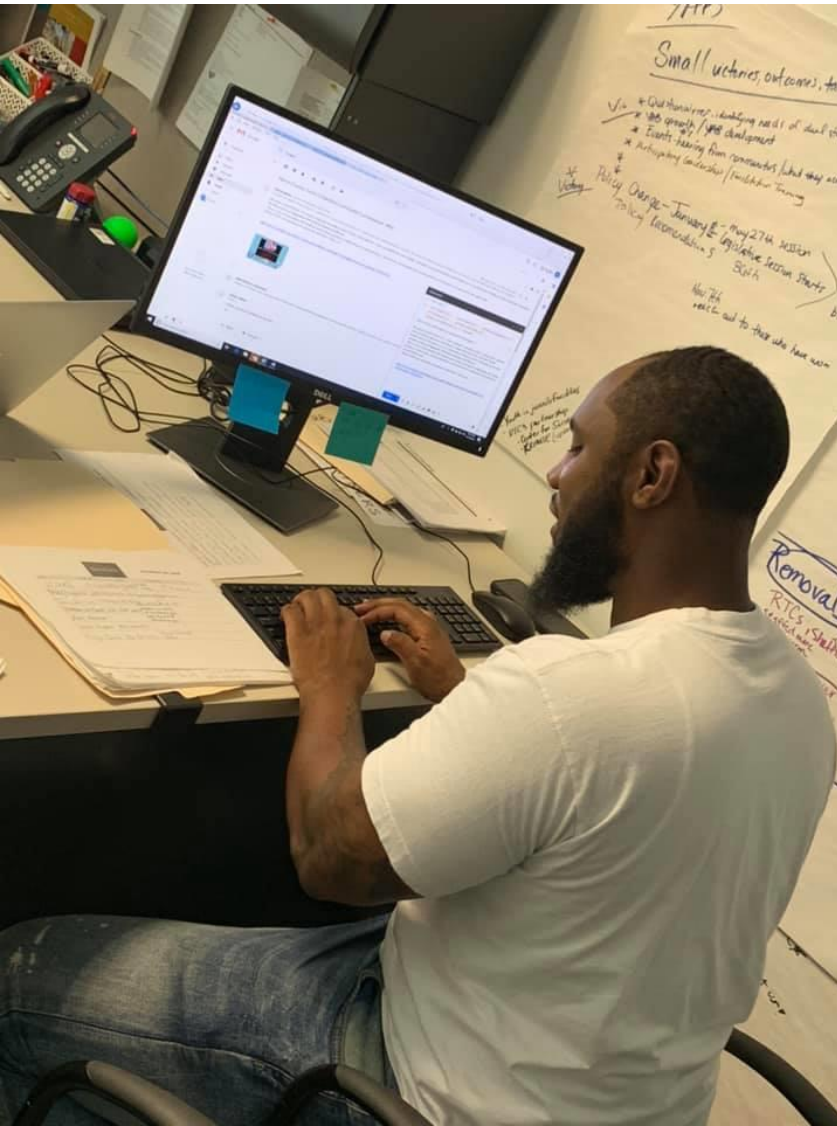
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Evolution of HCYC Youth Work

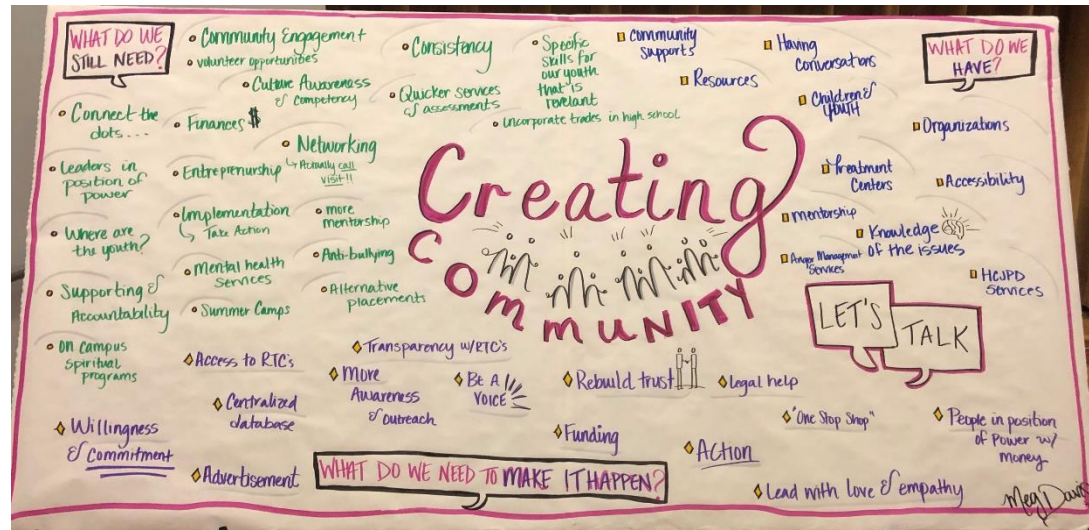


Community Projects

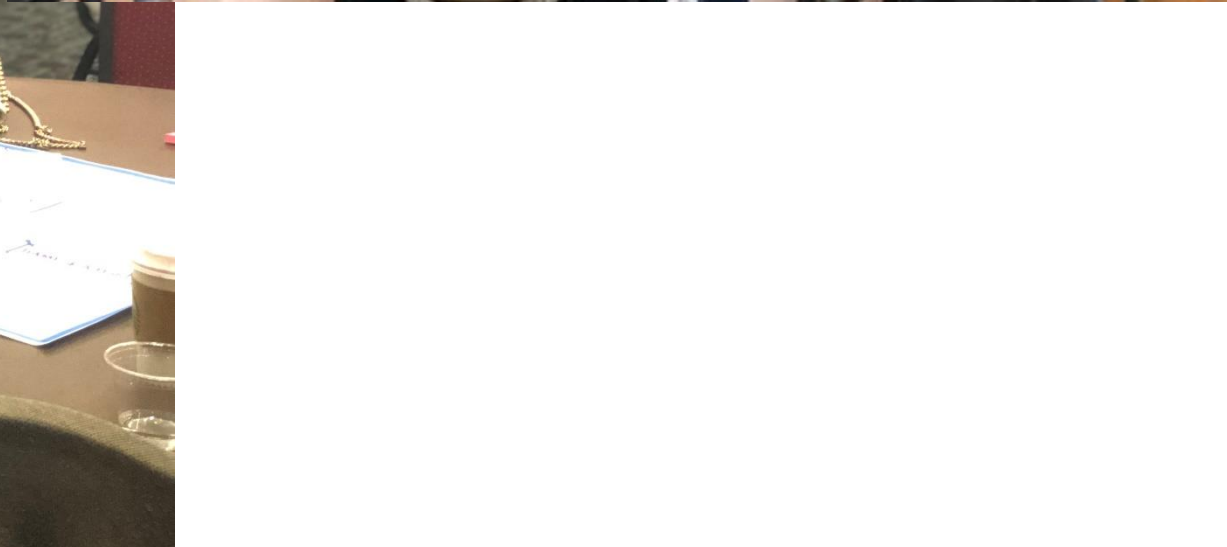




COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



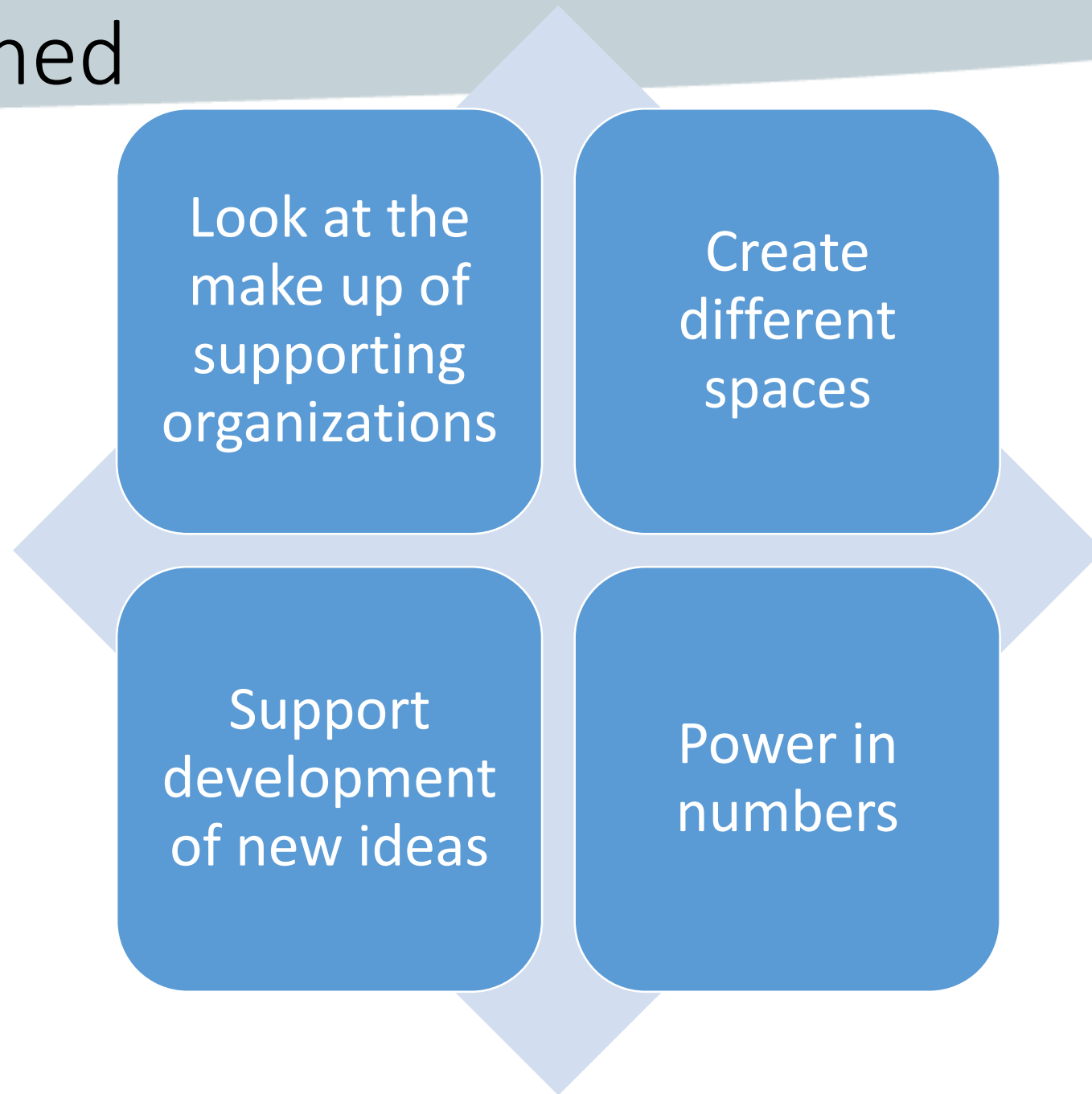
Working Groups



2020....



Lessons learned



Recruitment – what you need to know

Traditional hiring practices and policies may create barriers and challenges

Beware the “superstar”

Natural networks, build trust and power within

Supporting Youth and Young Adults

Flexibility

- Scheduling
- Transportation
- Personal Needs

Mentoring

- Developing existing experience
- Supporting non-work needs
- Listening

Investing

- Professional development
- Travel
- Benefits

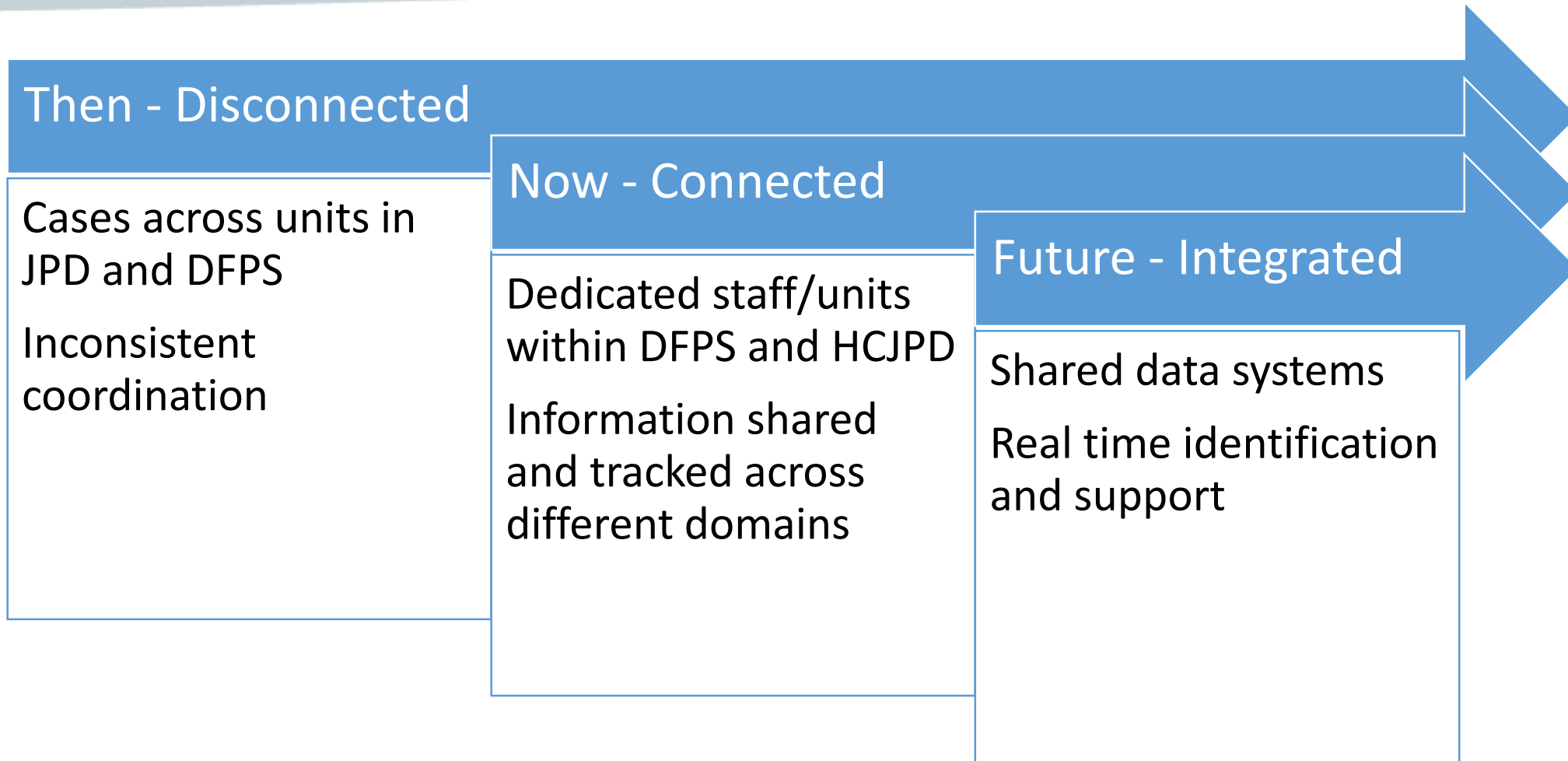
Creativity

- Plan together
- Build trust and connection
- Communication

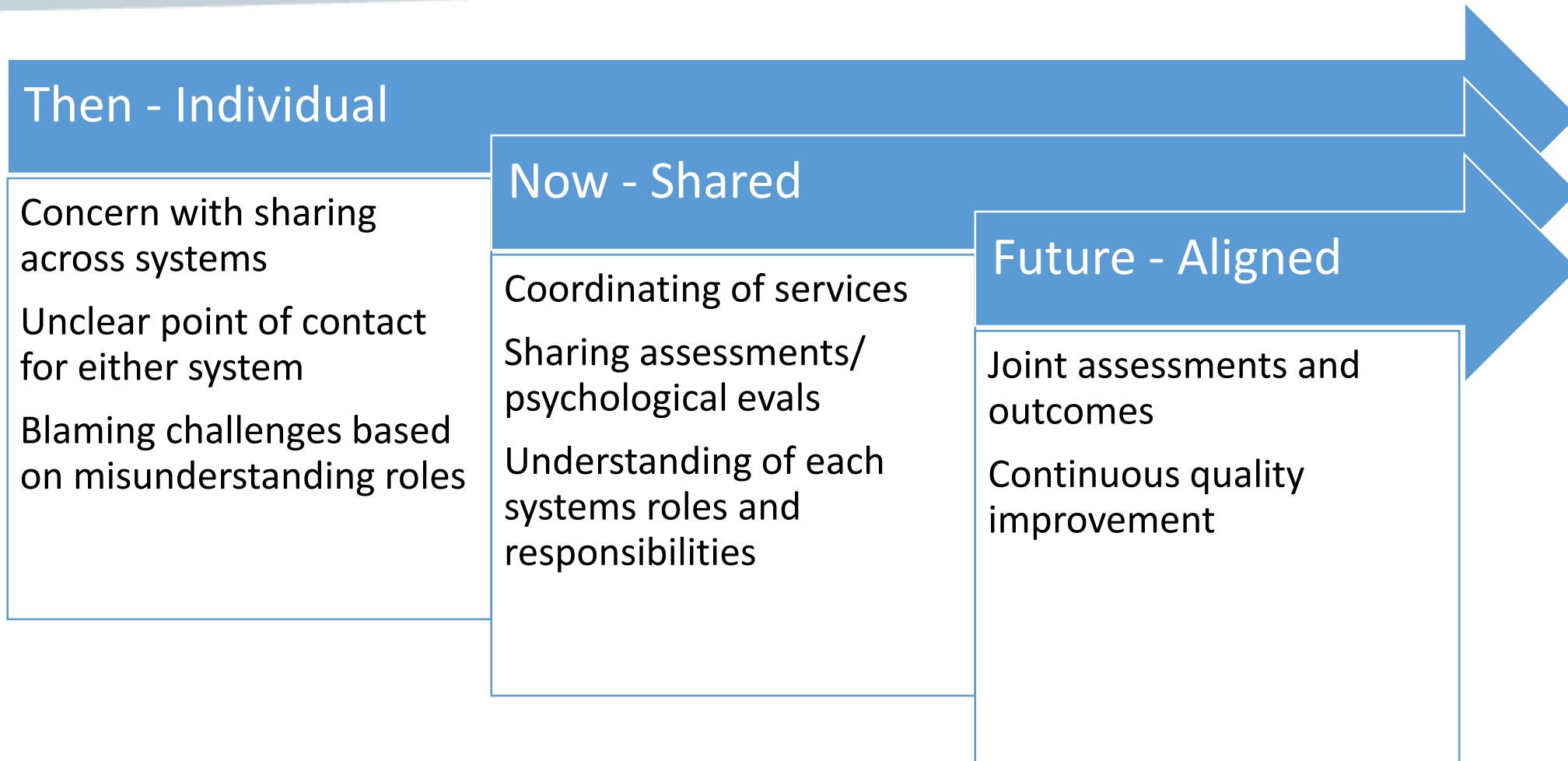
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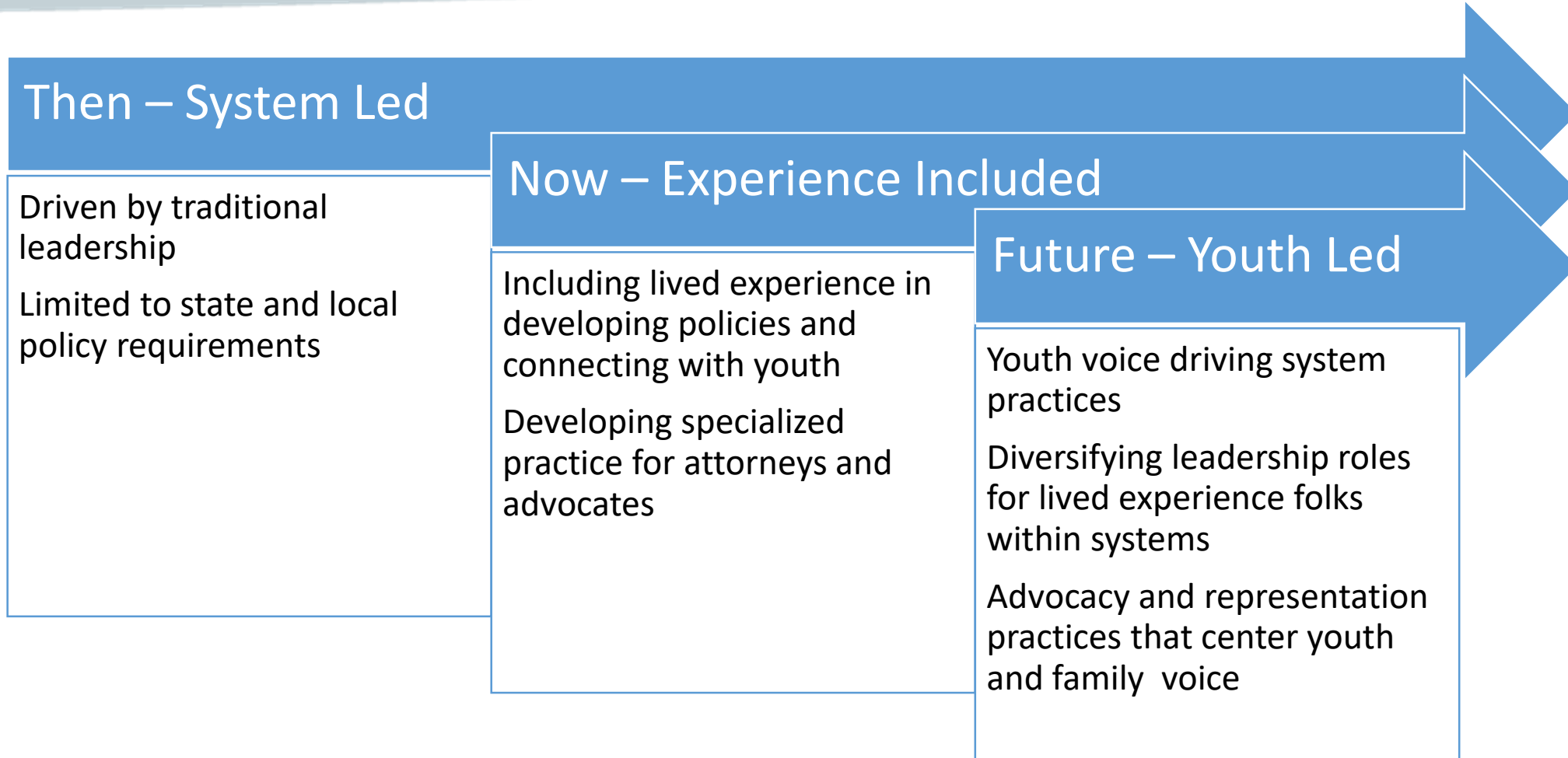
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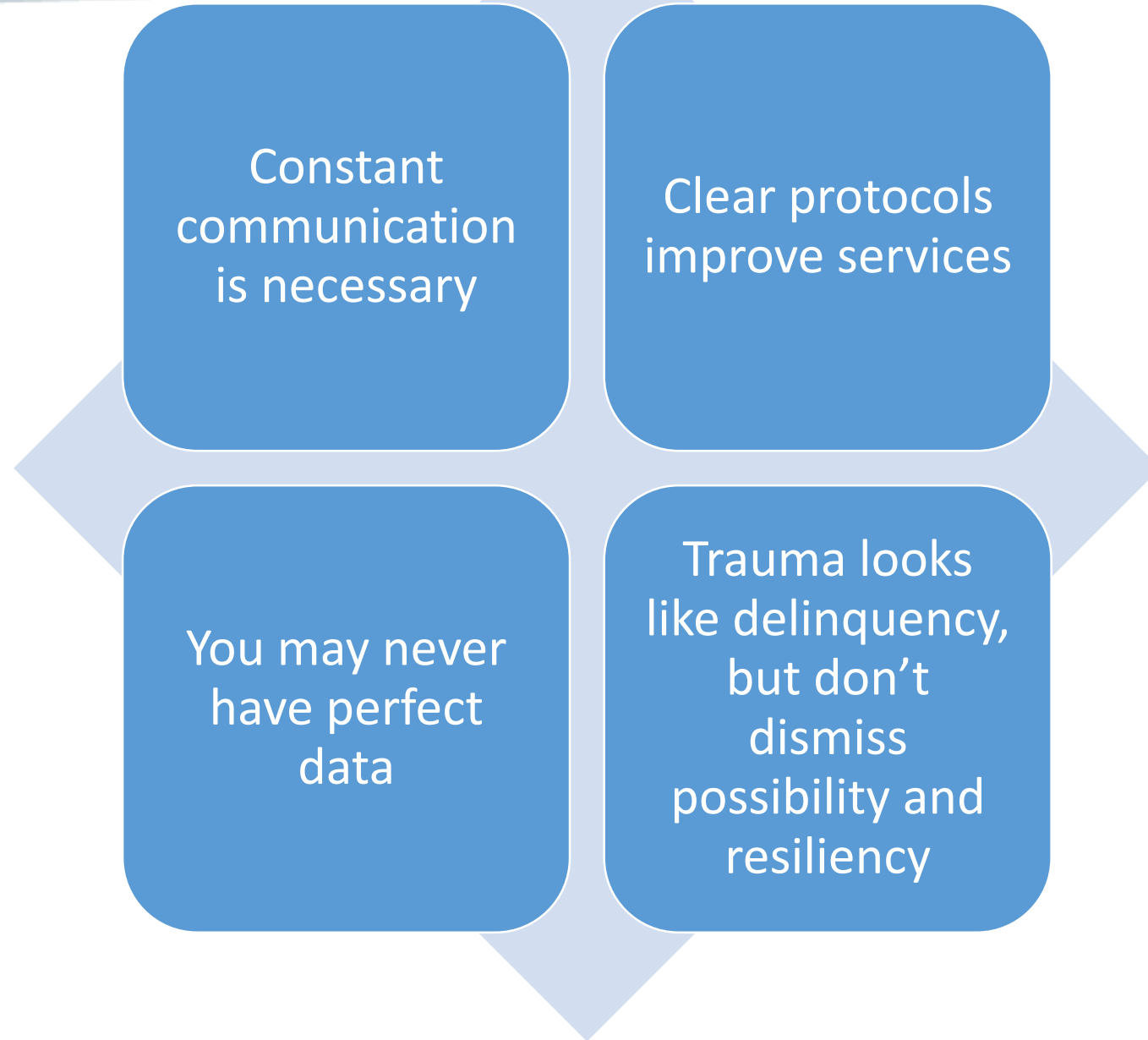
Future – Community Support

Contracting with
community providers to
keep kids in communities
Specialized home based
placements

Process for change



Lessons learned



Ongoing needs

Listening

- Dual Status youth feel that they are not heard
- Use motivational interviewing and notice the little things
- Understand other advocates, cases

Visiting

- Go see young people in placements. Often
- Involve youth in their own decision making
- Be honest

Supporting

- Beyond mentorship – long term supportive adults
- Engaging with families is necessary
- Activities that support normalcy

Developing

- More home based placements are needed
- Longer term supports once youth age out still needed
- Better safety net for young adults





My why...

**QUESTIONS?
INSIGHTS?**

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Kelly.opot@harriscountyyyc.org